January 4, 2016 – FDSTF Update

TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Meeting in January** – The next meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, January 21, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM at the Doubletree by Hilton – 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee FL.

2. **Attachments:**

- FDSTF Legislative Tracker
- Veterans Bills
- Task Force Grant Contract Extension – National Center for Simulation
- TPG Monthly Report

Regards, BG.

Bruce Grant

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

**Election-Year Dynamics Likely to Quash Prospects for Smooth Passage of FY‘17 Spending Bills**


Defense Communities 360 © January 4, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Reliance on continuing resolutions and omnibus packages to keep the government running has been the norm for much of the past two decades, a pattern which most likely will continue this year despite recent comments suggesting congressional leaders are aspiring to pass fiscal 2017 spending measures prior to Oct. 1. Last month, House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) said he received assurances from Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) that he would not block spending bills from going to the Senate floor for debate. —I think [Reid] too wants to get us back to regular order and that’s why he’s impressed upon me his goal to not block bills coming up to the Senate,— Ryan said Dec. 16………

US Southern Command –

**SOUTHCOM providing air mobility for Honduran military**

http://www.janes.com/article/56938/southcom-providing-air-mobility-for-honduran-military

Janes Defence Weekly © December 29,

2015 By Daniel Wasserbly

US Southern Command's (SOUTHCOM's) Joint Task Force-Bravo has completed its last troop movement in 2015 for the Honduran military as part of Operation 'Caravana'. The operation has run in various iterations and is co-ordinated by the local US embassy and the Honduran Air Force. It is meant to provide the Honduran military with aerial access to Gracias a Dios, Colon, and Olancho departments to combat illicit trafficking. Honduras has become one of the more violent states in the hemisphere because it serves as a transit point for cocaine, weapons, and currency. Since its inception in October 2014, Operation 'Caravana' has helped the Honduran government move "nearly 5,000 troops and more than 210,000 lb of cargo between remote
NS Mayport –

**Defense chief eyes slowdown of buying on littoral ships; effect on Mayport uncertain**


Florida Times-Union © December 28, 2015


Defense Secretary Ash Carter tripped a political alarm by telling the Navy to curb plans for adding littoral combat ships, the smaller new vessels expected to become mainstays of Mayport Naval Station. The instruction, delivered recently in a memo to Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, apparently won’t change announced plans to bring eight ships to Mayport by 2020. But it could have longer-term consequences for the base, which will become the East Coast hub for the ships, called LCS. Members of Congress have already challenged a part of Carter’s memo — a preliminary instruction for preparing a budget proposal expected by February — that referenced the Navy buying 40 LCS instead of the 52 formerly planned. —We live in dangerous times, and the only way to make America safe is to make America strong. … Our current national security demands require more vessels in the fleet, not fewer. That includes the LCS,‖ U.S. Rep. Ander Crenshaw, R-Fla., said in a statement last week.

**Call to scale back littoral ships could impact Mayport**


First Coast News © December 29, 2015

By [Steven Dial](http://www.firstcoastnews.com/story/news/local/military/2015/12/29/mayport-navy-ship-florida/78048940/)

Defense Secretary Ash Carter ordered the Navy to buy fewer Littoral Combat Ships than previously planned and that could mean fewer sailors at Mayport. "We are stepping off into a new chapter of surface warfare in the Navy," Capt. Paul Young said last month after the new LCS facility opened. Mayport will serve as the Navy's hub for Littoral Ships on the East Coast. The original plan was for the Navy to buy 52 ships. The memo from Secretary Carter is proposing to scale back that number to 40. Eight of the ships being cut are Littoral Combat Ships. Naval Station Mayport is scheduled to receive eight of those ships by 2020 with the first
Tyndall AFB –

**Travis (and Tyndall) to be assessed as possible temporary shelter for unaccompanied alien children**


Daily Republic © January 2, 2016

By Ian Thompson

Travis Air Force Base is one of six military facilities across the nation which will be assessed to see if it can provide temporary shelter to unaccompanied children who have arrived at the United States’ southern border with Mexico. Local leaders in communities near the possible temporary facilities got letters from the federal Department of Health and Human Services on Wednesday saying that representatives of the HHS’s Office of Refugee Resettlement, military officials and safety officials will be examining the facilities starting in early January. The HHS is in the middle of expanding its capacity to ensure it can give adequate shelter to the current influx of unaccompanied children who are showing up at the border. It is already planning to activate 800 beds at the Homestead Job Corps facility in Florida in February and 1,000 beds at the Denver Federal Campus in Lakewood, Colorado, in April as temporary shelters. Travis was listed along with Gunter Annex at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, Tyndall AFB, Florida, Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota, Naval Support Facility Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Hanscom AFB, Massachusetts…….

NAS Pensacola –

**National Naval Aviation Museum welcomes new director**


Pensacola News-Journal © January 1, 2016

Capt. Sterling Gilliam, the National Naval Aviation Museum's new director, talks about where the museum is going and his favorite display. Marketta Davis/mdavis@pnj.com

By Marketta Davis

Being appointed the [National Naval Aviation Museum](http://www.pnj.com/story/news/military/2016/01/01/national-naval-aviation-museum-gets-new-director/78072520/) director is a homecoming of sorts for
retired Navy Capt. Sterling Gilliam, as he has accumulated more than 4,600 flight hours on various aircraft displayed in the museum that he'll now be overseeing. Gilliam follows in the footsteps of Bob Rasmussen, who retired as the museum's director in 2014 after serving 27 years. "Capt. Rasmussen spent three decades turning this into the third largest aviation museum in the world," Gilliam said. "And now I have the opportunity to come in and build on the tremendous success that he and others have achieved." Gilliam began his naval career at Pensacola Naval Air Station graduating from Aviation Officer Candidate School in 1983. For the next 27 years, he flew 22 different aircraft, deploying aboard such carriers as the USS Nimitz, USS Carl Vinson and USS Enterprise, as well as working in the Pentagon………..

Defense Industry –

Report: DoD needs big cuts in civilian, contract spending in next budget


C4 ISR Net © December 30, 2015

By Aaron Boyd

The Department of Defense has been following a congressional directive to reduce spending on civilian and contract employees, the department told the Government Accountability Office. However, GAO investigators say they can't find the data to back this up. GAO looked into whether the DoD has been complying with a mandate in the 2013 National Defense Authorization Act to bring down staffing levels and reduce expenses on the civilian side on par with similar reductions to military personnel, which total about 7 percent since 2012. The DoD's civilian staff is currently made up of about 756,000 full-time employees and at least 641,000 contractors — though that number is likely significantly higher, according to the GAO — compared with some 2.1 million military employees………..

Flight leader: Tampa firm makes 75 percent of the world’s flight simulators


Tampa Tribune © January 2, 2016

By Yvette C. Hammett

On any given day, military pilots and flight crews from countries such as Peru, Japan or Sweden are sequestered in flight simulators near Tampa International Airport, training to confront
hurricanes or enemy fire and learning how to care for wounded warriors in flight. Across the

country and across the globe, flight simulators built and equipped by the Tampa company CAE

USA are in use for military purposes and also in civil aviation. The company builds 75 percent

of the world’s flight simulators and also trains pilots at its Tampa campus. Some 500 CAE

employees, many of them engineers, are responsible for completing the simulation systems that

prepare the U.S. military and pilots worldwide to train for real-world issues they may

encounter. Chances are, the pilot and crew on the flight from your local airport have at one
time trained on a flight simulator created by CAE. Last month, a Russian-made Antonov An-

124 — the world’s second-largest aircraft — flew into Tampa International to pick up a CAE

flight simulator to deliver to the Royal Danish Navy. The week before, a CAE simulator left

Tampa for the Australian military……..

DOD Issues –

Pentagon quick on plans to cut troops, slower on civilian trims

http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/pentagon/2015/12/28/gao-report-
civilian-contractor-cuts/77968384/

Military Times © December 28, 2015

By Leo Shane III

Defense Department leaders are lagging behind on mandates to find tens of millions of dollars in savings from cutting the civilian workforce and outside contractors, the Government Accountability Office said in a new report. It has been three years since lawmakers ordered Pentagon planners to find savings in both personnel areas in the wake of announced plans to cut military active-duty end strength as a long-term cost saving measure. The 2013 Defense Authorization Act mandates that planners reduce civilian workers and outside contract spending at roughly the same rate as troop cutbacks. But the GAO report said defense officials have been slow to outline those plans so far…….

Defense officials propose biggest UCMJ changes in decades

http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/pentagon/2015/12/29/defense-officials-
propose-biggest-ucmj-changes-decades/78031516/

Military Times © December 30, 2015

By Andrew Tilghman

It would add dozens of new crimes to the Uniform Code of Military Justice. It would make court-martialing troops on deployment far easier. It would give military judges more power. And it would end "bread and water" in the brig — a Navy punishment still on the books after
more than 200 years. Those are among the long list of changes the Pentagon has endorsed in a proposal to rewrite the UCMJ for the modern era. After a two-year review, the Defense Department is asking Congress to change dozens of articles governing how troops are tried and punished for misconduct. If approved, it would mark the most far-reaching changes to the UCMJ since its inception in 1950.

**Pentagon's women-in-combat push faces chilly headwinds**


The Hill © December 30, 2015

By Rebecca Kheel - 12/30/15 06:01 AM EST

The Pentagon faces major challenges ahead in 2016 as it works to make good on a pledge to open all U.S. military combat jobs to women. The toughest part of the integration, which President Obama and Defense Secretary Ashton Carter have made a priority in their final year in office, will be overcoming deep-seated opposition among many male special forces commandos.

—They feel what makes them special is being all male, and somehow integrating women is going to make them less special and less adept,‖ said Megan MacKenzie, author of —Beyond the Band of Brothers: the US Military and the Myth that Women Can’t Fight.‖ —A lot of that is based on emotion and a lack of experience working with women.‖ The four services are already taking steps to allow women to serve in all jobs. Service chiefs must submit their implementation plans to Carter by Jan. 1.

Other Items of Interest —

**Need to know, 2016: USAF Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh to retire in summer**


Air Force Times © December 29,

2015 By Jeff Schogol

Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh is expected to retire this summer, marking the end of his four-year tenure. Two likely contenders to replace him are Gen. Lori Robinson, head of Pacific Air Forces, and Gen. Darren McDew, head of U.S. Transportation Command, according to Air Force Times’ sister publication Defense News. Robinson was commissioned in 1982 through the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of New Hampshire, according
to her official biography. She is rated as a senior air battle manager with more than 900 flight hours in the E-3B/C and E-8C. She pinned on her fourth star and took command at PACAF in October 2014........
January 11, 2016 – FDSTF Update

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   - Task Force meeting agenda
   - FDSTF Legislative Tracker
   - Veterans Bills

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**Addressing Excess Capacity Would Help Army’s Dollars Go Further, Halverson Says**


Defense Communities 360 © January 4, 2016 By

Dan Cohen

Congressional authority to shed unneeded facilities, including a new BRAC round, would go a long way toward helping the Army sustain its infrastructure amid tight budget constraints, Lt. Gen. David Halverson, the service’s assistant chief of staff for installation management, told lawmakers last month. —The challenge we have is that we can’t optimize our investments or optimize if we don’t have some authorities to study, like a BRAC, and how we can move forward,‖ Halverson told the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee during a Dec. 3 hearing on the [impact of reducing funding for infrastructure and installation support](http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/addressing-excess-capacity-would-help-armys-dollars-go-further-halverson-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=6595a4639d-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-6595a4639d-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29). Halverson was responding to Rep. Beto O’Rourke (D-Texas), who asked how the Army’s estimate of excess infrastructure would change as its end strength drops……

DOD Budget–

**FY’16 Defense Spending Bill Calls for Reducing Civilian Workforce**


Defense Communities 360 © January 8, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Budget constraints will force the Defense Department to curtail civilian hiring this year as the fiscal 2016 omnibus spending package calls for $250 million in cuts intended to streamline DOD headquarters staffing and improve estimates of how large its civilian workforce should be.
Streamlining will hit the Air Force operations and maintenance workforce the hardest, with lawmakers slashing $110 million from that account. The Defense Information Systems Agency, the Defense Security Service and many other agencies also will need to absorb significant cutbacks in their workforces, reported Federal News Radio. During two Senate Armed Services Committee hearings last fall, experts said DOD is getting less bang for its buck. The joint staff has expanded to more than 4,000 employees, the office of the secretary of Defense to 5,000 and the combatant commands have grown to more than 38,000, said Michèle Flournoy, a former DOD undersecretary for policy……..

**White House to Release FY’17 Budget a Week Late**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/white-house-to-release-fy17-budget-a-week-late/

Defense Communities 360 © January 8, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The White House will release its fiscal 2017 budget request on Tuesday, Feb. 9, eight days later than the statutory deadline. The White House is required to submit its annual budget proposal to Congress by the first Monday in February, which falls on Feb. 1 this year. After repeatedly missing the deadline, the Obama administration met it last year for the first time since 2010, reported CQ Roll Call. The FY 2017 request will be the last of Obama’s presidency. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) still is putting the finishing touches on the budget, Director Shaun Donavan said Thursday via Twitter. Earlier in the week, a Pentagon official said its budget was not yet complete. —The final budget numbers have not been locked and continue to be worked,‖ the official told Politico. The department plans to submit its budget proposal to OMB next week………..

Space Coast –

**SpaceX's Reusable Rocket: The 'Holy Grail' of Space Flight?**

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/air-space/space/2016/01/06/spacexs-reusable-rocket-holy-grail-space-flight/78319782/

Defense News © January 6, 2016

By Lara Seligman

SpaceX's historic landing of a reusable rocket booster sets the stage for a new era in US access to space and likely marks the beginning of the end of the disposable launcher. This extraordinary achievement lays the groundwork for a revolution in the launch services market, analysts contend. SpaceX’s demonstration of a reusable rocket in late December potentially drives down the cost of space launch to unprecedented levels, leaving its competitors scrambling to catch up.
—If this is the beginning of a new era in terms of using reusable rockets more as a rule rather than the exception, then you are potentially revolutionizing the launch services market,” said Marco Caceres, Teal Group director of space studies. On Dec. 21, SpaceX launched a Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral into space. The rocket boosted 11 Orbcomm communications satellites into orbit before turning around and gracefully returning to the ground. The event was widely watched, after two failed attempts earlier this year to land the booster on a barge in the Atlantic Ocean……….

MacDill AFB –

**App to Ease Commutes to MacDill AFB**

[Link](http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/app-to-ease-commutes-to-macdill-afb/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=6595a4639d-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-6595a4639d-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29)

Defense Communities 360 © January 5, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority has launched a smartphone app that could shorten motorists’ lengthy commutes to MacDill Air Force Base and ease traffic congestion in South Tampa. The app provides near real-time data on travel times for primary and alternative routes onto the base, reported the Tampa Tribune. About 15,000 vehicles pass through the base’s four gates every day. The app, which is free to download and use, was designed for MacDill users to provide the wait time from a point almost two miles from the installation to each of its four gates, said authority spokeswoman Susan Chrzan. The authority developed the app as part of a larger study of morning traffic flows headed to MacDill intended to reduce wait times and ease congestion throughout surrounding neighborhoods, Chrzan said. The cost to develop and launch the custom MacDill gate traffic app was about $10,000, with the funds being reallocated from the ongoing traffic study………

**Report: Special Operations Head Next CENTCOM Chief**

[Link](http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/leaders/2016/01/06/votel-special-operations-head-next-centcom-chief/78350550/)

Defense News © January 6, 2016

By Aaron Mehta

President Barack Obama plans to tap Special Operations Command (SOCOM) head Army Gen. Joseph Votel as the next leader for US Central Command (CENTCOM), according to a report in the Wall Street Journal. Votel would replace Gen. Lloyd Austin, who has led CENTCOM since
March 2013. The move represents an early rotation for Votel, who only arrived at SOCOM in mid-2014. As the head of SOCOM, Votel has led the proverbial pointy end of the stick in the fight against the Islamic State group. Special operators are the only known US forces on the ground in Syria and Iraq, and are expected to see an expanded presence over the next year. Special operations have sometimes been seen as off in their own world, but in public statements Votel has called for greater coordination between special and conventional military forces.

**Future of MacDill medical clinic debated**


Tampa Tribune © January 9, 2016

By Howard Altman

Active duty service members, retirees and their dependents have come to rely on the MacDill Air Force Base medical clinic in Brandon, which serves about 18,000 patients a year. But now the 6th Air Mobility Wing, the base host unit, is looking at whether it should replace the clinic or add an additional one in the area. And it is reaching out to local businesses to offer solutions. Late last year, the base put out a request for information for a contractor-owned, contractor-operated medical treatment center in four categories — ranging from about 5,000 beneficiaries to about 20,000 within 15 miles of the 33547 Lithia-area ZIP code. Interested parties have until Friday to respond. The request is not binding, and there is no contract being issued yet.

**Eglin AFB –**

**2015 was a deadly year for local military**


Northwest Florida Daily News © January 1, 2016

By KELLY HUMPHREY

In 2015, flags flew at half-staff far too often in Northwest Florida. The community was hit with an exceptionally high number of military casualties over the past 12 months, starting with the crash of an Army National Guard helicopter in March. The accident killed seven Marines and four National Guard members. The losses continued throughout the year, with August taking a particularly heavy toll. On Aug. 3, Tech. Sgt. Timothy A. Officer and Tech. Sgt. Marty B. Betteyloun of the 720th Operations Support Squadron at Hurlburt Field were injured in a freefall training accident on the Eglin range near Camp James E. Rudder. Both men died from their injuries. On Aug. 8, 1st Sgt. Peter McKenna Jr. of the Army’s 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) was killed in an attack on a NATO Special Forces Base in Kabul, Afghanistan. Just a few weeks later, on Aug. 26, Staff Sgt. Forrest Sibley, a Pensacola native, and Capt. Matthew
Roland, both members of Hurlburt’s 24th Special Operations Wing, died after being ambushed in Afghanistan………..

Eglin a finalist for Commander-in-Chief’s award

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/article/20160106/NEWS/160109697

Northwest Florida Daily News © January 6, 2016

By Kelly Humphrey

The world’s largest Air Force base is in the running for one of the military’s most prestigious awards. Air Force officials recently announced that Eglin is a finalist for the Commander-in-Chief’s 2016 Award for Installation Excellence. The award, nicknamed —The CINC,— recognizes the outstanding and innovative efforts of personnel who operate and maintain American military installations around the world and who have achieved the most with their resources to support their mission. —Each year, one installation from each service branch is selected for this honor,— said Sara Vidoni, a spokesperson for Eglin. —As one of the two finalists, we are competing against Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany for the title and a monetary award of $1 million for base quality of life initiatives.—

Is Agent Orange still a threat to local residents?

Northwest Florida Daily News © January 9, 2016

By KELLY HUMPHREY

More than 45 years after the last Agent Orange spray testing was completed at Eglin Site C-52A, some local residents still wonder about the residual effects of the toxin. Because of the site’s proximity to creeks and other waterways that eventually empty into Choctawhatchee Bay, some have expressed concerns about the possibility of groundwater contamination and other adverse environmental impacts. ………

NAS Jacksonville –

Florida's oldest naval air base halfway done with construction of new runways and more

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection helicopter lifted straight up from its hangar at Jacksonville Naval Air Station, then flew north over the busy runways on a recent Monday headed toward the St. Johns River. But it isn’t aircraft crowding the base’s 8,000- and 6,000-foot-long main runways these days. Instead, dump trucks and backhoes are halfway through a $52 million overhaul of the 75-year-old base’s fixed-wing runways between the river and Roosevelt Boulevard. A reopening is planned for June 26. Begun June 8, the project has seen up to 100 workers and dozens of pieces of equipment tearing up old, then laying down new runways, some dating back to the 1950s. Workers even found buried 70-year-old fuel tanks……..

Runway Overhaul at NAS Jacksonville Remains on Course
http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/runway-overhaul-at-nas-jacksonville-remains-on-course/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=b93e41b7fd-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-b93e41b7fd-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © January 7, 2016

By Dan Cohen

A $52 million project to rebuild the two main runways at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, widen taxiways and improve the airfield is halfway completed and remains on target to be completed in June. The last major overhaul of the runways at the installation, Florida’s oldest naval air station, occurred in 1967, reported the Florida Times-Union. The base opened in 1940. The work also includes demolition of three obsolete hangars from World War II, which will free up space to park the base’s new Boeing P-8A Poseidon aircraft as well as those arriving from other Navy bases for training at NAS Jacksonville. The P-8A reconnaissance aircraft are replacing the Navy’s aging Lockheed P-3 Orions. During the year-long project, the base’s 38 fixed-wing aircraft and 2,000 crews and civilian employees are operating out of Cecil airport, a general aviation airport run by the Jacksonville Aviation Authority……..

NS Mayport –

Former NFL Player Brings Mental Health Awareness to Mayport


Florida Times-Union © January 6, 2016
By MC2 Mark Andrew Hays

Former Heisman Trophy winner and NFL football player Herschel Walker visited Naval Station (NS) Mayport, Dec. 16, to speak with Sailors and their families about his experiences with mental health disorders and seeking help. Walker spoke to Sailors at the Afloat Training Group auditorium about developing dissociative identity disorder and how he overcame it. NS Mayport’s Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) and the Patriot Support Programs of United Health Systems organized the visit to help in reducing the stigma associated with psychological issues that prevent individuals from seeking medical treatment. —FFSC often gives general military training about mental health and treatment options, I said Amie McKague, FFCS counseling and advocacy program manager. —It’s always better for Sailors to hear someone speak who has lived through it and overcome it, and especially someone who has accomplished all that Herschel Walker has. I ……..

Tyndall AFB –

Federal officials conducting assessments at Tyndall AFB for temporary refugee shelter


WJHG © January 7, 2016

Officials with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) sent an email to Bay County regarding the decision of refugees being housed at a local Air Force base. According to HHS, the agency is scheduling assessments of Tyndall and five other Department of Defense (DoD) properties on whether they'll be used as temporary shelters for unaccompanied children entering the U.S. southern border. State lawmakers Don and Matt Gaetz said they're against the action, with Tyndall containing classified information…………..

NAS Pensacola –

CNO, MCPON in Cradle of Naval Aviation to Tour Training Commands, USS Independence


Imperial Valley News © January 6, 2016

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. John Richardson and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Mike Stevens visited commands onboard Naval Air Station Pensacola January
6-7. The visit served to provide the senior leaders an overview of aviation training, as well as an opportunity to tour the littoral combat ship USS Independence (LCS 2). The ship is operating out of the station while the crew conducts operational evaluation and testing of the mine countermeasures mission package. The CNO and MCPON were greeted by Commander Naval Education and Training Command Rear Adm. Mike White, Chief of Naval Air Training, Rear Adm. Dell Bull and NAS Pensacola Commanding Officer Capt. Keith Hoskins. As part of the visit, they saw flight simulators used by student aviators at squadrons under Training Air Wing Six (CTW 6)........

Patrick AFB –

Patrick AFB's AFTAC detects explosion near North Korea


Florida Today © January 6, 2016

By R. Norman Moody

The seismic activity coming out of North Korea that alarmed the world and triggered an emergency United Nations Security Council meeting was detected by experts working right here on the Space Coast. North Korea, which has made no secret of its nuclear ambitions, claims it tested a hydrogen bomb, although there is some international skepticism over whether the test was of such a powerful weapon. "Our sensor system did detect an underground disturbance in the vicinity of the North Korea reported nuclear test," said Susan A. Romano, a spokeswoman for the Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick Air Force Base. "That was based on seismic activity. Further analysis most assuredly will be done." "With regard to the type of explosion, we don't know," she said. "We cannot say the explosion was nuclear in nature. We're not saying it was nuclear at all."........

Defense Industry –

Deloitte: Defence sector to grow 2.7% in 2016, ending decline


Flight Global © January 6, 2016 By

James Drew

A two-year budget deal in the USA coupled with growing global instability could see defence revenues jump by 2.7% in 2016, breaking a five-year decline, according to forecasters at
Deloitte. The sombre security outlook is driving governments worldwide to beef up their militaries, with forecasters noting an increase in demand for munitions and light attack and surveillance aircraft from aerospace manufacturers. The turnaround is driven partly by a $13 billion uptick in US military spending, with Congress approving more than $570 billion for the Department of Defense (DOD) for fiscal 2016. The United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, India, South Korea, Japan, India, China and Russia are also driving growth by investing in next-generation military equipment, according to Deloitte’s 2016 global aerospace and defence outlook, published this week………..

Defense Investors Eye Rising Budgets, Changing Business Strategies

Defense News © January 9, 2016

By Andrew Clevenger

The financial outlook for defense firms is complicated, with growing defense budgets potentially counteracted by outsized growth in other government spending, industry experts said during a two-day defense forum hosted by Bank of America this week. Pierre Chao, the founding partner of Renaissance Strategic Advisors, identified a few notable trends he sees in the industry. First, after years of contraction, the Defense Department’s budget is starting to increase, he said. But it will take time for the increased funds in the Pentagon’s budget to translate into increased revenues for defense firms, he noted………

DOD Issues –

Top Navy admiral releases new plan to stay ahead of rivals at sea and prepare for combat


Washington Post © January 5, 2016

By Dan Lamothe

The Navy’s top officer released a new plan on Tuesday to stay ahead of potential adversaries at sea, saying the service must develop new concepts for fighting alongside the Marine Corps, reorganize two of its largest headquarters and reinvigorate how it trains leaders. Adm. John M. Richardson’s 10-page plan, titled —A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority, l is meant to jump-start the Navy into better preparing for the future, he said in an interview. —Our adversaries are bent on leaving us swirling in their wake,l the document warned. It later added: —Looking forward, it is clear that the challenges the Navy faces are shifting in character, are increasingly
difficult to address in isolation, and are changing more quickly. This will require us to reexamine our approaches in every aspect of our operations. The document sets the tone for Richardson’s expected four-year tenure as chief of naval operations, which began in September. The admiral said he doesn’t see the document as breaking new ground, but as providing guidance that will shape planning in the future……..

**Medals policy overhaul includes new 'C' device for combat**


Military Times © January 8, 2016

By Andrew Tilghman

The Pentagon is fundamentally changing the way it recognizes service in a combat zone by tightening the criteria for awarding the Bronze Star and creating a new —C device that can be pinned to other traditionally noncombat awards. The changes stem from a two-year internal Pentagon review aimed at modernizing the military medals and awards system; the final report includes 37 recommended changes made public Wednesday. —Recognizing valor should be the pre-eminent thing that we do in the Department of Defense … and we weren’t doing that,— said one defense official familiar with the review who spoke on condition of anonymity. The Defense Department will create a —C device to denote an award was earned in a combat setting. It will be the same size and design of the current —V device denoting valor and may be affixed to noncombat performance awards such as commendation or achievement medals……..

**Marine Corps debate over women in combat continues to roil**


Marine Corps Times © January 9, 2016

By Lolita C. Baldor

A top Marine general predicted Friday that the Defense Department's vows to maintain the same standards for women and men in combat jobs won't last, saying the military will eventually be pressured to lower the qualifications so more women can serve in jobs like the Marine infantry.

The public comments by Gen. John Kelly, head of U.S. Southern Command, underscored how strongly the Marines oppose Defense Secretary Ash Carter's order to fully integrate women into
all combat jobs, including the Marine Corps and special operations forces like Navy SEALs and Army Green Berets. A new, high-level disagreement is erupting over whether the Marine Corps must also fully integrate its 12-week recruit training program at Parris Island in South Carolina……..

Other Items of Interest –

**Do U.S. military commands really need reorganizing?**


Brookings © January 5, 2016

By Michael O’Hanlon

In recent weeks, the basic question of how the Pentagon organizes itself for overseas operations has gained new attention. Thanks are due largely to Senator John McCain, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, who has held a number of hearings on the subject and seems bent on pushing the issue in 2016. The new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford, has also expressed interest in reform. Some modest changes are likely in order, perhaps most of all in the cyber domain. Dunford's idea to streamline his own joint staff, housed in the Pentagon, also makes sense. But in an era when the government has been seemingly reorganizing itself to deal with every new problem, most notably with intelligence and homeland security, we need to avoid change for change's sake……..

**Air Force Plans to Shave Civilian Workforce**

The Air Force could be forced to lay off hundreds of civilian employees this year to meet funding targets and rebalance its civilian workforce, officials said Wednesday. Officials last year identified —more than 1,000 civilian overages— across 48 installations going into fiscal 2016, according to a press release. As a result, —some Air Force installations will implement civilian reduction in force (RIF) authorities effective through April 4. —Having the RIF authorities will assist in the placement of employees not assigned against funded positions and allow greater flexibilities for employees to be placed at their installations while retaining their grade or pay,‖ the release stated. Officials will attempt to reassign civilians to other positions, with the remaining employees eligible for future vacancies…….

**Legislation Would Create Military Affairs Commission in Nebraska**


A bill introduced this week in the Nebraska Legislature would establish a state Military and Veterans Commission in a move intended to strengthen Offutt Air Force Base in the face of a looming BRAC round. Most significantly, the measure would create a point person for all military matters in Nebraska, said state Sen. Sue Crawford, whose district includes Offutt. —The Military and Veterans Commission would streamline our efforts to both protect and grow military assets and missions,‖ Crawford said in a news release. —By having a point of contact in place and active participation from relevant government agencies, elected officials, county officials, local business leaders and active duty or retired military officials, we can be more proactive with our state’s military interests,‖ Crawford said. Jeff Mikesell, senior military liaison for the Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership, echoed the importance of creating a point person for military affairs…….
Can you feel the strain? The Army wants more troops. The Air Force wants more money and newer planes. The Navy wants more ships and is battling over what to do with the fleet it has. And the Marines — well the Corps isn’t sure what comes next, but they’re staying in the fight. Spend big, fight small. Be ready to roll everywhere, but stay out of a big war anywhere. Destroy the Islamic State, check down Russia and China, prepare for nuclear war, buy long-range bombers, defend cyber networks and satellites, patrol the seas, and expand covert special ops missions to capture and kill Islamic State leaders. And while you’re at it, modernize the workforce, open up to women, honor commitments to families, and do a better job connecting with the ………

Navy Bases Falling behind Growing Maintenance Workload, Senior Officials Say

Navy installations are experiencing a growing backlog of maintenance needs as budget constraints over the past several years have forced the service to allocate funding to higher priorities, officials told the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee on Friday. Critical requirements are being funded, but other jobs are being deferred, Vice Adm. Dixon Smith, commander of Navy Installations Command, told the panel. —Where we are today is holding,— Smith said, reported the Daily Press. Capt. Louis Schager, commanding officer at Naval Air Station Oceana, described a litany of deferred maintenance tasks at the Navy’s East Coast master jet base in Virginia Beach, Va………
January 19, 2016 – FDSTF Update

TF members --

1. **Next Task Force This Week** – The next meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, January 21, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM at the Doubletree by Hilton – 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee FL.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Number -- Open Session -- 800-501-8979** Access code: 8784566

3. **BRAC Information Paper** – In accordance with the direction of the Task Force, staff prepared an information paper on BRAC and distributed it to the members of the Florida Legislature. The paper was coordinated with The Principi Group and approved by the Chairman. Copy is attached.

4. **Attachments:**
   - Task Force meeting agenda
   - FDSTF Legislative Tracker
   - Veterans Bills
   - BRAC Information Paper for Florida Legislators
   - Veterans Florida Grants Announcement

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

**HASC chair: The military needs more money, not less**


Military Times © January 14, 2016

By Leo Shane III

The head of the House Armed Services Committee doesn’t think the military has enough money. Just hours after President Obama argued for military funding restraint in his final State of the Union address, Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, pushed back against the suggestion that the armed forces are fully funded to meet national security demands. —Military strength requires both quantity and quality of capability, he said at a news event at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday. —The Obama administration argues that a ship today is more capable than one twenty years ago. Generally, that is true, but a ship can still only be at one place at a time……..

**HASC Chair Adds Pressure To Raise War Budget**


Defense News © January 16, 2016

By Joe Gould

Weeks ahead of President Obama’s budget submission to Congress, House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry is already putting pressure on the White House, suggesting a looming fight in Congress to increase defense spending. Thornberry, in a Jan. 13 speech at the National Press Club in Washington, said funding in the two-year bipartisan budget agreement needs to be adjusted to reflect increased threats against the US. He rejected Obama’s State of the Union message that talk of America’s enemies getting stronger and the US growing weaker is —baloney —Military strength requires both quantity and quality of capability, Thornberry said. —The Obama administration argues that a ship today is more capable than one 20 years ago. Generally, that is true, but a ship can still only be at one place at a time.]
Defense secretary Carter visiting MacDill on Thursday


Tampa Tribun © January 11, 2016

MacDill Air Force Base will be busier than usual Thursday. That’s because Defense Secretary Ash Carter will visit to meet with leaders from U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations command about the administration’s plan for the campaign in Iraq and Syria to counter the Sunni jihadi group calling itself Islamic State — and ensure the safety of the American people, according to the White House blog. Centcom oversees U.S. military operations in those two nations, as well as 18 others in the Middle East. Socom provides fully trained and equipped commandos and synchronizes the global war on terror.

MacDill AFB on short list to get KC-46 tankers by 2020, Castor says


Tampa Tribun © January 14, 2016

MacDill Air Force Base could be the home of 36 new KC-46 air-refueling tankers within four years. The Tampa base is on a short list to be considered for the next round of base selection for the aircraft, and a decision could come by the end of the year, U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor, D-Tampa, said in a news release. MacDill was rejected in 2013 for the first wave of KC-46s despite nearly a year of lobbying by a group of MacDill, civic and local government leaders, including Castor, whose District 14 includes the base. Making the cut for the next-generation tankers in 2020 shows how hard that community has worked to demonstrate that the base has room to grow as the Air Force — modernizes its mission structure, Castor said.

US Army Gen. Joseph Votel Officially Named as CENTCOM Nominee

Army Gen. Joseph Votel has officially been named as the next nominee for US Central Command (CENTCOM). Secretary of Defense Ash Carter made the announcement Thursday during a speech in Tampa, Florida. If approved by the Senate, Votel would succeed Gen. Lloyd Austin as the leader of the military command leading the fight against the Islamic State group, commonly known as ISIS. Votel has led Special Operations Command (SOCOM) since mid-2014. The role of SOCOM in the fight against the Islamic State group has grown steadily since the fight in Syria and Iraq began, giving Votel a strong knowledge base of the situation on the ground. —His experience in the Middle East region will serve him well,— Carter said of Votel during his introductory comments.

Eleven installations are in the running to host the KC-46 air refueling tanker in the Air Force’s next round of selection, lawmakers said last week. The installations, according to a release from Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.), are Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J.; Dover AFB, Del.; Dyess AFB, Texas; Fairchild AFB, Wash.; Grand Forks AFB, N.D.; Joint Base Charleston, S.C.; Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.; Little Rock AFB, Ark.; MacDill AFB, Fla.; Scott AFB, Ill.; and Travis AFB, Calif. The Air Force will narrow the list of approved candidates in the spring and likely will make a final basing decision by the end of the year, said Jeff Sagnip, a spokesman for Smith. Boeing is manufacturing the next generation aerial refueling tankers.

Eglin AFB –

Test team aims at new machine gun for Pave Hawk

By Rebecca Amber

Arriving in the rain, an HH-60G Pave Hawk landed Jan. 5 at Edwards Air Force Base to begin testing the ballistic dispersion of a GAU-21 .50-caliber machine gun. The Pave Hawk will be at Edwards AFB until Jan. 22 where the 412th Test Wing and 418th Flight Test Squadron are providing the facilities, range safety, photographic documentation and maintenance support equipment. The 96th TW at Eglin AFB, Florida, and the 412th TW partnered up to provide Detachment 1, 413th FLTS from Nellis AFB, Nevada, a location for their test team to accomplish baseline ballistics testing. That location is Edwards AFB's Gun Harmonizing Range. The testing is part of the Air Combat Command's HH-60 defensive weapons system upgrade modification proposal. The modification proposal requires the new weapon to be an open bolt system, have a longer barrel life, a higher cyclic rate of fire, be lighter weight, and have reduced recoil. The selected weapon must also be used currently by other Defense Department services………

Air Force Struggling to Keep up with Failing Facilities

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/air-force-struggling-to-keep-up-with-failing-facilities/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=408e343b41-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-408e343b41-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © January 15, 2016

By Dan Cohen

This year’s budget should prevent any further deterioration in the Air Force’s facilities, but it likely won’t make much of a dent in the service’s expanding backlog of deferred maintenance items that now stands at $22.6 billion, senior installation officials told the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee on Wednesday. For now, officials are doing as much preventive maintenance as they can, but are mostly —waiting for things to break—and responding to emergencies, reports Federal News Radio. In short, the Air Force finds itself in the same dire straits as the other services following three years of stringent budget constraints. At some point in the near future the service won’t have the resources to keep up with emergency repairs, which are far more costly than preventive ones, Brig. Gen. Christopher Azzano, commander of the 96th Test Wing within Air Force Materiel Command, told lawmakers………

US Southern Command –

Tidd takes control of US Southern Command as Kelly retires
Navy Adm. Kurt W. Tidd took over the U.S. Southern Command on Thursday morning, as its outgoing leader Marine Gen. John F. Kelly prepares to retire following more than four decades in uniform. Tidd, a 1978 Naval Academy Graduate who has most recently worked alongside Secretary of State John Kerry as the assistant to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, assumed control of the combatant command that oversees U.S. military operations in South and Central America and the Caribbean. SOUTHCOM largely faces issues such as drug trafficking, narcoterrorism and providing humanitarian and disaster relief. It also oversees the United States’ controversial detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

NS Mayport –

BAE plans to lay off 300 at Jacksonville shipyards

Up to 300 BAE Systems employees who work at the company's Jacksonville shipyards could be out of jobs in March as part of its plan to scale back its workforce to meet a shrinking workload, the company announced Tuesday. The company, which cut its workforce by 100 last fall, expects to lay off hundreds of employees by March 18 due to a sagging demand for commercial and military shipbuilding and repair services in North Florida. BAE currently employs 700 people at its Heckscher Drive facility and at Naval Station Mayport. The news comes on the heels of a memo from Secretary of Defense Ash Carter ordering the Navy to buy fewer ships, including Littoral Combat Ships, than previously planned. An original plan to buy 52 new ships has been trimmed to just 40 ships. Eight of the ships cut under Carter's proposal would be littoral ships.

Mayport Has First LCS Crew

Littoral Combat Ship Crew 109’s commissioning ceremony was held on Jan. 8 and marks the first LCS Crew commissioning ceremony for Naval Station Mayport. The ceremony opened with the announcement of the newly commissioned crew and its plans for the future. Crew 109 became qualified through various trainings and schools throughout the United States to prepare for its duties as a rotational crew. —The crew has completed all the training and certifications necessary and now they are looking forward to what 2016 has in store with the delivery,
commissioning and sail away of USS Little Rock (LCS 9), said Cmdr. Paul Burkhart, commanding officer of Crew 109. Cmdr. Todd Peters, executive officer of Crew 109, said he is very excited about the new adventures that Crew 109 is about to face. —Today, we live in an uncertain world, where conflict and crisis can arise at any time, Peters said. —We must always plan for the unknown and be ready to respond accordingly. I know our crew will put warfighting first and will always be ready.

Tyndall AFB –

**HHS Reviewing Six Bases to House Unaccompanied Minors**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/hhs-reviewing-six-bases-to-house-unaccompanied-minors/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=5092ab972a-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-5092ab972a-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © January 19, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is conducting site assessments at six military installations to potentially house unaccompanied children to accommodate the latest surge of undocumented children illegally crossing into the United States through the Mexican border, defense officials have told lawmakers. In an email to Rep. Martha Roby (R-Ala.), Matthew Rhoades, policy chief for DOD’s office of legislative affairs, said HHS will assess the viability of the following bases for use as a temporary shelter for unaccompanied children:

- Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base (Gunter Annex), Ala.
- Tyndall AFB, Fla.
- Grand Forks AFB, N.D.
- Hanscom AFB, Mass.
- Travis AFB, Calif.

Defense Industry –

**Meet the Air Force’s New Acquisition System**

http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2016/01/meet-air-forces-new-acquisition-system/125102/

Defense One © January 13, 2016

By Deborah Lee James

We’re creating a new way of developing, building and buying that works better for the service and the defense industry. Here’s how. The U.S. Air Force simply can’t afford to continue business as usual and expect to maintain air, space, and cyberspace superiority. That’s why one year ago, I launched a series of new activities designed to reduce cost and acquisition times
while increasing innovation under the Air Force’s Bending the Cost Curve initiative, or BTCC. By dedicating ourselves to partnering with the defense industry, taking bold actions within the Air Force, and continually measuring results, we are leading the way in creating a 21st Century acquisition system that truly fosters innovation and harnesses the full potential of American ingenuity. While there is still much work to be done, we’ve made a lot of progress in the last year. So, now is a great time to review what we’ve accomplished, discuss what hasn’t worked, and chart a course for the future………

DOD Issues –

**Report: A-10 retirement indefinitely delayed**


Air Force Times © January 13, 2016

As predicted by Air Combat Command commander Gen. Hawk Carlisle in November, the Air Force is indefinitely freezing all plans to retire the A-10 Warthog, a warplane many officials, airmen and congressional members have rallied behind since the announcement of its withdrawal from the battlefield. Service officials next month will lay out their new request when the Pentagon submits its fiscal 2017 budget request to Congress, DefenseOne reports. The Air Force in a statement told Air Force Times Wednesday they could not discuss the budget request until it is presented to Congress. —It appears the administration is finally coming to its senses and recognizing the importance of A-10s to our troops’ lives and national security," Rep. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., said in a statement Wednesday in response to the news reports. McSally is a retired colonel who served 26 years in the Air Force and was the first female pilot to fly in combat……..

**U.S. military may expand ISIS fight beyond Iraq and Syria**


Military Times © January 13, 2016

By Andrew Tilghman

Defense Secretary Ash Carter signaled Wednesday that the U.S. military will expand efforts to target Islamic State militants beyond the group's territory in Iraq and Syria, potentially involving airstrikes and raids in other Islamic countries. —The threat posed by ISIL, and groups like it, is continually evolving, changing focus and shifting location,‖ Carter said, using an alternative acronym for the Islamic State group. —That’s why the Defense Department is organizing a new way to leverage the security infrastructure we’ve already established in Afghanistan, the Middle East, East Africa, and southern Europe into a network to counter transnational and transregional threats like ISIL,‖ Carter said………..
Carter’s LCS Cut: Second Thoughts At OSD

http://breakingdefense.com/2016/01/carters-lcs-cut-second-thoughts-at-osd/


By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter’s decision to curtail the controversial Littoral Combat Ship program may not be the last word, according to several well informed sources. Those sources independently told Breaking Defense that the Office of the Secretary of Defense is divided over the decision cut LCS from 52 ships to 40. So is the Navy, which has had pro- and anti-LCS factions since the beginning. My sources all have close ties to the Navy, so there may be some wishful thinking at work, but they tell a consistent story. Last month’s memo bypassed much of the usual vetting on its way to Secretary Ash Carter’s desk. Two of them traced the memo to hardline LCS critics in the powerful Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE)……...

Other Items of Interest –

LCS Work Steady Until Mid-2020s Despite Program Cut: Lockheed


DOD Buzz © January 11, 2016

Defense contracting giant Lockheed Martin Corp. will be producing littoral combat ships for the U.S. Navy until the mid-2020s regardless of a recent order from Defense Secretary Ashton Carter to reduce the planned quantity of ships, according to the company’s LCS program vice president Joe North. North declined to speculate what the long-term impact of a reduced ship buy would be, noting that budgets had not been finalized and the Navy and Defense Department continued to negotiate about how many of the vessels the service needs. —Less ships is definitely not as good as more ships,‖ North said during a briefing with reporters. Carter’s Dec. 14 memo chastised the Navy for overemphasizing shipbuilding while causing — unacceptable reductions to other war-fighting assets including fighter aircraft and missiles. He told the service to reduce the number of LCS and frigates it planned to buy from 52 to 40 and to select one builder and variant……

DOD’s Path to Net Zero Remains Hazy, GAO Finds

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/energy/dods-path-to-net-zero-remains-hazy-gao-finds/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=2fe27c7c20-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-2fe27c7c20-55784537&ct=%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © January 13, 2016

By Dan Cohen
Fully achieving net zero status at DOD installations — reducing the consumption of energy, water and waste resources to an effective rate of zero — is unrealistic and ultimately cost prohibitive, service officials told the Government Accountability Office (GAO), according to a new report from the congressional watchdog agency. The department has not fully identified the potential costs of implementing net zero initiatives, the agency found. The only spending dedicated to net zero initiatives involved studies to establish baselines and assess the feasibility and costs of net zero at various installations. The Army reported spending $14.2 million on net zero studies from fiscal 2011-2013; the Navy reported spending about $2.6 million on studies; and the Air Force spent almost $80,000 on an implementation plan in 2012......

Military Bases No Longer Accepting IDs from Five States


by Amy Bushatz

U.S. military installations are no longer allowing visitors to gain base access using official ID cards from five states -- and other installations may soon follow. State-issued driver's licenses and identification cards from Illinois, New Mexico, Missouri, Washington and Minnesota can no longer be used to obtain a visitor’s pass because those cards don’t comply with federal standards, officials said. DoD officials did not say whether or not enhanced driver's licenses from Minnesota or Washington would still be accepted. Guidance has already been issued by such installations as Fort Bragg in North Carolina, White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, Fort Drum in New York, Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri and Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. "Effective immediately, residents of these five states can no longer use their driver’s license to get a visitor’s pass," Tom McCollum, a Fort Bragg spokesman said in a release today. "Driver's licenses and identification cards issued by these states cannot be used to access not just Fort Bragg, but all federal facilities, to include other military installations."........

CNO Richardson Addresses Criticism that Navy Is 'Unbalanced'

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=7e996cd7-cbb4-4018-baf8-8825eada7aa2&ID=2058&RootFolder=%2Fblog%2FLists%2FPosts

By Allyson Versprille

The Navy should not have to choose between more presence and more lethality, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson told reporters Jan. 12. In order for the service to fight to the best of its ability there should be an equal balance between presence, posture, capability and capacity, he said. The service shouldn't have to choose, he added. It is my responsibility to deliver the Navy that is most in balance. … I'm kind of deflecting anyone who wants to take me down a rabbit hole where it's an either/or type of decision. It's both/and" when it comes to those
four aspects, he said following his keynote address at the 2016 Surface Navy Association Symposium. "Does the needle move from budget cycle to budget cycle?" he asked. "Certainly, but on the whole we want to keep that needle balanced." ...........
TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Conference Call/Webex  February 18, 2016** – The next conference call/webex of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, February 18, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM.

2. **Meeting Call In Number and Access Code** --  **Call In Number: 800-501-8979  Access code: 8784566**

3. **Attachments:**
   - FDSTF Legislative Tracker
   - Veterans Bills
   - Veterans Credentialing Program

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget—

**Congress Must Kill Sequester To Pay For Pacific Pivot: CSIS**


By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

If the United States is serious about __rebalancing__ to Asia, it needs to invest some **serious cash**. Strategic small change won’t __deter China__ or reassure our **increasingly anxious allies**, says a **new report** from the influential Center for Strategic & International Studies. And that means the CSIS study’s sponsor — Congress — must get its act together and get rid of the Budget Control Act, aka sequester. —During interviews with officials in foreign capitals, CSIS scholars consistently encountered concerns about long-term U.S. strategic choices...particularly with respect to China, l says the report. —Chinese and North Korean actions are routinely challenging the credibility of U.S. security commitments, and at the current rate of U.S. capability development, the balance of military power in the region is shifting against the United States. In particular, the study says, there are __alarming vulnerabilities in US satellites__ and __clear and worrying gaps in electronic warfare__. ........

**Air Force Facing Budgetary Train Wreck**

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/archive/2016/February/Pages/AirForceFacingBudgetaryTrainWreck.aspx

By Jon Harper

Absent a major increase in topline funding, the Air Force acquisition budget will experience a crunch in the 2020s, analysts said. The service is projected to spend more than $67 billion in fiscal years 2016 through 2020 on its top three priorities — the F-35 joint strike fighter, KC-46 tanker and long-range strike bomber — as well as C-130 cargo aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles, according to the Congressional Research Service. Budget plans for this period also include initial funding for: joint surveillance target attack radar system recapitalization; a new combat rescue helicopter; a presidential aircraft replacement; and a new advanced T-X trainer aircraft. These programs, if carried to fruition, are all likely to be in the procurement stage in the 2020s. The Air Force is therefore facing a modernization — bow wavel unless plans are modified, budget experts said.........
Eglin AFB –

This Is The Most Important Technology On the F-35

http://www.defenseone.com/technology/2016/01/most-important-technology-f-35/125228/

Defense One © January 19, 2016

By Patrick Tucker

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the most expensive weapons program ever, won’t justify its price tag by outmaneuvering other jets (it can’t), flying particularly fast, or even by carrying munitions in a stealthy bomb bay. Instead, the U.S. military is banking on an emerging technology called cognitive electronic warfare to give the jet an almost-living ability to sniff out new hard-to-detect air defenses and invent ways to foil them on the fly. While the specifics of the jet’s electronic warfare, or EW, package remain opaque, scientists, program watchers and military leaders close to the program say it will be key to the jet’s evolution and its survival against the future’s most advanced airplane-killing technology. In short, cognitive EW is the most important feature on the world’s most sophisticated warplane……….

DoD Weapons Tester Concerned about F-35 Software Development


By Lara Seligman

Although the Joint Program Office maintains the F-35 program remains on track, the Pentagon’s top weapons tester recently raised concerns that the fifth-generation fighter jet’s software development could fall behind. In a Dec. 11 memo, Michael Gilmore, the Defense Department’s director of operational test and evaluation, described as being —not realistic! the JPO’s current plan to finish work on the F-35’s Block 3F software — the final software block required for full warfighting capability — by July 31, 2017. Rushing the testing schedule and weapons deliveries in order to meet this deadline —constitutes a very high risk of failing! Initial Operational Test and Evaluation — the final phase of testing before a full-rate production decision, Gilmore said……….

Despite Decades of Stealth, Sticking Points Bedevil F-35 Jet


By CLYDE HABERMAN

For decades the United States has been on a quest to perfect stealth technology, but development of the F-35 fighter jet shows just how complicated dreams can become………

Hurlburt Field –

**Air Force will fly Osprey here for public event on Feb. 4**

[http://www.jcfloridan.com/news/local/article_f89d38f0-c156-11e5-8800-8fa4d8ae8e09.html](http://www.jcfloridan.com/news/local/article_f89d38f0-c156-11e5-8800-8fa4d8ae8e09.html)

Jackson County Floridan © January 22, 2016

By Deborah Buckhalter / Jackson County Floridan

The U.S. Air Force will host a public event at the Marianna Municipal Airport on Thursday, Feb. 4, showcasing a CV-22 Osprey aircraft that will fly in from Hurlburt Field in Okaloosa County. The pilot and others from the USAF base are expected to speak, and members of the public may be allowed to tour the inside of the Osprey. Maggie McCardle manages the MMA for Skywarrior Flight Support, the company that has run the facility for the city since June of 2014. McCardle said the Feb. 4 presentation is meant to familiarize the local community with the craft, noting that it’s her understanding that the noise associated with the craft had led to complaints in years past and a request that the Air Force find other places to refuel the craft. She stopped short of calling it a sound-ban, but said her company is seeking a turn-around in public perception and a more welcoming atmosphere for the Osprey in the local community………

DOD Issues –

**Pentagon chief: Number of U.S. troops deployed to Iraq likely to increase**


Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter said Tuesday that the number of U.S. troops deployed to Iraq will likely increase, citing the recent success in taking the city of Ramadi back from the Islamic State and a need to train more Iraqi military and police units as the campaign against the militants expands. Carter said that the additional U.S. troops would be part of a larger force of military advisers that also could include more troops from countries whose defense ministers he will meet with here Wednesday. Ministers from France, Britain, Australia, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands are gathering in Paris to discuss how the military campaign in Iraq and Syria should evolve………

**Navy’s Dilemma: What Kind Of Presence?**


By **Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.**

—I guess I’m going to have to attack your question on almost every aspect,‖ Adm. John Richardson told me. As an analyst, it’s unnerving to have the Navy’s top admiral tell you to your face, albeit politely, that you’re just plain wrong. (I’d politely disagree, though I did miss some important nuances in an earlier story). I had asked the Chief of Naval Operations about the service’s shift in emphasis from providing global presence in peacetime to preparing for high-end warfare. He countered that there really wasn’t a fundamental shift. Indeed, after a harsh memo from Defense Secretary Ash Carter told the Navy it was spending too little on powerful warships and too much on smaller ships for presence, Navy leaders are at pains to emphasize that presence still matters — none more than Secretary Ray Mabus………

**Defense Secretary Ash Carter's historic personnel changes irk generals**


USA Today © December 27, 2015

By **Tom Vanden Brook**

Women in the infantry. Transgender troops. 401(k)s for soldiers. The Pentagon in 2015 witnessed some of the most significant changes to its policies on who fights and how they're compensated since the draft ended in 1973. The changes pushed by Ash Carter, who took office in February, make him "the most consequential secretary of Defense in 40 years," according to a
top deputy. Analysts and critics agree the changes are monumental but note that they remain deeply unpopular among senior uniformed officers. The coming year promises more upheaval as women seek to qualify for combat and elite special operations and the military deals with a burgeoning problem with recruiting. Also expected for 2016: An overhaul of the mechanism for awarding medals that could include commendations for drone pilots……..

**Many Ships = Few Wars: The Case For A Big Fleet**

http://breakingdefense.com/2016/01/many-ships-few-wars-the-case-for-a-big-fleet/

Breaking Defense © January 22, 2016

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

Think of international conflicts as earthquakes. Many little ones are better than one—Big One—a global war. Social science suggests that the more often two rival powers interact, the more likely they are to resolve their differences through many small, manageable conflicts rather than one violent conflagration. That makes naval presence worldwide a very desirable capability, two US Navy officers write in a recent paper. It takes lots of ships to create a track record of standing firm in the face of provocations such as China’s assertive moves versus ships, aircraft, and shoals in the South China Sea. It takes lots of ships to have lots of interactions where rival powers can test each other in low-stakes settings and thus lower the risk of one big war. The problem is, we don’t have lots of ships anymore……..

Other Items of Interest —

**Colorado Springs group trying to get ahead of looming military base closures**

http://gazette.com/colorado-springs-group-trying-to-get-ahead-of-loomi...article/1568060

Colorado Springs Gazette © January 19, 2016

By Tom Roeder

The next round of base closures is at least two years away, but local military boosters are ramping up efforts to protect local installations and move more troops to town. The push has its origins in the Colorado Springs Regional Business Alliance's 2015 efforts to protect Fort Carson from cuts, but leaders say it will be more sophisticated than the postcard campaign that turned heads at the Pentagon. "We want Colorado Springs to pop up in conversations with the leaders," said Andy Merritt, who heads military programs for the business alliance. Getting that to happen means hitting the road. Merritt is pulling together a team of local base-boosters to travel to military trade shows and conventions, including the Association of Defense Communities in Charleston, S.C., in late February……..

**USAF faces cost conundrum with F-35, KC-46 and LRS-B**

In 1986 during the so-called Reagan Build-up, $12 billion delivered 387 new combat aircraft to the US military. Today, that amount buys fewer than 80. As the secretary of the air force has put it many times, the US military is on the losing side of the cost curve – with few aircraft coming in, and cuts, cuts and more cuts just to pay the bills. In terms of aircraft, USAF is smaller today than at any point since it split from the army in 1947. And although an F-35 armed with modern, precision-guided weapons is far superior to the fighters of the 1980s, USAF officials contend that the number of airframes still remains important. This month marks the 25th anniversary of Operation Desert Storm – arguably the greatest display of combat airpower in history. Now, the air branch is reminiscing about how mighty it once was.

**DoD bases no longer accepting driver's licenses from 5 states as ID**


Fox News © January 21, 2016

Defense Department bases no longer will accept driver’s licenses from five states as proof of ID -- a consequence of the implementation of a controversial post-9/11 law. The decision, which affects residents of Minnesota, Illinois, Missouri, New Mexico and Washington, was announced Wednesday. Residents from those five states, going forward, will need another form of ID such as a passport to enter. The move marks one of the first big changes after the government started to implement a 2005 security law known as the REAL ID Act. The legislation was meant to tighten standards for government-issued IDs – like driver’s licenses – and banned federal agencies from accepting IDs that don’t measure up. Washington D.C. delayed full implementation for years, but the Department of Homeland Security is now pressuring states into compliance. Currently, DHS is only enforcing the legislation for access to military bases, most federal facilities and nuclear power plants -- but will eventually extend the ID requirements for air travel as well. Only 23 states are in compliance with the law, but many others have been granted exemptions until later this year.

**We’re Long Overdue for Due Diligence in Defense**

[http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2016/01/were-long-overdue-due-diligence-defense/125353/](http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2016/01/were-long-overdue-due-diligence-defense/125353/)

Defense One © January 23, 2016

By Douglas Macgregor

Defense Secretary Carter deserves applause for cutting the Navy’s LCS, and encouragement to think more broadly. In business, —due diligence— is the belief that a thorough investigation allows a buyer to make better decisions. President Eisenhower was an —informed buyer.‖ He
cancelled weapons he discovered would be obsolete before they were fielded. He rejected unfocused spending on defense as a substitute for sound strategy. Eisenhower’s due diligence also predisposed him to avoid foreign interventions because they could escalate and involve Americans in conflicts that would sap U.S. strength and strategic power. These days, due diligence in defense is rare. That’s why whenever reason trumps the combined power of special-interest money and bureaucratic parochialism Americans should take notice………

**Delegation Says Joint Base Well-Positioned to Host Next Generation of Air Refueling Tankers**


U.S. Sens. Bob Menendez and Cory Booker (both D-N.J.) joined members of the New Jersey congressional delegation working to preserve and expand operations at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst today to announce that the U.S. Air Force has begun its process to select the home base for the next generation of air refueling tankers, the KC-46A. The senators, Congressmen Rodney Frelinghuysen (N.J.-11th), Donald Norcross (N.J.-1st) and Tom MacArthur (N.J.-3rd) say JBMDL is well-positioned to be chosen from among the 10 military bases in consideration to house the operations. The Air Force is moving forward with a replacement plan for its aging fleet of air refueling tankers, and recently notified Congress of its selection criteria for the next basing round for the KC-46A………

**How the US Department of Defense coordinates operations around the world**


Business Insider © January 23, 2016

By Alex Lockie

The US military has a truly global reach, with a presence on every continent. To carry out the herculean task of promoting US interests around the world, the Department of Defense divides the globe into six areas of responsibility and three non-geographic commands. Through these nine commands, the military monitors the entire planet every minute of every day, every day of the year………
TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Conference Call/Webex  February 18, 2016** – The next conference call/webex of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, February 18, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM. More information for Task Force members on the webex to follow.

2. **Meeting Call In Number and Access Code --**  
   - **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   - **Access code:** 8784566

3. **Attachments:**
   - FDSTF Legislative Tracker
   - Veterans Bills
   - Veterans Credentialing Program
   - New EFI Marketing Video – [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/thefutureishere/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/thefutureishere/)
   - Notes from bi-weekly TPG conference call

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

**Pentagon in open brawl over spending priorities**


Politico © January 26, 2016

By Austin Wright

A brawl has broken out at the top rungs of the Pentagon over how to prepare the military for long-term threats, in a rare public fight that pits leaders of the military branches against Defense Secretary Ash Carter. Carter wants to use the Pentagon’s upcoming, approximately $580 billion budget request to solidify the Obama administration’s goals of investing in more advanced weapons such as next-generation fighters and submarines, and high-demand skills such as cyber warfare. But he is butting heads with the Navy’s leadership and facing open skepticism from the man in line to be Army secretary, who have disagreed with their boss in recent days over key aspects of the administration’s plans. One admiral even mocked critics of a warship program that Carter is trying to scale back. Carter is getting pushback from multiple quarters.

Space Coast –

**U.S. needs to defend space assets, Pentagon space expert says**


Air Force Times © January 29, 2016

By Phillip Swarts

The United States needs to recognize that space is no longer a benign environment, and should take more steps to protect its critical infrastructure, one of the Pentagon’s leading space experts said Friday. —We have put together an architecture which accomplishes missions very efficiently, but it will not have the capability to protect itself and be resilient in the face of threat,‖ said Winston Beauchamp, the deputy undersecretary of the Air Force for space.
MacDill AFB –

**KC-46A tanker passes test as Tampa works to land it for MacDill AFB**


Tampa Tribune © January 28, 2016

By Howard Altman

A new Air Force refueling tanker passed a key test on the long road to delivery just as Tampa officials are gearing up to compete for as many as three dozen of the KC-46A Pegasus jets for MacDill Air Force Base. The jets, along with additional personnel and construction jobs to prepare the base, could mean tens of millions of dollars to the local economy, said U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor, who has been leading the charge to bring Pegasus to Tampa. MacDill is already home to 16 KC-135 Stratotanker refueling jets, which first rolled off the assembly lines when Dwight Eisenhower called the White House home. Another eight jets from bases receiving the first wave of new tankers are expected at MacDill beginning in two years. The Stratotankers are flown by the 6th Air Mobility Wing, MacDill’s host unit, and the 927th Air Refueling Wing, an Air Force Reserve unit……..

Eglin AFB –

**F-35 software overrun with bugs, DoD testing chief warns**


ARS Technica © January 28, 2016

by Sean Gallagher

The F-35's flight plan appears to have delays written all over it. A previously unreleased memo from Michael Gilmore, the Department of Defense's director for Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E), details a list of problems that will likely hold up the testing of the final configuration of the aircraft—and will mean the "Block 2B" aircraft now being delivered to the Marine Corps soon will continue to be full of software bugs for years to come. But officials with the F-35's
Joint Program Office (JPO) have downplayed the seriousness of Gilmore's concerns, with one military member of the office taking to the Facebook page of a defense publication to call the memo "whining."………

Hurlburt Field –

823rd RED HORSE support OTS mission


By Airman 1st Class Alexa Culbert

42d Air Base Wing Public Affairs

The 823rd Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineer (RED HORSE) from Hurlburt Field, Florida, supports Officer Training School in the construction of new facilities at Vigilant Warrior, a 200 acre expeditionary training site near Titus, Alabama. The RED HORSE squadrons are the Air Force's heavy construction units that travel from base to base in the United States as well as overseas locations. The 823rd RED HORSE squadron is currently constructing a new latrine facility, K-Span building, arched steel panel buildings, and lodging facilities to house and support cadets passing through for training. "What we're doing is upgrading the facility here for a higher capacity of trainees to come through," said Airman 1st Class Shane Landon, 823rd RED HORSE constructor………

US Southern Command –

Leaders from 18 nations, SOUTHCOM meet in Jamaica to discuss Caribbean security

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/187375/leaders-18-nations-southcom-meet-jamaica-discuss-caribbean-security#.Vqu3vuZyTIw
DVIDS © January 28, 2016

Drawn by an interest in addressing regional threats of mutual concern, delegations from 18 nations met in Kingston, Jamaica, Jan. 26-29, 2016, for talks on security cooperation capacity building in the Caribbean. More than 100 leaders and experts in defense, government, law enforcement, and emergency management took part in the 14th Caribbean Nations Security Conference (CANSEC XIV), where they examined known challenges to regional stability and discussed the policies, strategies, initiatives, mechanisms and capabilities that support regional collaboration and shared security goals. The annual conference was co-hosted by Maj. Gen. Antony Bertram Anderson, Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) Chief of Defence Staff, and U.S. Navy
Adm. Kurt Tidd, commander of U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), who briefly addressed attendees during a short opening ceremony.

U.S. military willing to cooperate with Cuba in regional security


Citizen Digital © January 30, 2016

The U.S. military welcomed cooperation with Cuba to safeguard peace and security in the Caribbean region at the three-day Caribbean Nations Security Conference. The conference ended on Friday in Kingston of Jamaica, with the participation of over 70 representatives from the countries and organizations. Kurt Tidd, new Admiral of the U.S. Southern Command, said the United States welcomed Cuba’s role in the regional security, pledging more cooperation between the two countries at a news conference with Major General Antony Anderson, chief of Jamaica’s Defense Force, after the conference. —I think we’ve already seen Cuba’s active involvement in some of the regional challenges and healthcare and disaster response. We talked at some length about humanitarian assistance and disaster response exercises. Those sorts of activities. We share challenges with all of the countries across this region. Cuba is one of those countries in this region. And so I believe in the future we’ll have opportunities to find ways that we can work together,‖ said Kurt Tidd.

NS Mayport –

USS The Sullivans deploys from Mayport


WOKV © January 26, 2016

By Stephanie Brown

The USS The Sullivans is on deployment once again. —Very proud of your Sailors going to sea to do the work of the nation,‖ says Naval Station Mayport Commanding Officer Wesley McCall. With more than 340 Sailors on board, the ship will be gone for a seven month deployment. They’ll respond to the 5th and 6th Fleet Areas of Responsibility during that time. While the deployment is part of an ongoing rotation of forces, McCall says every deployment is taken seriously- especially given the international climate.
Tyndall AFB –

**High-end, advanced combat training launches during Red Flag 16-1**

[https://www.dvidshub.net/news/187152/high-end-advanced-combat-training-launches-during-red-flag-16-1#.Vqu0NOZyTIw](https://www.dvidshub.net/news/187152/high-end-advanced-combat-training-launches-during-red-flag-16-1#.Vqu0NOZyTIw)

DVIDS © January 27, 2016

Combat air force squadrons from across the world joined Tyndall Air Force Base’s Checkertails at Nellis AFB, Nevada, this week for the joint-training, full-spectrum, readiness exercise, Red Flag 16-1. The 325th Fighter Wing takes point as it leads Red Flag for the first time from Jan. 25 to Feb. 12. More than 130 aircraft and 3,000 personnel from more than 30 units including squadrons from Australia and the United Kingdom have arrived here to participate in advanced, realistic combat training in contested air, space and cyberspace. Col. Derek C. France, 325th FW commander, is tasked with commanding the Red Flag 16-1, Air Expeditionary Wing, which consists of squadrons from different military branches and coalition nations from around the world designed to strengthen joint warfighting capabilities in a contested, degraded and operationally-limited environment.

NAS Pensacola –

**Access Changes for NAS Pensacola**


WKRG © January 25, 2016

The Navy Blvd. entrance will only be open to employees and military personnel starting Feb. 1. All visitors must now use the West Gate off of Blue Angel Parkway. Starting next Monday (Feb. 1), all visitors that do not have a Department of Defense ID card will need to use the West Gate entrance, which can be accessed by Blue Angel Parkway. The change affects visitors going to the National Naval Aviation Museum, Fort Barrancas, Pensacola Lighthouse, and the golf course, AC Read. The main gate on Navy Boulevard will only be available to employees, military and Department of Defense cardholders. —The safety and security of everyone who works, lives or visits NAS Penscola is my priority,— said NAS Commanding Officer Captain Keith Hoskins in a press release. He added, —This change will bring the installation in alignment
with security directives issued by the Secretary of the Navy and are not in response to any specific threat. The changes take effect Monday, February 1, 2016.

**NAS visitors must use Blue Angel Parkway gate**


By Will Isern

Naval Air Station Pensacola Commanding Officer Capt. Keith Hoskins has announced that effective Feb. 1, all visitors to Pensacola NAS who do not possess a Department of Defense identification will be required to enter the base via the Blue Angel Parkway gate. Hoskins said the change will be permanent and is being made to bring the base in line with security directives sent down by the secretary of the Navy. The base's main gate at Navy Boulevard will be open to employees, military and DoD cardholders and previously vetted personnel who possess a valid visitor's pass. Those who have the credentials to use the Navy Boulevard gate are encouraged to do so. "This is the best course of action to ensure we maintain openness of NAS Pensacola public sites for our visitors to come on board our air station," Hoskins said.

**NAS Pensacola Limits Visitor Access in Response to Navy Guidance**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/nas-pensacola-limits-visitor-access-in-response-to-navy-guidance/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=6ee2c7fae9-RSS dc360 EMAIL CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-6ee2c7fae9-55784537&ct=%28RSS dc360 EMAIL CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © January 27, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., will close its main gate to most visitors starting next week to bring the base in line with security directives issued by the secretary of the Navy, Commanding Officer Capt. Keith Hoskins announced Monday. The change in access at the air station, which Hoskins said would be permanent, will force unescorted visitors who do not possess DOD identification or a visitor’s pass to use the base’s west gate. For visitors to three public attractions on the base — the National Naval Aviation Museum, Fort Barrancas and Pensacola Lighthouse — the new policy will require an eight-mile detour around the air station, reported the Pulse. Visitors to Barrancas National Cemetery, however, still will be able to use the main gate. —The safety and security of everyone who works, lives or visits NAS Pensacola is my
priority,‖ Hoskins said. ―This change will bring the installation in alignment with security directives issued by the Secretary of the Navy and are not in response to any specific threat,‖ he said …….

Florida National Guard –

**Commission Aims To Heal Army-Guard Rift**


By Jen Judson

The National Commission on the Future of the Army's findings in its report released last week could alleviate some friction between the Army and the Guard as it offered solutions to build more "connective tissue" between the regular and reserve components. Eight commissioners appointed by Congress and the White House examined the service's structure and policies relating to its size and force mix between the active, Army National Guard and the Army Reserve. In part, the commission was created to settle a dispute between the active Army and the Guard over a 2013 decision to restructure its aviation fleet that included taking all AH-64 Apaches out of the National Guard and placing them in active units. The Guard pushed back, arguing it should mirror the active force in capability. ………

Patrick AFB –

**Astronaut rescue exercise proves Airmen ready to support space mission**


By Chrissy Cuttita, 45th Space Wing Public Affairs

It's not common an astronaut must be rescued out of rough open waters after descending home to Earth in a crewed capsule. But when those space race-era days of human space flight return, a
small Air Force detachment knows they will be ready. The 45th Operations Group’s Detachment 3 joined NASA's Commercial Crew Program; Air Force pararescuemen; combat rescue officers; and survival, evasion, resistance and escape specialists in a simulated astronaut rescue at Patrick Air Force Base Jan. 14. "At the strategic and operational levels of this exercise, we flawlessly met our objectives of effective command and control between our Joint Space Operations Center operating location and the combined Department of Defense and NASA landing support officers for the aircraft launch, relay of mission execution status, relay of astronaut medical status, and systems matter expertise to all players," said Lt. Col. Jason Havel of Det. 3, which is also known as the Human Space Flight Support Office. "The command and control was exercised in accordance with U.S. Strategic Command and Det. 3’s concept of operations previously developed during their 2015 war game scenarios."………

Defense Industry –

**Report: Defense Acquisition Hits Bottom, but Bounceback Will Be Slow**


By Aaron Mehta

2015 will likely represent the nadir of Pentagon spending on defense contracts, but industry should not expect to see a rapid doling out of contract obligations in the near future. That’s the conclusion of a new report entitled —Defense Acquisition Trends 2015,— released Jan. 27 from the Center for Strategic and International Studies. The report — led by Andrew Hunter and Rhys McCormick, with input from Jesse Ellman, Gregory Sanders, Kaitlyn Johnson and Gabriel Coll — tracked Pentagon contract obligations from 2000 through 2014 to study the overarching trends in the marketplace. Data for fiscal year 2015 is not yet complete and will be looked at by the authors for a future report. Overall, their research found that the share of Pentagon obligations going to defense contracts shrank from 53 percent in 2009 to 46 percent in 2014, as the budget environment forced the Department of Defense to look primarily at contracts for potential budget cuts………

**Global Turmoil A Boon To U.S. Defense Industry**


Forbes © January 29, 2016
By Neil Howe

India, the world’s largest defense importer, is shifting away from Russian arms exports and toward U.S. ones. This is timely news for the U.S. defense industry: Thanks to years of budget cuts and new Silicon Valley partnerships, the road is so rough that even industry heavyweights like Lockheed Martin are wondering how they’re going to survive losses of lucrative contracts. Far from a one-off statistic, India’s decision is part of a growing trend: Amid global unrest, America is increasingly seen as the world’s premier providers of arms. Prior to World War II, the U.S. defense industry consisted almost exclusively of government-owned arsenals and shipyards. But in 1942, Teddy Roosevelt’s War Production Board converted private-sector factories into wartime manufacturing plants, placing firms like Boeing at the helm of America’s war effort. This government-industry partnership only grew after the war, with companies like AT&T and IBM joining the fold.

DOD Issues –

Russian aggression a top concern in U.S. European Command's new military strategy


Military Times © January 27, 2016

By Andrew Tilghman

The U.S. European Command issued an —updated theater strategy document Tuesday, pointing to Russian aggression as a top concern and warning that the U.S. troop drawdowns of the past 25 years put the region’s stability at risk. The 12-page document lays out EUCOM’s priorities for the next three to five years and lists a dizzying array of challenges that include refugee migration, financial crisis, cyber attacks and infectious diseases. The most prominent challenge is Russia and its —disregard for the sovereignty of its neighbors in Europe as well as its military aggression beyond the EUCOM region, including Syria……..

Pentagon unveils family-friendly initiatives


USA Today © January 28, 2016
Female troops in all services will receive 12 weeks of maternity leave as part of a series of personnel initiatives Thursday aimed at making military careers more appealing, especially to millennials, Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced. The moves, unveiled under the banner of Force of the Future, are designed to recruit and retain a new generation of troops, Carter said. Carter's announcement sets the same standard for maternity leave for all services. But the move will also reduce the leave for the Navy and Marine Corps from 18 weeks to 12 weeks. The Army and Air Force will increase from six weeks to 12. Paid paternity leave will be expanded to 14 days from 10, Carter said. About 200,000 women in the services will be eligible for the benefit.

Army Force Commission Calls for Apache Compromise, More Troops in Europe


Army Times © January 28, 2016

By Jen Judson

A US Army force of 980,000 is —minimally sufficient— for maintaining national security and the National Guard should keep some attack helicopters, the National Commission on the Future of the Army declared in a new report. These are among 63 recommendations the commission made in a major report released Thursday ahead of its congressionally mandated Feb. 1 deadline. The findings partly work to settle friction between the Army and the Guard and many of the recommendations would ensure the reserve components are used regularly and are equipped appropriately, which can be seen as a win for the Guard. Eight commissioners appointed by Congress and the White House examined the Army's structure and policies relating to its size and force mix between the active, Army National Guard and the Army Reserve.

Report Calls for Sweeping Army Changes, Praises National Guard Brigade


Military.com © January 30, 2016

The Army needs to better focus on missile defense and anti-aircraft duties and should cut two infantry brigades to beef up other areas that have withered since the 9/11 attacks, retired Gen. Carter Ham and a panel of experts wrote in a report to Congress that will help shape the Army's future. The National Commission on the Future of the Army also chided lawmakers about the
need for stable Army budgets and called for better integration of part-time troops so the Army
can respond to emerging threats including rising Russian aggression. In a Friday interview with
The Gazette, Ham, who led the panel, said he expects some resistance to the 63
recommendations it issued, especially cutting infantry brigades. Cutting about 7,000 infantry
troops, he said, will allow the Army to change how it employs soldiers without growing the
force, which includes 450,000 active-duty troops and 530,000 reservists and National
Guardsmen…….

Defense secretary outlines strategies, goals


By Erik Schechter

Ashton B. Carter plunged into the deep end of the pool when he replaced Chuck Hagel as
secretary of defense last February. Carter faces a world riven with conflict, from jihadi terrorism
spreading in Europe to ongoing Russian interference in eastern Ukraine to chaos in Syria and
Iraq. At the same time, he is addressing significant internal policy matters, such as how to clamp
down on sexual assault in the armed services and overseeing the integration of women into all
military combat roles. Unlike his predecessor, Carter has deep roots in the defense establishment.
From 2011 to 2013, he served as the deputy secretary of defense, and before that, he was the
undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics (ATL), spearheading
procurement reform in the Department of Defense with the Better Buying Power initiative in
2010…….
TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Conference Call/Webex February 18, 2016** – The next conference call/webex of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, February 18, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM. If you have questions on the webex, please call Marcy Sanders and she can walk you through it.

2. **Meeting Call In Number and Access Code** -- **Call In Number: 800-501-8979  
Access code: 8784566**

3. **Attachments:**
   - FDSTF Legislative Tracker
   - Veterans Bills
   - TPG Monthly Report
   - Invitation to webex

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:
DOD Budget—

**DOD requesting 3,000-5,000 more troops for Europe in FY17 budget**


Stars and Stripes © February 1, 2016

By Tara Copp

The Pentagon plans to sharply increase the number of troops, tanks and artillery positioned in Europe under a budget proposal that calls for a $2.6 billion spending increase aimed at strengthening the military’s posture across eastern Europe. The $3.4 billion request for the European Reassurance Initiative is about four times the amount of the department’s $780 million request in 2016. It would add an additional brigade’s worth of troops to the U.S. footprint in Europe — between 3,000 and 5,000 rotational soldiers. A brigade-size fleet of heavy vehicles and weaponry would also be delivered to storage sites throughout the Continent, defense officials told Stars and Stripes on Monday. The proposals are part of the Pentagon’s 2017 budget request, which aims to take on a series of vexing security challenges confronting the military as it faces —Great Power competition! from Russia and China, traditional terrorism threats and the instability brought on by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria………

**HASC Chair Leery of War-Budget Battle With White House**


Defense News © February 1, 2016

By Joe Gould

The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee indicated Monday he would seek to increase the wartime contingency fund if the Obama administration backtracks on a budget deal that boosts military spending over mandatory budget caps. Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, doubled down on his stance that the —clear agreement! behind last year’s two-year bipartisan budget deal between key lawmakers and the White House set $59 billion for the overseas contingency operations (OCO) as a minimum, subject to increase based on current threats. —The exact amount of OCO needed this year would depend on [military] operations,‘ Thornberry told reporters in a Capitol Hill press conference Monday. —So the budget agreement was weeks
before the Paris attacks, for example. In Afghanistan, originally the intention was to reduce the numbers there. That may be undergoing re-evaluation.  

**Carter Unveils Budget Details; Pentagon Requests $582.7 Billion**


Defense News © February 2, 2016

By Aaron Mehta 4 p.m. EST February 2, 2016

President Obama’s fiscal year 2017 budget will request $582.7 billion in funding for the Pentagon, including $71.4 billion for research and development, $7.5 billion to fight the Islamic State group, $8.1 billion for submarines, and $1.8 billion on munitions, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced Tuesday morning. In a speech previewing next week’s budget release, Carter also highlighted new technologies his department is developing to meet what he called a —major inflection point—that takes—the long view for the Department. The budget, Carter explained, was driven by five key factors: the rise of great powers in Russia and China, the threat of North Korea to the US and its Pacific allies, Iran’s —malign influence against allies in the Gulf, and the ongoing fight against the Islamic State group, commonly known as ISIL or ISIS.

**HASC Chair Signals Push For More OCO Funding**


Breaking Defense © February 2, 2016

By Colin Clark

None of us knows many details about what’s in the last of the Obama defense budgets, but House Republicans are criticizing the sketchy outlines of the **2017 budget offered by Defense Secretary Ash Carter** today. In particular, House Armed Services Committee Chairman **Mac Thornberry** is raising concerns that the Pentagon is **not asking Congress for enough money** to do what must be done. Last year, the **president’s budget request** estimated that this year’s base budget would need to be $573 billion. Today, Carter made it official that the base budget request would be $524 billion. The OCO budget will be about $59 billion.

**Pentagon Adds Second Littoral Combat Ship to 2017 Budget Plan**
The Pentagon will request money for two Littoral Combat Ships in its fiscal 2017 budget, one more than Defense Secretary Ash Carter directed in December when he truncated the program, according to defense officials. Carter has joined in criticism that the lightly armed vessel may be vulnerable in combat. He agreed to the Navy’s proposal for a second ship after the service found savings of $300 million to $400 million to pay for it, said one of the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity before President Barack Obama’s final proposed budget is sent to Congress on Feb. 9. The Navy and Defense Department officials agreed that funding the extra vessel will let manufacturers Lockheed Martin Corp. and Austal Ltd. compete more fairly for a decision in 2019 on which of the contractors will build seven more heavily protected frigates to complete a 40-ship program, one of the officials said……

Pentagon chief: $59 billion war fund could be adjusted

Defense Secretary Ash Carter said Tuesday that the administration will stick to its request of $59 billion in war funding next year set under a 2015 bipartisan budget deal, but signaled he is also open to spending more. Carter on Tuesday previewed the administration's $582 billion defense budget request, which would have a base budget of $524 billion and a war funding budget, also known as overseas contingency operations (OCO), of about $59 billion. Those levels for defense funding were set under the 2015 Bipartisan Budget Act, but some Republican defense hawks in Congress say the $59 billion should be a floor, not a ceiling, given increased spending in the war against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and to bolster European allies amid Russian aggression……

What Agreement? Congress Drawing Battle Lines in '17 Defense Budget Fight
Defense News © February 7, 2016

By Joe Gould

The Senate’s No. 2 Democrat says if House Republicans follow through on threats to raise defense spending through the wartime account known as OCO, they can expect resistance from Democrats. Assistant Minority Leader Dick Durbin, DIll., pushed back against House Armed Services Committee (HASC) Chairman Mac Thornberry’s assertion that $59 billion allocated for the overseas contingency operations account (OCO), was considered a floor and not a ceiling by the two-year bipartisan budget deal reached late last year. Thornberry has said in recent weeks that last year’s budget deal clearly set the amount as a minimum to be raised based on current threats. —I viewed it as a ceiling, not a floor, but I would like to hear his explanation,‖ Durbin said of Thornberry on Thursday. —There is one abiding concern: fifty-fifty, defense and non-defense.‖ A key principal for Democrats during last year’s budget negotiations was that any increase for the defense side of the budget be matched equally on the non-defense side. Asked if Democrats would stick to that principal, should the GOP seek an OCO plus-up, Durbin told Defense News: —I will...........

Eglin AFB –

**Pentagon report questions ‘unrealistic’ F-35 test schedule**


Flight Global © February 1, 2016

By James Drew

The Pentagon’s chief weapons tester says an operational evaluation of the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II could be delayed by up to one year because of difficulties completing developmental testing by the due date of August 2017. In his annual F-35 report, published 1 February, Michael Gilmore also cautions against entering into a three-year —block buyl before completing operational assessments, where full-rate production lots 12-14 would be bundled together to generate production savings. According to the report, completing developmental testing of the full-up Block 3F weapon system in 2017 is —unrealisticl and the F-35 joint programme office should —acknowledge the schedule pressuresl and make the necessary adjustments — something that it has worked to avoid since the 2012 programme re-baselining........

**F-35A IOC at Risk**
The F-35A might not meet the criteria required to be declared operational in August, Pentagon Director of Operational Test & Evaluation J. Michael Gilmore said in an annual report released Monday. The report, which covers all services, included a 70-page assessment of the F-35 program. In it, Gilmore says USAF briefed the Joint Requirements Oversight Council in December that due to struggles with the 3i version of the F-35A software, the jet is “at risk” of not having the capability required to declare initial operational capability on time. August is the threshold, or desired date, but December is the “objective” or must-do date for IOC, and that seems more likely, he said. Developmental testing of the 3i software was eight months late. Gilmore also asserted that it’s “unrealistic” to think completion of flight testing the objective mission systems software, version 3F, will wrap up as planned in May 2017. He said the program office is referencing a date of July 31, 2017, and Gilmore said the more likely date will be January 2018. Even to hit that late target, flight testers would have to keep up a pace of 6.8 flight tests a month—faster than the planned six flights per month—to burn down all the necessary test points, with discoveries of new issues only five percent of the time. The program could, “as has been the case in testing previous software increments,” decide that some of that testing is unnecessary, but he’d want an explanation.

Eglin Air Force Base plans exercises in Gulf, Bay

Residents near Eglin Air Force Base may experience noise Feb. 8 to Feb. 11 when the 53rd Weapons Evaluation Group conducts boat operations in the Gulf of Mexico and the Choctawhatchee Bay. Preparatory boat operations will take place in the bay Wednesday. Fighter aircraft will release munitions between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m. daily, approximately eight to 20 nautical miles south of Destin. The test will be conducted within a cleared range safety area, which includes boat surveillance. Notices to mariners will be issued before the missions and flyers will be handed out at the local marina. Each day between 1 and 5 p.m., approximately 30 boats traveling in formation, will transverse between the Mid-Bay Bridge and the Highway 331 Bridge. The boat formation will be used as visual targets by F-15s and F-16s flying over the area. No weapons or ammunition will be involved with this boat formation. Some boat operators will be dressed in various military uniforms and white costumes. They will carry rubber rifles, painted in high visible colors, which will be kept out-of-view when transiting to and from the mission area. Some boats will have fake deck guns and rocket launcher tubes. The boats also will
use marine flares as visual markers. These operations are part of the 53rd Wing’s Weapon System Evaluation Program.

**F-35A cost and readiness data improves in 2015 as fleet grows**


Flight Global © February 2, 2016

The cost of operating the Lockheed Martin F-35A has come down 37.6% compared to last year and is now $17,000 cheaper to fly per hour than its fifth-generation cousin, the Lockheed F-22 Raptor. According to air force cost-per-flight-hour (CPFH) data obtained by Flightglobal, the conventional takeoff and landing F-35 cost $42,200 to operate per hour in fiscal year 2015 compared to $67.5 in 2014 and achieved a 68.6% mission-capable rate as the fleet grew to 51 aircraft. The director of operational test and evaluation reported this week that F-35As located at Hill AFB maintain the highest aircraft availability rate, averaging 80% followed by F-35Cs at Eglin AFB at 79% — compared to the Lightning II fleet-wide average of 51%..........

**Are F-35s fit for combat? Pentagon doesn't know**

http://www.kxlf.com/story/31137326/are-f-35s-fit-for-combat-pentagon-doesnt-know

KXLF © February 4, 2016

By Ryan Browne CNN

The military risks committing itself to buying billions of dollars of F-35 fighter jets before they have demonstrated they are fit for combat, a new Pentagon report warns. The development of the Joint Strike Fighter F-35, a fifth-generation stealth jet, has been beset by spiraling costs and schedule delays. The program's price tag is nearly $400 billion for 2,457 planes -- almost twice the initial estimate. To drive down costs and benefit from larger economies of scale, the Pentagon has sought to pool planned purchases through a "block buy" of hundreds of aircraft from the F-35's manufacturer, Lockheed Martin, according to the report by the Pentagon's Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, J. Michael Gilmore. The report cautions that these efforts to curb costs have created a situation in which the U.S. could be committed "to procuring as many as 270 U.S. aircraft" before "operational testing is complete."..........

Hurlburt Field –
Hurlburt Field Air Commandos participate in Gulf Coast exercise

http://pulsegulfcoast.com/2016/02/air-commandos-crush-frigid-archer

The Pulse © February 2, 2016

By Drew Buchanan

Dozens of Air Commandos from Hurlburt Field descended upon the Gulf Coast last month in a combat exercise designed to test the ability of America’s elite special ops units to operate—anytime, anyplace. In the January exercised dubbed Frigid Archer, airmen of the 1st Special Operations Wing and other Hurlburt Field units operated from austere conditions at the half-million acre Eglin Air Force Base reservation. Security forces members with the 1st Special Operations Security Forces Squadron debark a CV-22 Osprey during exercise Frigid Archer 2016 on Eglin Range, Fla., Jan. 6, 2016. Frigid Archer was a week-long exercise that tested 1st Special Operations Wing Air Commandos’ expertise through a myriad of operational and support requirements. The exercise tested the airmen’s ability to function in an operational environment as part of Air Force Special Operations Command’s priority to—provide combat-ready forces around the world. Hurlburt’s special ops units performed operational and support requirements, which included flying, maintenance, base security, field communications, chemical warfare response and emergency medical response in the field……

NS Mayport –

Guns blaze as Mayport Naval Station conducts live fire hostage exercise at Navy Exchange


Florida Times-Union © February 1, 2016

By Dan Scanlan

The masked gunmen fired multiple rounds as they stormed the Navy Exchange on Mayport Road at noon Monday, leaving bloody—deadly and —wounded—in their wake. Then as police responded to the armed men inside the sprawling store, the gunmen fired on them before retreating inside to hold shoppers hostage. The gunfire echoing around Mayport Road wasn’t domestic terrorism, like the Dec. 2 mass shooting in the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino that saw Tashfeen
Malik and Syed Rizwan Farook kill 14 and injure scores more. And it wasn’t like June 18’s massacre of nine Bible study members at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston. It was an hour-long simulated robbery gone wrong set up by Mayport Naval Station as one of many anti-terrorism exercises being conducted now through Feb. 12 at every U.S. naval installation during a nationwide Solid Curtain-Citadel Shield 2016 program.

**USS The Sullivans Deploys**

http://mayportmirror.jacksonville.com/military/mayport-mirror/2016-02-03/story/uss-sullivans-deploys

Mayport Mirror © February 3, 2016

Sailors aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans (DDG 68) departed homeport of Naval Station Mayport on Jan. 26, for a seven-month deployment to the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet areas of operation. The Sullivans recently completed a challenging training cycle and two-month NATO exercise in preparation for the deployment. —The crew operated and trained extensively at sea during the past several months, said Cmdr. Jennifer Blakeslee, The Sullivans’ commanding officer. —The training scenarios were complex and challenging. The ship’s warfighting proficiency increased exponentially since beginning the training cycle. I couldn’t be more proud of the crew; they are dedicated, skilled, and tremendously enthusiastic about deploying. This deployment is part of an ongoing rotation of forward-deployed forces to support maritime security operations in the U.S. 6th and 5th Fleet areas of operations.

Avon Park Air Force Range –

**Boom sounds caused by special operations training**


Highlands Today © February 2, 2016

The strange-sounding booms people have been hearing in various parts of the county are the sounds of military training exercises at the Avon Park Air Force Range. Air Force Range Director of Operation Charles —Buck— MacLaughlin said Monday the range is hosting a special operations command exercise. And that is what people are hearing. Although aircraft are flying in conjunction with the training exercises, bombs are not being dropped and there are no sonic
booms because the air space is not designated for supersonic flight, he said. What is being heard primarily is —ground-fired ordnance," MacLaughlin said. The aircraft during the training operations don’t drop air-to-ground high explosives. The joint-integrated air and ground exercises involve the Air Force and other branches of the military. The two-week training exercises started last week and will end later this week, he said. In a Facebook post, Lake Placid Police Chief James Fansler alerted the inquiring public about the source of the sounds………

Tyndall AFB –

**Military training may cause delays**


News Herald © January 31, 2016

By **COLLIN BREAUX**

Two local military bases are undergoing training exercises over the next two weeks, and motorists could see some of the effects from one of them. Solid Curtain-Citadel Shield 2016 (SC/CS16) may lead to traffic delays on Thomas Drive near Naval Support Activity Panama City (NSA PC) today through Feb. 12. SC/CS16 is an annual anti-terrorism force protection exercise the Navy Installations Command and U.S. Fleet Forces Command Public Affairs office reported is designed to train Navy security forces to respond to installation and unit threats. The two-week exercise is to prepare base personnel for any type of incident that may occur, said NSA PC installation emergency manager Nicole Stegall. A variety of drills and exercises will cover multiple scenarios, Stegall said…….

Patrick AFB –

**Two companies file layoff notices at Patrick AFB**


Orlando Sentinel © February 1, 2016

By Paul Brinkman
Two contractors that perform work at Patrick Air Force Base near Cocoa Beach have filed notices of layoffs totaling more than 200 people. As usual, many of the workers may be rehired by companies that secured contracts, but neither company could be reached Monday for more information. The companies are InDyne Inc., based in Virginia, with 173 layoffs, and GCR Inc., which is based in North Carolina, with 36 layoffs. In both cases the companies said the layoffs would occur by March 31. InDyne specializes in government and military security, engineering, and technology, among other things. GCR says it specializes in such areas as aviation, security, land services and other areas. Employment at the base often ebbs and flows as new contracts come on, or as new companies win bids to perform the work. The base is responsible for processing and launching of government and commercial satellites from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. The base has a population of about 15,000 civilian and military personnel and their families with an economic impact of more than $1.2 billion annually……..

NAS Key West –

Cuban migrant windsurfs to Navy property

[http://keysnews.com/node/72802](http://keysnews.com/node/72802)

Keys News © February 3, 2016

BY ADAM LINHARDT

A Cuba migrant windsurfed across the Florida Straits and came ashore at Naval Air Station Key West property in the Truman Annex Tuesday afternoon. The migrant told Navy personnel that he had been on the water for about 12 hours, said NAS Key West spokeswoman. He was spotted by nearby Joint Interagency Task Force South security cameras and received medical care. Custom and Border Protection agents responded to the Navy property, she added. The incident marked the fourth time since 2014 that federal agencies have searched or found Cuban migrants using the method to cross the dangerous Florida Straits. In April 2014, the Coast Guard searched for, but never found, a migrant reportedly windsurfing after they received a call from his wife. It was not clear if she lived in Florida or Cuba……..

City wants harbor access

[http://keysnews.com/node/72787](http://keysnews.com/node/72787)

Keys News © February 3, 2016

By Gwen Filosia
Key West will seek help in regaining access to Truman Harbor, which the Navy closed to the public in 2013 citing its national security mission. City Commissioner Richard Payne's proposal to ask the Florida Keys' congressional delegation to intercede in the matter was approved by the commission 6-1 Tuesday. "It's our property, we should be able to do anything we want," Payne said. "Live up to your promises and keep your promises. Give it back to us." Payne wants the city to put a Havana ferry service at the Truman Waterfront, which the Navy handed over to the city in 2002. Naval Air Station Key West has repeatedly said the harbor closure isn't up for negotiation. But Payne says his legal research shows the city has the right to use the wharf that came with the property transfer. The harbor closure ended the city's plans to have a private partner build a marina to create revenue to help pay for the upcoming Truman Waterfront Park. Tuesday's vote means city staff will send the resolution to U.S. Senators Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio, and U.S. Rep. Carlos Curbelo........

Defense Industry –

**US Air Force Cuts Five F-35 Fighter Jets From Budget Request**


Defense News © February 3, 2016

By Lara Seligman

The US Air Force cut five F-35As from its fiscal year 2017 budget request while fully funding the Long Range Strike-Bomber and KC-46 tanker, sources said. The Air Force reduced the F-35A buy in FY-17 from a planned 48 aircraft to just 43, according to one source. It is not clear if the Air Force will reduce the overall planned buy of 1,763 aircraft. These figures do not take into account the total F-35 buy across the US armed services or purchases by international partners. The cut was purely budget driven, the source said, as the F-35 joint strike fighter program has made strides in recent years. The Marine Corps declared initial operational capability on time last summer with its F-35Bs, and the Air Force is on track to do the same with its conventional takeoff and landing F-35A this summer. The F-35A cut is not a surprise. Analysts and top government officials have hinted for months that changes could be ahead for the JSF as part of the Pentagon’s effort to balance its books. Frank Kendall, undersecretary for acquisition, technology and logistics, said in December that the Defense Department expects to make —disproportionatel cuts to modernization in FY17 — and he indicated a slowdown in F-35 production was likely..........
DOD Issues –

**US Helicopters May Aid Iraqi Forces in Fight to Retake Mosul from ISIS**


Military.com © February 1, 2016

by Richard Sisk

U.S. attack helicopters -- **AH-64 Apaches** -- could be committed against the Islamic State for the first time in an accelerated campaign to retake Mosul that the Iraqis and Kurds say will happen this year, the top U.S. commander for Iraq and Syria said Monday. In his upbeat overview of the progress of the campaign, **Army** Lt. Gen. Sean MacFarland steered clear of endorsing the repeated prediction of Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi that the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, will be driven from Mosul before the end of the year, but said he was in a rush to defeat the terrorist group. "I don't want to put a date out there," MacFarland said, but "I would like to get this wrapped up as fast as I possibly can." Use of the Boeing Co.-made attack helicopters in Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, was contingent upon the Iraqis making a formal request for them, MacFarland said in a video briefing from Baghdad to the Pentagon. The Iraqis pointedly did not ask for them in the long-delayed but eventually [successful action to retake the flashpoint city of Ramadi](http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/02/01/us-helicopters-may-aid-iraqi-forces-fight-retake-mosul-isis.html) in Anbar province in December........

**Military leaders promise to extend child care hours, shorten wait lists at child development centers**


Military Times © February 1, 2016

By Karen Jowers

Military families will see more flexibility in child care as defense officials move to extend the operating hours of child development centers to 14 hours a day. Long-term, the military services are developing plans to expand child care capacity in areas where wait times exceed 90 days, among other things. The hours of operation at CDCs will be extended so that they overlap the normal working shifts of service members by at least two hours. The hours will be consistent with the work patterns of a majority of service members at each specific installation, according
to a DoD fact sheet. For example, if the normal workday is 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., the child development center would be open continuously from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. While the centers would be open 14 hours, each child would receive up to 12 hours a day of subsidized child care. Service members would have to pay the full cost of any child care provided in excess of 12 hours in a single day, said DoD spokesman Matthew Allen.

Pentagon chief expects Congress to consider draft for women


The Hill © February 3, 2016

By Kristina Wong

Defense Secretary Ash Carter said Wednesday that he expects Congress to take up the question of whether women should begin registering for the draft. "I expect them to take this up," Carter said in response to a question from a female Marine. "It stands to reason it'll be taken up by the Congress because of the decision we've made," he added, referring to his move to open all combat positions in the military to women. Carter defended that decision, which opens jobs to women in the infantry and special operations forces. Carter said it was important to be able to choose from the largest pool of people to maintain the best all-volunteer force possible in the future. "It goes back to the need to think generations ahead," he said. "For us to have the best in the future, [we need to] reach into the largest pool of people………

Other Items of Interest –

Paul, McConnell argue against Army cuts in Ky.


The Hill © February 1, 2016

By Kristina Wong
Kentucky's senators are urging Defense Secretary Ash Carter not to reduce the number of troops at bases in their state. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Sen. Rand Paul (R) made the request in a letter to Carter. "The Army installations in Kentucky provide critical services that are necessary for the national defense and security of our country," they wrote. Paul, who is running for president, argued in a statement that Kentucky "has absorbed a disproportionate" amount of reductions and transfers already. The Army is currently undergoing a massive downsizing, from 570,000 active duty forces in 2012 to 490,000 by 2018, as a result of post-war drawdowns and defense budget cuts. The cuts were planned in 2013, after the Pentagon was hit with massive budget cuts under the 2011 Budget Control Act. The Army is slated to shrink down to 420,000 by 2019, if the cuts remain in place. 

Military leaders: Register women for draft

http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/capitol-hill/2016/02/02/army-marines-women-combat-jobs-draft/79695978/

Military Times © February 2, 2016

By Leo Shane III

The Army and Marine Corps' top uniformed leaders both backed making women register for the draft as all combat roles are opened to them in coming months, a sweeping social change that could complicate the military’s gender integration plans. Both services, along with the Navy, have begun work to open all military jobs to any service member after a decision by Defense Secretary Ash Carter in December to lift all gender-based restrictions on combat and infantry roles. On Tuesday, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley and Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert Neller told senators during a Capitol Hill hearing that full integration of those jobs will likely take a few years, to overcome logistical and cultural issues.

Surprisingly Sound Answers on the Future of the Army

http://warontherocks.com/2016/02/surprisingly-sound-answers-on-the-future-of-the-army/

War on the Rocks © February 3, 2016

By Robert H.Scales

I really don’t have much faith in congressionally mandated committees. I was a member of the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). I found the experience to be unseemly and the shrill and naked advocacy of my fellow members very disappointing. Congressman Ike Skelton appointed Professor Dick Kohn and me to the QDR expecting us to craft a concept for the reform of the military’s education system. We did that. We tried to get the administration to pay
attention. So far, nothing. So I read the recently published report by the National Commission on the Future of the Army with some trepidation. And I was pleasantly surprised. The document is good. The commission members were faithful to their congressional charter. They were instructed to answer two key questions: What should the size of the future Army be? And how should the Army apportion its aviation fleet between the regular Army and the Army National Guard?

Bill Nelson blasts proposal to expand offshore drilling in Gulf Coast


McClatchey © February 3, 2016

BY JAMES ROSEN

Sen. Bill Nelson took to the Senate floor Wednesday to launch a fierce assault against a legislative initiative to expand offshore drilling in the Gulf of Mexico by providing states huge financial incentives to increase energy exploration. Displaying a large map of the gulf, Nelson accused Sen. Bill Cassidy, a Louisiana Republican, of offering a "secret amendment" to a broad energy bill that would boost revenue-sharing for states that allow offshore oil and natural gas production. The amendment would provide $1.5 billion over 15 years to Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi and Alabama for increased energy production. It would also create new revenue-sharing streams for Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia and Alaska. "Off of Louisiana there are not many beaches," Nelson said. "Off of Mississippi there are not many beaches. Off of Alabama — not many beaches. But what do you think Florida is known for? Its pristine beaches all the way from the Perdido River, which is the Florida-Alabama line, all the way down the coast, all the way to Naples and then not only to the Keys, but up the East Coast of Florida."

Army to Let Women Apply for Infantry and Armor Jobs by This Spring

http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/02/03/army-to-let-women-apply-for-infantry-armor-jobs-by-this-spring.html

Military.com © February 3, 2016

by Matthew Cox

The U.S. Army's chief of staff told Congress on Tuesday that female soldiers could begin their training to serve in direct combat arms jobs such as infantry and armor by this spring, but it could take up to three years to form gender-integrated units. Gen. Mark Milley joined Marine Corps and Navy leaders at a Feb. 2 hearing to testify before a skeptical Senate Armed Services Committee about future plans to merge women into ground combat units across the services.
"Readiness is the Army's number-one priority, and I believe that full integration of women in all career fields will either maintain, sustain or improve the overall readiness of the United States Army ... if and only if we maintain and enforced rigorous combat readiness standards, we retain a merit-based results-oriented organization, and we apply no quotas," Milley said……..

New military retirement law creates big decisions for many troops


Military Times © February 7, 2016

By Andrew Tilghman

Hundreds of thousands of service members face a critical decision during the next year that could have a huge impact on their future financial security: Whether to opt into the new military retirement system or stick with the traditional one. Signed into law in November, the new retirement benefit will mean smaller pension checks but include cash contributions to the individual investment accounts of all troops. It's the biggest change in decades for military compensation. For the first time, the military will offer some limited retirement benefit, similar to 401(k) contributions, to troops who separate before reaching 20 years of service. Historically those non-career service members — more than 80 percent of the force — received no retirement benefit. Officially the new retirement system takes effect Jan. 1, 2018. After that, all troops coming out of boot camp will be automatically enrolled in the new benefit as the traditional pension plan is phased out…………..
February 15, 2016 – FDSTF Update

TF members --

1. **This Week -- Task Force Conference Call/Webex February 18, 2016 --** The next conference call/webex of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, February 18, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM. If you have questions on the webex, please call Marcy Sanders and she can walk you through it.

2. **Meeting Call In Number and Access Code --** Call In Number: 800-501-8979
   Access code: 8784566

3. **Attachments:**
   - Invitation to webex
   - FDSTF Legislative Tracker
   - Veterans Bills
   - Meeting agenda

 Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FLORIDA DEFENSE SUPPORT TASK FORCE

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –
Pentagon Renews BRAC Request but Pushes it Back to 2019


Defense Communities 360 © February 10, 2016

By Dan Cohen

In the Obama administration’s last year, the Pentagon has raised the urgency of a new round of base closures, threatening to take unilateral action if lawmakers once again reject its request. The need to reduce unneeded facilities is so critical that, in the absence of authorization of a new round of BRAC, the department will explore any and all authorities that Congress has provided to eliminate wasteful infrastructure, according to an overview of DOD’s fiscal 2017 budget request. The department’s budget, released Tuesday, calls for a new BRAC round in 2019; the last several budgets had requested a new round in 2017. —The year proposed is now 2019 … just because it’s physically impossible, given the restrictions on our activities to have one in 2017 based on where we are now,— DOD Comptroller Mike McCord told reporters. The proposal includes $4.0 million in FY 2017 for planning and oversight of a new BRAC. Defense officials already are figuring out how much of the department’s infrastructure is excess, as directed under the FY 2016 defense authorization bill………..

DOD Budget–

Use of War Account to Elude Spending Caps


Defense Communities 360 © February 9, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The two-year bipartisan budget agreement reached last October seemingly settled the question of how much spending defense programs would be allocated in fiscal 2017, but instead a fight over the use of DOD’s war fund to evade the statutory spending caps has emerged for the second straight year. Last week, Defense Secretary Ash Carter previewed the Pentagon’s FY 2017 budget request — $583 billion in topline spending, including $59 billion for the department’s
overseas contingency operations (OCO) account — which matches spending levels in the budget deal. GOP defense hawks, however, blasted the topline for treated the funding level for the OCO account in the budget deal as a ceiling rather than a floor………

Defense Department's Budget Request Seeks More for R&D, ISIS Fight


Defense News © February 9, 2016

By Andrew Clevenger

The Pentagon unveiled its fiscal year 2017 budget request Tuesday morning, asking Congress for $582.7 billion in military funding. The Defense Department’s request, which includes $523.9 billion in base budget money and $58.8 billion in overseas contingency operations (OCO) funding according to budget documents, represented a tiny 0.4 percent increase from the $580.3 billion total Congress enacted for 2016. However, the base budget figure is $23.9 billion less than the Pentagon planned on having this year when it completed its 2016 budget. The budget includes $71.8 billion for research and development, a 4 percent uptick from the previous year’s enacted $69 billion. The fruits of R&D investment are expected to provide a foundation for the so-called third offset strategy, the Pentagon’s plan to produce a battlefield advantage built on cutting-edge technology…………..

2017 Budget: The Long, Slow Slog

http://breakingdefense.com/2016/02/2017-budget-the-long-slow-slog/

Breaking Defense © February 9, 2016

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

On a grand strategic level, the Defense Department’s 2017 spending plan reorients the military to deter Russia and China. Down in the trenches, though, it’s a long, slow slog to rebuild the force for high-intensity conflict after 14 years of irregular warfare in the Islamic world — which isn’t actually ending — and three years of Budget Control Act caps. The effect is mostly immediately, painfully obvious in readiness, but long-term modernization suffers too. Navy readiness, for example, is recovering from the 2013 sequester and years of frenetic deployments with its new Optimized Fleet Response Plan. On current funding levels, by 2018 all carriers, amphibious ships, and their escorts will be on OFRP. If that funding continues, then by 2021, the Navy will have rebuilt its readiness enough to have two carriers deployed, on average, at any given time and three more ready for —surge deployment in a crisis. ………
In the Pentagon’s new budget, the Air Force won and the Navy and Army lost


Washington Post © February 9, 2016

By Dan Lamothe

The U.S. government released its proposed $4 trillion budget for fiscal 2017 on Tuesday, and the Pentagon’s slice of the pie is about $582.7 billion. That represents less than a 1 percent increase over the $580.3 billion budget for fiscal 2016 at a time when the U.S. military is balancing operations in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, aggressive actions by Russia and China and the modernization of a force that has been at war since 2001. According to official documents, the Pentagon’s proposal calls for the Air Force to get the largest funding boost from last year, from $161.8 billion to $166.9 billion. The Army’s funding also will get a boost, from $146.9 billion to $148 billion. However, the Navy Department will face a reduction from $168.8 billion to $164.9 billion. Those numbers count both the base budgets and $58.8 billion in overseas contingency operations funding, which goes toward current operations like the fight against the Islamic State. An additional $102.9 billion is set aside in a department-wide category……..

What Obama’s Air Force Budget Request Says About the Future of Warfare


Defense One © February 9, 2016

By Patrick Tucker

In President Obama’s final defense spending request, the Air Force looks beyond ISIS toward the rising technological capabilities of China and Russia, asking Congress for more money for intercontinental ballistic missile modernization and long-range striking, new semi-autonomous robotic missiles, offensive cyber operations, and lasers. The research, development, test, and evaluation portion of the Air Force budget paints a picture of changing priorities inside a Defense Department grappling with new technological realities and evolving threats……..

Navy Budget Confirms Plans to Cut Purchases of Littoral Combat Ships
It's official: The U.S. Navy plans to reduce its Littoral Combat Ship buy from 52 to 40 vessels over the next five years, according to the service's fiscal 2017 budget request released on Tuesday. With a base budget request of $155.4 billion, the Navy's spending plan for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1 is about $4 billion less than it was for fiscal 2016, though some of that will be offset by a $9.5 billion request in overseas contingency operations funding. The Navy is also set to lose 4,400 active-duty sailors, nearly all enlisted, as it approaches a long-term steady state that will have 50,000 sailors underway on ships year-round. This end strength reduction, from 327,300 sailors to 322,900 sailors, represents the most significant reduction in forces since fiscal 2012. Current projections show the service maintaining its end strength after this year with small adjustments, with a projected active-duty force of 323,100 by fiscal 2021.

Obama Punts Controversial War Account to Successor

The fate of the Pentagon’s war chest will be left up to a successor of President Barack Obama, who tried to rein in Defense Department spending but wound up expanding the use of a budget accounting gimmick in an era of fiscal turmoil. The Pentagon’s war budget — formally called the overseas contingency operations account, or OCO, and formerly known as the supplemental request — is being used far more broadly than it was when when Obama entered White House seven years ago. Today, it helps pay not only for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but for combat operations in all regions of the world, training in the United States, and new equipment for the military.

Republican Chairmen Take Aim at Defense Budget

The chairmen of the House and Senate Armed Services committees on Tuesday decried the Pentagon’s fiscal 2017 budget request for shortchanging national security amid a litany of growing threats. —I am disappointed that this request does not adhere to the budget agreement made just last fall,—Mac Thornberry (R-Texas), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, said in a statement. —Last year, Congress passed the Bipartisan Budget Act, which establishes a minimum level of funding for our military. I hoped such an agreement would provide some budget stability and begin to rebuild our military. Unfortunately, this administration continues to play budgetary games with our country’s security and diminishes what credibility it had left,—Thornberry stated.

US Navy Absorbing $7 Billion Budget Cut


The US Navy is absorbing a $7 billion reduction in fiscal 2017 funding – about 3.5 percent over last year’s plan, according to newly released budget documents. The service is reducing the number of ships it’s buying while adding more aircraft, and uniformed personnel also are being cut, up to as many as 6,400 sailors below previous forecasts. The Navy Department’s top line drops to $152.9 billion in baseline funding against last year’s projection of $159.9 billion. The 3 percent dip below projection is planned to last just this year, rising in 2018 to $159.7 billion. Projected baseline funding drops again to about $158 billion in 2019, to $155.7 billion in 2020 and up to $157.5 billion in 2021. Overseas contingency operations (OCO) funding remains steady, $9.5 billion in 2017 against $9.4 billion last year, and includes six aircraft – two F/A-18 Super Hornets and four RQ-21 Blackjack drones for the Marines.

Budget “bow wave” causes Air Force to cut 45 F-35s from purchase plans


Ars Technica © February 9, 2016

by Sean Gallagher
The F-35 program will be cut by 45 aircraft over the next 10 years as the Air Force struggles with its spending priorities, according to an Air Force document. A prematurely posted copy of the US Air Force's fiscal year 2017 budget request was pulled down from the service's website today but not before defense analysts and journalists were able to download the document and find a number of surprises. While it had been previously announced by the Department of Defense that five fewer F-35A fighters would be purchased in 2017, the plan outlined in the 2017 Air Force budget would cut even more F-35s from purchase plans over the next 10 years, deferring the purchase of 45 planes until later. In a statement introducing the budget plans, Air Force officials wrote, "The Air Force is facing a modernization bow wave in critical nuclear and space programs over the next ten years that, under current funding levels, we simply cannot afford." A recent assessment of the Air Force's nuclear forces reinforced calls for a major investment in modernization of systems, some of which have been in place with few modifications since the 1970s and 1980s………….

Ready to fight in a dangerous world: 5 takeaways from Marine Corps' budget


Marine Corps Times © February 10, 2016

By Jeff Schogol

The Marine Corps’ fiscal 2017 budget request shows that it’s getting harder to keep the service ready to fight anywhere, anytime under budget cuts imposed by Congress. A recent two-year budget agreement hashed out by lawmakers left the Defense Department with $17 billion less in fiscal 2017 than it expected to receive. As a result, the Department of the Navy’s budget is projected to take a $7 billion hit next fiscal year. Faced with numerous global threats, the Marine Corps is spending more money on readiness at the expense of military construction and other budget items. Here is what you need to know about the Marine Corps’ proposed fiscal 207 budget:………. 

Leave DOD’s Long-Term Fiscal Outlook Uncertain


Defense Communities 360 © February 11, 2016

By Dan Cohen
Last year’s bipartisan budget deal provided the Pentagon much-needed budget relief, supplying an extra $56 billion in spending for fiscal 2016 and 2017 along with a measure of certainty, at least in the short-term. —The present budget allows us to execute our national military and defense strategies,‖ Bob Work, deputy defense secretary, told reporters Tuesday at the outset of a briefing on the department’s newly released FY 2017 budget request. Still, given the funding limits imposed on defense spending, officials crafting the proposal needed to balance force structure, modernization and readiness, while placing a priority on strengthening conventional deterrents against the most advanced adversaries, he said………

Navy Would Lose Carrier Air Wing under FY’17 Request

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/navy-would-lose-carrier-air-wing-under-fy17-request/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=dadce64bbd-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-dadce64bbd-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © February 12, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Navy would cut an aircraft carrier air wing based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif., along with its five associated squadrons, under its $165 billion budget request for fiscal 2017 released earlier this week. The proposal would reduce the number of aircraft carrier air wings in the Navy from 10 to nine. —This proposal will allow the Navy to match the number of air wings to the number of deployable aircraft carriers,‖ Rear Adm. William Lescher told reporters during a budget briefing Tuesday. —It reflects the practice of having one carrier in refueling and complex overhaul, and one carrier in an extended maintenance availability at any time,‖ said Lescher, the service’s deputy assistant secretary for budget………

MacDill AFB –

CBS orders pilot for TV drama based on Tampa military scene


Tampa Tribune © February 8, 2016

By Howard Altman
As a city that hosts MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa is no stranger to military drama. The base is the only military center in the U.S. with two four-star commands, both key players in America’s power projection at a tense time. U.S. Central Command oversees the wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan. U.S. Special Operations Command synchronizes the global war on terror. Another lower-level headquarters, Special Operations Command Central, oversees commando missions in the Centcom region. There are two Air Force refueling wings that put men and women in harm’s way. And dozens of other mission partners. On Monday, a mass casualty exercise ahead of the upcoming Tampa Bay AirFest, scheduled at MacDill on March 19 and 20, showcased all the action that takes place on base. And Congress and the Defense Department Office of Inspector General are looking into whether Centcom cooked the books on intelligence in the fight against the so-called Islamic State.

**Socom gets boost in Obama budget, but base closings loom**


Tampa Tribune © February 10, 2016

By Howard Altman

President Barack Obama, who has relied heavily on special operations forces in the battle against Islamic extremists, has given U.S. Special Operations Command a budget boost in his final spending plan, details of which were unveiled in Washington on Tuesday. And though the budget request calls for another round of base closings in 2019, MacDill Air Force Base should weather the process in the unlikely event Congress approves the budget, local members say. Obama’s spending plan calls for allocating $10.8 billion to Socom, headquartered at MacDill, said Lt. Cmdr. Matt Allen, a Socom spokesman. That represents a 3.2 percent increase over the current budget, Allen said. That may not seem like much of bump, but weighed against the total military spending request, it’s huge. The president wants to increase the overall Pentagon budget from $580 billion to $583 billion, an increase of just 0.005 percent.

**MacDill Airmen watch over DOD aircraft in foreign nations**


By Senior Airman Danielle Quilla
A single error on an airport approach procedure can put the lives of pilots, crew members and their passengers in danger. To protect Defense Department aircraft, specialized teams of air traffic controllers personally ensure they land safely when flying abroad. The Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS) team at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, works with nations in Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and Mexico. Although they report directly to headquarters Air Mobility Command at Scott AFB, Illinois, the team is housed at MacDill AFB to be near the countries in their areas of responsibility (AOR). "Each of us has our own countries that we deal with on a daily basis. That way we always maintain continuity of what is happening in the country," said Tech. Sgt. Bruce Dally, a TERPS specialist assigned to the AMC Air Operations Squadron. "We get the host nation's information off the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) website, and then rebuild it into our software and apply Air Force criteria to it."………

**CAE Inc.: CAE awarded U.S. Air Force contract to support Mobility Air Force Distributed Mission Operations**


TWST.com © February 11, 2016

CAE today announced that CAE USA has been awarded contracts under the KC-135 Aircrew Training System (ATS) program to upgrade a range of KC-135 aircrew training devices so that they can be used on the United States Air Force's Distributed Training Center Network (DTCN). In addition, CAE will be responsible for ensuring the training center facilities housing KC-135 aircrew training devices meet the required physical security and cybersecurity requirements established by the U.S. Department of Defense to network the training devices to the classified DTCN. 'Our objective for the Mobility Air Force Distributed Mission Operations initiative is to enhance our live, virtual and constructive training so that we can train in a secure and networked environment across our mobility platforms and the broader U.S. Air Force, as well as joint and coalition training exercises,' said Clifford Sanchez, KC-135 Aircrew Training System Manager, Air Mobility Command, United States Air Force. 'We are systematically increasing our virtual training capabilities and the addition of the KC-135 pilot and boom operator flight simulators are a critical piece of our overall MAF DMO and virtual air refueling effort.' ………..

Eglin AFB –

**F-35 Chief Lays Out Biggest Development Risks**
Ahead of a fast-approaching deadline for the US Air Force to declare its variant of the F-35 joint strike fighter operational this summer, the general in charge of the program laid out the biggest risks ahead in development of the fifth-generation fighter jet. During a roundtable with reporters Wednesday, Lt. Gen. Chris Bogdan, head of the F-35 joint program office (JPO), stressed that the Pentagon and industry team are making great strides. The team has completed 80 percent of the plane’s system development and demonstration (SDD) program, he said. Meanwhile, the JPO is in final negotiations with contractor Lockheed Martin on the ninth and tenth batches of the jet, and expects to get the unit cost down to the target of $80 to $85 million by 2019.

31st TES departs for Mountain Home AFB to conduct F-35 testing

A much anticipated and important test mission for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program is underway with the "deployment" of six operational test and evaluation F-35s and more than 85 Airmen from the 31st Test and Evaluation Squadron, which took place Feb. 8 and 9. This is the first simulated deployment test of the F-35A, specifically to execute three key initial operational capability mission sets: suppression of enemy air defenses, close air support and air interdiction. The 31st TES will execute each of these in a limited scope from a "deployed" location for this test. The "deployed" location is Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho. The 31st TES at Edwards AFB falls under the 53rd Wing at Eglin AFB, Florida, which is leading the test design, management and execution of the F-35A deployment test.

B-2s drop bombs in Florida for exercise Combat Hammer

At a time when B-52 heavy bombers are frequent flyers over the Korean peninsula (see: North Korea shenanigans) it’s nice to know that they’re keeping ready. Six B-52 Stratofortresses from
Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, took part in Exercise Combat Hammer, an annual air-to-ground combat training exercise which tests bombing capability, according to a release from Minot. —We exercise to ensure we are able to hit a target that the Air Force tells us to hit, with weapons they tell us to use, at a time they want it to be hit,‖ Maj. Ryan Cox, 5th Operations Support Squadron chief of wing scheduling, said in the release. —The exercise evaluates everything from building the bomb, to loading the bomb, to planning the sortie, to dropping the weapon, to hitting the target.‖ While the B-52s from the 69th Bomb Squadron only took part Feb. 8-10 of the week-long exercise, they took off from their base and flew out to open range just outside Eglin Air Force Base, Florida………

NS Mayport –

Action News Jax Investigates: New billion-dollar program could be cut by Washington


Action News Jax © February 8, 2016

by: John Bachman

A brand new billion dollar program could see its future cut by Washington, D.C., which would mean fewer ships, sailors and fewer jobs for Mayport. Naval leaders consider the Littoral combat ships (LCS) the future ship of the Navy and NS Mayport. Naval officers practice at a secure, virtual training center similar to a realistic video game at NB San Diego. Action News Jax anchor John Bachman traveled to San Diego to experience the simulator firsthand to see what the LCS can do. Bachman took the ship out of Mayport, into open water and straight into a fire fight in an exercise. The sound of the ship's engines are pumped in through speakers in the floor. "These are Rolls-Royce controllers from the ship, so the touch and feel of this and push back (is) what you (would) feel on the ship," said Littoral Training Facility manager Joe Shifflett………..

Mayport Facilities Compete For Top Energy Saver of the Quarter Title


Florida Times-Union © February 10, 2016
NAVSTA Mayport Public Works Energy Team wishes to give everyone an update of how the facilities in the Quarterly Energy Competition are doing. The Mirror published an article in the Jan. 7, 2016 issue that showed how these 10 large facilities reduced energy during the month of October. After analyzing energy data from November, we have updated the rankings. The table below takes into account utility (electrical and natural gas) consumption during October and November. The average month-to-month energy reduction is determined and facilities are ranked from highest to lowest. The Energy Team is still in the process of analyzing the final month (December) of energy consumption data in order to recognize the facility that demonstrated the highest reduction in Energy Use Intensity (EUI) and winner of the title: Energy Saver of the 1st Quarter of FY16. ……

Tyndall AFB –

Tyndall AFB no longer considered for housing immigrant children


News Herald © February 9, 2016

By Amanda Banks

Undocumented immigrants and refugees will not be coming to Tyndall Air Force Base after all, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement. Tyndall was one of several Air Force bases under consideration as potential shelters for unaccompanied children apprehended at the southern U.S. border. Many area officials were vocally opposed to the idea. —We’ve been watching this debate for a long time and we were feeling very nervous that this would pull away from the military missions that Tyndall Air Force Base and other air force bases across the country need to be focusing on rather than non-military missions,‖ state Rep. Jay Trumbull, R-Panama City, said Tuesday. Trumbull’s biggest worry about the project was that, despite it being billed as a shelter project for children, there was no guarantee adults wouldn’t be housed on the base as well……

Final week of Tyndall Red Flag exercises underway


News Herald © February 10, 2016

By COLLIN BREAUX
The third and final week of Exercise Red Flag 16-1 is underway, according to Tyndall Air Force Base. Twelve F-22 Raptors assigned to the 95th Fighter Squadron at Tyndall AFB, along with about 30 other airframes, are participating in the advanced training program administered by the United States Warfare Center and executed through the 414th Combat Training Squadron, both located at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, Tyndall officials reported. The 325th Fighter Wing is leading Red Flag for the first time, with more than 130 aircraft and about 3,000 personnel involved in the high-tempo exercise that incorporates day and night missions. Col. Derek France, commander of the 325th Fighter Wing, is tasked with commanding the Red Flag 16-1, Air Expeditionary Wing, which consists of squadrons from different military branches and coalition nations from around the world.

NAS Whiting Field –

Naval Aviation Training Draws Noise Complaints In Foley


WKRG © February 10, 2016

By Pat Peterson

Bill and Susan Trimble moved to Foley’s Glen Lakes subdivision from Arkansas two years ago. The Trimbles and some of their neighbors say military pilots training on the T-6 aircraft fly right over their house from the time they wake up until right before dinner. —We had no idea there was a military facility nearby,— says Susan Trimble. —We come down to paradise and the next thing we know, we’ve got planes flying all around us all over the place,— says Bill Trimble. —I’m not anti-military, I’m a former Naval officer.— The pilots are using nearby Barin Field for touch and go exercises. —We want the Navy to move their operations from Barin NOLF to somewhere where it’s not an inhabited area where they can fly and not disrupt the lives of people,— says Tom Hallberg. The pilots that use Barin Field are stationed at NAS Whiting Field near Milton, FL. Military officials there are aware of the noise complaints and say they want to be good stewards.

NAS Key West –

Commission delves into affordable housing

http://keysnews.com/node/72884
BY TIMOTHY O'HARA Citizen Staff
The Monroe County Commission on Wednesday will again tackle the issue of dealing with one of the Florida Keys most pressing issues — creating more housing for workers. County and Keys’ city officials have begun to call the worker housing situation a crisis and have formed committees and set aside money for the creation of worker and affordable housing projects. The county commission will vote Wednesday on changing the zoning for a waterfront area bordering Big Coppitt and Rockland Keys from industrial to mixed-use commercial, which could lead to roughly 200 rental units for workers to be placed there. Residential development is currently prohibited on land designated industrial. The county commission will meet at 9 a.m. Wednesday at the Harvey Government Center, 1200 Truman Ave. ........

Exercises pick up as Carrier Air Wing 8 roars into town
http://keysnews.com/node/72938

BY ADAM LINHARDT

The busy winter season over Boca Chica Field is kicking into high gear this week. Nearly 1,000 sailors and at least seven squadrons are in town as Naval Air Station Key West hosts Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia-based Carrier Air Wing 8, said NAS Key West spokeswoman Trice Denny. —From now until the air show in April, we will be very busy...

DOD Issues –

Questions, frustration as women prepare to join combat units

Military Times © February 10, 2016

By Leo Shane III

Military women are headed into combat posts. But that's just the start of their fighting. As the military moves towards opening all jobs to all troops, regardless of gender, both advocates and critics on Capitol Hill are frustrated by the unanswered questions surrounding when the changes will happen, how they'll be put in place and what side effects the massive cultural change will have on the armed services. Among the unexplored, potential problems worrying lawmakers:
Will job standards be lowered? Are military leaders ready and accepting of the change? Will women be required to register for the draft now? Defense officials for the last three years have been studying and preparing for full integration of women into front-line and infantry units, with the stated goal of filling all military jobs with the —best qualified and most capable personnel regardless of gender………

US Army Pivots to Europe

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/land/weapons/2016/02/14/us-army-pivots-europe/80284042/

Defense News © February 14, 2016

By Jen Judson and Aaron Mehta

For years, the US administration has cast a longing gaze on a pivot to the Asia Pacific but wars in the Middle East have managed to divert attention. And now Russia has re-emerged as the number one threat to the US. So if there’s a pivot happening anywhere it’s to Europe, and it’s clear the Army will lead. President Obama’s last budget request more than quadrupled the amount of overseas contingency operations (OCO) money funneled into what is being called the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI). The $3.4 billion in fiscal 2017 funding is part of an effort to deter Russia’s military aggression in Eastern Europe and to bolster allies’ defense capabilities. And it’s clear that the majority of those dollars — $2.8 billion of it — are Army green………

Other Items of Interest –

Congress moves to confront military child abuse with Talia's Law


Military Times © February 9, 2016

By Drew Gerber

The House on Tuesday passed a bill that would require anyone employed by the Defense Department to report cases of suspected child abuse on military installations to state child protective service agencies in addition to reporting such suspected crimes up their
chain of command. The legislation was approved by voice vote and sent to the Senate for consideration. Called Talia’s Law, the bill is named for five-year-old Talia Williams who was tortured and beaten to death by her father — an active-duty Army specialist at the time — and step-mother in 2005 at Wheeler Army Airfield in Hawaii. Talia’s mother, Tarshia Williams, sued the U.S. government in 2008 for what she argued were failures by military officials to report suspicions that her daughter was being abused. Williams was awarded $2 million in a settlement last May……..

Another Year of Postponing Facility Maintenance for Military Services

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/another-year-of-postponing-facility-maintenance-for-military-services/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=ee32232428-RSS_dc360.EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-ee32232428-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360.EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © February 10, 2016
By Dan Cohen

Facility sustainment accounts would fall short of requirements in all four military branches, forcing the services to accept continued risk in maintaining their installations, under the fiscal 2017 budget request released Tuesday by the Defense Department. The Army’s facilities budget, for example, would drop $294 million from the current year, marking the latest in a series of cuts over the past several years. In FY 2014 the Army’s total facilities budget was $2.6 billion; by FY 2016, it had fallen to $1.6 billion, reported Defense News. —Unfortunately, we could only afford to fund about 67 percent of our facilities sustainment requirements,— Maj. Gen. Thomas Horlander, the Army’s budget director, told reporters during the service’s budget briefing……..

Army Drawdown Plan Should Be Stopped, House Republicans Say

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/army-drawdown-plan-should-be-stopped-house-republicans-say/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=1b761d7575-RSS_dc360.EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-1b761d7575-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360.EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © February 11, 2016
By Dan Cohen

With the military facing growing threats around the globe, the Army’s plan to shrink its end strength is ill-advised, two GOP members of the House Armed Services Committee said Wednesday. —It is clear from all of the testimony we’ve received and the information that we’ve
received from the Army that this [drawdown] could break the Army, [and] that it would significantly hamper the next president of the United States in their opportunities and capabilities for the military to protect the country,‖ said Mike Turner (R-Ohio), chairman of the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee.

Legislation Would Block Further Drops in Army, Marine Corps End Strength


Defense Communities 360 © February 12, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Legislation introduced Wednesday by two members of the House Armed Services Committee would freeze the size of the Army and Marine Corps at current levels in an effort to block drawdowns now underway. The 2016 Protecting Our Security Through Utilizing Right-Sized End-Strength (POSTURE) Act — introduced by Mike Turner (R-Ohio), chairman of the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee, and Chris Gibson (R-N.Y.) — would set the Army’s end strength at 1,035,000 for the total force rather than the service’s planned target of 980,000. The Army’s end strength under the bill would be just below its pre-9/11 troop level, reported Defense News.
February 22, 2016 – FDSTF Update

TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Meeting – March 17, 2016 in Cocoa Beach** – The next meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, March 17, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM at the Courtyard by Marriott, 3435 N. Atlantic Ave., Cocoa Beach, FL 32931.

2. **Attachments:**
   - FDSTF Legislative Tracker
   - Veterans Bills
   - USAF Force Structure

Regards,  BG.

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Articles of Interest:

**BRAC** –

*Most BRAC 2005 Moves to Collocate Training Activities Fail to Achieve Jointness, GAO Finds*
By Dan Cohen

If the Defense Department has its heart set on promoting jointness among the military services, it likely will need to conduct another BRAC round as the last one failed to achieve many of the gains in efficiency and enhanced capabilities officials hoped to accomplish through a handful of recommendations intended to merge training activities from multiple services. At least that’s the implication of the latest report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO). GAO analysts focused on six recommendations from BRAC 2005 designed to promote opportunities for jointness by consolidating training functions across the services and infrastructure at a single location:

- Joint Center for Consolidated Management Training, Fort Lee, Va.;
- Joint Center of Excellence for Culinary Training, Fort Lee, Va.;
- Joint Center of Excellence for Religious Training and Education, Fort Jackson, S.C.;
- Joint Strike Fighter Initial Joint Training Site, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.;
- undergraduate pilot and navigator training, Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla.; and
- relocation of the Army’s 7th Special Forces Group to Eglin AFB…………

GAO Questions Accuracy of BRAC 2005 Implementation Costs

The final $35.1 billion tally of implementation costs for the last round of base closures was “likely somewhat understated,” the Government Accountability Office (GAO) concluded, after discovering that some costs funded outside of the Pentagon’s special BRAC 2005 account to carry out the recommendations were not reported. The conclusion stemmed from a larger investigation of whether a handful of BRAC 2005 recommendations intended to consolidate training activities from multiple services met the Pentagon’s goal of promoting jointness, and was based on a review of only six recommendations. The 2005 round included a total of 198 recommendations……..
DOD Budget–

‘Worst First’ Approach to Dictate Facility Priorities, under Air Force’s FY’17 Budget


Defense Communities 360 © February 17, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The fiscal 2017 budget request would require the Air Force to continue to accept risk in sustaining its installations, with emergency repairs taking priority over long-term facility needs. —That does push us into a strategy of worst first. We have a backlog of like $12 billion in facility restoration, modernization projects, so we are addressing the worst first,‖ Lt. Gen. John Cooper, the service’s deputy chief of staff for logistics, engineering and force protection, told the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee on Friday. —The worst first focuses around the mission. So unfortunately, quality of life is competing against mission requirements, and we are opting for our mission requirements,‖ he told the lawmakers………

Use of OCO Account May Not Be Divisive Issue This Year, Democrat’s Comments Indicate


Defense Communities 360 © February 22, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), ranking member on House Armed Services, on Friday acknowledged that using DOD’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account may be the only solution if the department needs more money than the Obama administration requested for fiscal 2017. Smith would favor raising the statutory cap on defense spending to accommodate a
boost in DOD’s budget, but that path may not be possible, he said, reported CQ Roll Call. —If it was up to me, and we decided there was an extra $10 billion that was needed, I’d raise the caps,‖ Smith said on C-SPAN. —Certainly, where readiness is concerned in particular, I can make an argument that the Department of Defense needs more money. While being critical of doing it through OCO, if that’s the only way Republicans will do it, then, no, I’m not inalterably opposed to that if the case is made,‖ he said…………

MacDill AFB –

**On duty, but unarmed: MacDill airmen can’t have personal weapons on the base**


Tampa Tribune © February 18, 2016

By Howard Altman

At a time of heightened concern over security at military bases, more than two-thirds of airmen at MacDill Air Force Base surveyed last month said they want permission to carry weapons on base — something only law enforcement personnel are allowed to do. The survey was taken Jan. 26 after Air Force Col. Dan Tulley, commander of the 6th Air Mobility Wing at MacDill, held his quarterly meetings with the men and women under his command, known as a commander’s call. One non-commissioned officers asked Tulley if he would follow the lead of his counterpart at Dyess Air Force Base in Texas and allow weapons on base, said Terry Montrose, a spokesman for the wing, which is the MacDill host unit……..

**Report: MacDill AFB evicting NOAA hurricane planes**


Washington Times © February 18, 2016

For more than two decades, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has been flying hurricane-hunter aircraft out of Hangar 5 at MacDill Air Force Base. The Tampa Tribune ([http://bit.ly/1SUT5pw](http://bit.ly/1SUT5pw)) reports the Air Force wants the hangar back and NOAA will have to vacate by July 1, 2017. It is unclear where the NOAA operation will go, whether to another location on base, somewhere off base, or out of the Tampa area entirely. Hangar 5 is home to
NOAA’s Aircraft Operations Center, which directs three Hurricane Hunter aircraft and six other specialized environmental monitoring planes. NOAA and the Air Force are discussing what comes next, and a spokesman says is exploring both short- and long-term aircraft facility solutions.

Refueling team from MacDill A.F.B. helps The Thunderbirds get to Daytona 500


ABC Action News © February 19, 2016

By Ryan Raiche

A refueling aircraft from MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa met up with the Thunderbirds to top off their tanks in mid-flight, and ABC Action News went along for the ride. The Thunderbirds took off Friday morning from their home base in Las Vegas, Nevada en route for Daytona, Florida where they will perform at the Daytona 500. But not even the famous Thunderbirds can make that trip on a single tank of gas. "I've been at MacDill for six years. This is the first time I've ever done the Thunderbirds," said Matthew Scott, Boom Operator for the 91st Air Refueling Squadron. The mission started around 3 a.m. Friday, when the crew prepped the KC-135 Stratotanker -- one of 16 in the ancient yet nibble refueling fleet at MacDill. The inside the aircraft looks more like a cargo plane with plenty of room for military troops and supplies. But the tail of the plane -- the refueling pod -- is where all the action happens.

Hurlburt Field –

Reflecting on 20 years of housing transformation

http://www.hilltoptimes.com/content/reflecting-20-years-housing-transformation


By RON MARLIN

In late September 2015, Air Force leaders joined Corvias Military Living at Hurlburt Field, Florida, to celebrate the delivery of 145 brand-new housing units. After the speeches were done, the ribbon cut and the crowd dispersed, Master Sgt. John Campbell, his wife Nicole and their
two sons stepped through the front door as the first residents of their new home. The journey that brought the Campbell family to the stoop of a new home at Hurlburt Field began 20 years ago with military housing privatization legislation. Back then, Air Force Housing was in an unacceptable state, with roughly half the homes in the inventory falling below established Air Force standards. The Air Force housing transformation began in 1998 when we closed the first housing deal at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas. That project delivered 420 brand-new units and solidified the Air Force’s commitment to establish an Air Force-wide program.

NAS Jacksonville –

**NAS Jacksonville runway construction project: Estimated completion date: June 27**


Jax Air News © February 17, 2016

This project replaces the original runway that was built in 1940. The last comprehensive overhaul/major runway repairs were completed in 1967. Today’s repairs/improvements are necessary in order to meet evolving NAVAIR operational requirements and safety criteria and to ensure compliance with FAA airfield regulations. Runway 10/28 thresholds will receive full-depth concrete placement of the existing pavement at the east and west ends in order to comply with design standards and requirements for P-8A aircraft. The project also includes construction of a new 1,000-foot overrun at the west end of runway 10/28, along with construction of associated taxiways and new airfield lighting. Replacement of airfield lighting, including new taxiway signs, a new lighting vault, demolition of existing lighting vaults, and incidental work are included.

NS Mayport –

**USS Milwaukee Arrives in BAE Systems Yard in Jacksonville**


USNI News © February 19, 2016

By: Sam LaGrone
The Littoral Combat Ship USS *Milwaukee* (LCS-5) has arrived in a Jacksonville, Fla. BAE Systems yard, according to a Friday release from the Navy. The ship had left Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek – Fort Story, Va. on Wednesday headed to Florida to finalize repairs to its propulsion system that suffered damage in mid-December, according to the service. During its time at Little Creek repairing damage to its *Milwaukee* – a San Diego-based ship — took on a Naval Station Mayport, Fla. LCS crew. —Crew 108 Sailors are thrilled to finally arrive in our new homeport and reunite with our families,‖ said Cmdr. Kevin Ralston, *Milwaukee* commanding officer said in the statement. —It’s been a long journey to get here, but I couldn’t be happier with my crew’s performance and their efforts to get *Milwaukee* ready for sea.‖ The Navy will finalize the repairs to the combining gears ahead of shock trials that will prove the ship’s systems in a simulated combat scenario……..

Florida National Guard –

**Greater Reliance on Reserve Components Could Offset Army Downsizing, Milley Says**


Defense Communities 360 © February 17, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley wants to increase the service’s reliance on its reserve elements as a way of compensating for its declining active-duty end strength. Milley’s embrace of the National Guard and Army Reserve would echo many of the recommendations in the recent report issued by the National Commission on the Future of the Army, while marking a turn from his predecessor, reported the Colorado Springs Gazette. —The Army is a million-plus, it’s not 450,000‖ Milley said, citing the strength of the combined force of the Army vs. its shrinking active-duty roster. —I think of the Army as a single entity that comes in three forms.‖ To overcome the prolonged amount of time needed to prepare National Guard units for combat deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army chief wants to increase their training and integrate active-duty soldiers into their ranks……..

NAS Key West –

**Deconstructing Truman Harbor issue: Exploring the debate over water access**
BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff
Naval Air Station Key West officials haven’t heard from U.S. congressional leaders who were asked by several City of Key West officials to intervene on their behalf regarding access to Truman Harbor. —We have yet to receive any inquiries from the Florida congressional delegation,‖ said NAS Key West commanding officer Capt. Steve McAlearney………..

Other Items of Interest –

**Readiness Gap Continues to Plague Air Force**

Colorado Springs, Colo. — The Air Force’s target date for restoring readiness to levels that existed prior to sequestration has been postponed once again, with the objective still remaining more than a decade away, officials told the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee last week. —The 2025 timeframe was based on some assumptions that haven’t panned out,‖ said Gen. David Goldfein, the Air Force’s vice chief of staff. —We assumed we wouldn’t be increasing our activity in Europe, in the Pacific and in Iraq and Syria. As long as that demand signal is there, what you’ll see is a continual, rolling eight-to-10 year delay in getting to full spectrum readiness. Our prediction is that for the next two-to-three years, we’ll probably be able to just hold our own,‖ said Goldfein, reported Federal News Radio. Currently, only about half of the Air Force’s combat units are sufficiently trained for conflict against high-end adversaries. One of the primary hurdles preventing air crews from regaining desired readiness levels is that instead of conducting training missions, units are committed to carrying out missions overseas that don’t provide the appropriate experience……

AF officials announce FY 2017 budget force structure changes
Air Force officials released force structure changes resulting from the president’s fiscal year 2017 budget Feb. 12. This year’s budget request continues the momentum gained from the recovery provided by the 2015 Bipartisan Budget Act, but still reflects the tough choices the Air Force was forced to make as the demand for Air Force capability continues to increase as the Budget Control Act looms in fiscal 2018. The fiscal 2017 budget leverages the total force -- active duty, Guard and Reserve -- to maintain the service’s ability to support ongoing operations while ensuring the service is ready to face future threats. The budget keeps the active-duty force at 317,000 while posturing the force for future growth. Guard and Reserve Manning will remain constant, but the Air Force will continue plans to transfer aircraft and flying missions to Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve locations that would otherwise have no mission due to fleet divestments……..
TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Meeting – March 17, 2016 in Cocoa Beach**  – The next meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, March 17, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM at the Courtyard by Marriott, 3435 N. Atlantic Ave., Cocoa Beach, FL 32931.

2. **Attachments:**
   - DRAFT Meeting Agenda
   - FDSTF Legislative Tracker
   - Veterans Bills
   - TPG Monthly Report

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FLORIDA DEFENSE SUPPORT TASK FORCE

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –
Excess Capacity Analysis Expected before Summer

DOD expects to complete an analysis of the department’s excess capacity by late spring, the first formal analysis of how much surplus infrastructure it retains since prior to the last round of base closures, Politico reported. The new report, mandated under the fiscal 2016 defense authorization bill, is expected to bolster the department’s case for holding a new BRAC round. The administration’s FY 2017 budget request calls for a new round to be held in 2019. Two of the services recently have updated their assessments of how much excess infrastructure is in their inventory. Air Force officials testified earlier this month that the service has a surplus of 30 percent. The Army believes the portion of its infrastructure considered excess will rise to 21 percent after ongoing restructuring shrinks the service’s active-duty end strength from 490,000 to 450,000 soldiers, a top installations official said last year, citing a rough estimate.

Army leaders to Congress: Give us another round of BRAC, please

Ongoing budget cuts have forced the Army to only focus on the fights it might face today, the service’s top leaders said Wednesday on Capitol Hill. —Ignoring readiness shortfalls puts our nation at great risk. The choice to focus on near-term readiness has risk,‖ said Acting Army Secretary Patrick Murphy. ―We’re mortgaging our future readiness because we have to ensure success in today’s battles.‖ Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley, who testified alongside Murphy, agreed, saying that —while the Army prefers investment in both future and current readiness,‖ it is focused on the threats or contingencies the force might face in the short-term. In their remarks to the Senate Appropriations Committee’s subcommittee on defense, Murphy and Milley cited the growing threat of radical terrorism, a revanchist Russia, a rising China and provocative North Korea as reasons why there are more than 190,000 soldiers committed in 140 countries around the world.
Upbraids Congress for Rejecting Past BRAC Requests

The Pentagon cannot afford to wait any longer to harvest the savings from a new round of base closures, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said in the written testimony he submitted to the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Thursday. The earliest the Pentagon could carry out the next BRAC round is in 2019, Carter said. “Fourteen years since DOD was allowed to right-size its domestic infrastructure, which any business leader or citizen would think is ridiculous,” he said. “Now is the time to fix it.”

DOD's fiscal 2017 budget request calls for a BRAC round in 2019; the department’s last several budgets had proposed holding the next round in 2017. The department estimates it has over 20 percent excess infrastructure, Carter said. For Congress to ignore that DOD has “more bases in more places than we need,” while criticizing it for wasteful spending —is not only a sin of omission, but a disservice to America’s taxpayers,” according to the secretary’s testimony………

James Reminds Congress that Air Force Needs a BRAC Round

In case there was any lingering doubt, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James on Friday underscored her service’s growing impatience to shed a portion of its excess capacity, estimated at 30 percent. “I never miss an opportunity to remind all of you and remind our Congress that we really, really do need the authority to conduct a base closure and realignment,” James said during the Air Force Association’s air warfare symposium in Orlando, reported Military.com. Air Force officials have called the situation unaffordable. Money spent on unneeded bases could be better spent on weapons, combat readiness training, quality-of-life issues for airmen and maintaining infrastructure that’s needed, according to an Air Force spokeswoman……

Excess Capacity Little Changed since Last BRAC, DOD Installations Official Says
Excess capacity throughout DOD likely stands at about 20 percent, Pete Potochney, acting assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, told the House Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee on Thursday. That figure could change slightly, however, as a —DOD-wide parametric analysis‖ is still underway, according to the written testimony Potochney submitted to the panel. Two of the services recently conducted their own assessments, with the Army determining that 21 percent of its capacity is excess to its needs and the Air Force pegging its ratio at 30 percent. A new BRAC round will save about $2 billion annually, with savings paying for the estimated $7 billion in implementation costs by the end of the six-year phase-in period. A new round — which the Pentagon wants to conduct in 2019 — would be —efficiency-focused‖ unlike the 2005 round of base closures.

Latest DoD plan to close U.S. bases gets mild response in Congress

Defense officials repeated their plea to Congress on Thursday for another base closing round, and once again received partial empathy for their cost concerns but no real path forward on the controversial proposal. The Pentagon's fiscal 2017 budget request marks the fifth consecutive year military leaders have requested a new base closing round, arguing the services’ stateside footprints are too large given drawdowns in troops and equipment over the last decade. Pete Potocheney, acting assistant secretary of defense for installations, estimated a base closing round in 2019 will save about $2 billion annually, and promised the process would be —efficiency-focused‖ and designed to cut military costs. —We are in a tough budget situation‖ he said. —We need to make tough choices. And we need a BRAC‖

BRAC Round Would Free up Funding for Enduring Facilities, James Says

Defense Communities 360 © March 4, 2016

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/excess-capacity-little-changed-since-last-brac-dod-installations-official-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=de69b894ee-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-de69b894ee-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Latest DoD plan to close U.S. bases gets mild response in Congress

Military Times © March 3, 2016

By Leo Shane III

By Leo Shane III

BRAC Round Would Free up Funding for Enduring Facilities, James Says

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/brac-round-would-free-up-funding-for-enduring-facilities-james-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=3c6f468045-
At a hearing Wednesday of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James pointed to the extra dollars a BRAC round would make available for the service’s remaining facilities as the main impetus for pursuing additional base closures. "We have an ever-shrinking pot of money for infrastructure improvement and we’re spreading it out way, way thin. And if we could reduce that overall footprint of infrastructure, we would have more money to keep up and improve the facilities that we really need going forward," James said in response to a question from Rep. Betty McCollum (D-Minn.). The secretary made clear the urgency of the matter. "I’m worried about infrastructure across the Air Force," she said……..

Ballentine Offers Forceful Defense of Pentagon’s BRAC Request

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/ballentine-offers-forceful-defense-of-pentagons-brac-request/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=c0a55d2720-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-c0a55d2720-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

By Dan Cohen

Defending the administration’s request for a BRAC round in 2019 at last week’s hearing of the House Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee was left to Miranda Ballentine, assistant secretary of the Air Force for installations, environment and energy, who took on lawmakers’ past concerns about the economic harm borne by defense communities, implementation costs and the prospect that surge capacity could be shortchanged following a future round. But first Ballentine pointed out that 30 percent of the service’s infrastructure is excess, making a new round of base closures urgent.—Since the Gulf War, we’ve reduced combat-coded fighter squadrons from 134 to 55. That’s a nearly 60 percent reduction. Yet all BRACs in that time period have only reduced U.S. bases by about 15 percent," she said. —Since BRAC 2005, the Air Force has thousands fewer personnel and hundreds fewer aircraft, yet we have not closed a single installation in the United States," Ballentine noted……..
Defense Secretary Ashton Carter and top military leaders will be on Capitol Hill this week making their case that Congress should pass the president's budget proposal for fiscal year 2017 so the military can be spared the disruptions caused by unpredictable funding. Any hopes for a stable funding cycle, however, have been rapidly fading as battle lines are drawn and factions on Capitol Hill prepare to fight over government spending. Although the government's discretionary budget top line was agreed upon in October by congressional leaders and the White House, that deal is being challenged both by anti-spending conservative Republicans in the House and by GOP defense hawks. The agreement set a $1.070 trillion top line for discretionary spending, and the Pentagon's request accounts for $523.9 billion. Defense would get an additional $58.8 billion in war supplemental funding.

**Defense Committees Poised to Receive Military ‘Unfunded Requirements’ List [UPDATED]**

The Senate Armed Services Committee last week asked the military chiefs to submit a detailed list of items that were not funded in the president’s fiscal year 2017 budget request. This annual drill — known as the “unfunded requirements” list — is taking on added significance this year as congressional defense hawks seek to make a case that the Pentagon should receive tens of billions of dollars more than what the president requested. “Each one of us is developing a list that we'll submit to the department,” said Army Maj. Gen. Thomas Horlander, deputy assistant secretary for financial management. The service chiefs received a letter last week from Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., asking them to itemize programs that they believe should be funded if more money were available.

**Defense Hawks in House Urge Boost in Defense Spending**

Defense Communities 36 © February 26, 2016
The battle over fiscal 2017 defense spending so far appears to be following last year’s script, with defense hawks pushing to add billions of extra dollars to the Pentagon’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account, which is not subject to the Budget Control Act caps. Rep. Mike Turner (R-Ohio) on Wednesday revealed that he had collected the signatures of 84 members of the House GOP for a letter to the chamber’s Budget Committee endorsing a boost of about $18 billion in defense spending beyond the Obama administration’s request. The challenge for House Budget Chairman Tom Price (R-Ga.) is to find a compromise between defense advocates’ desire to raise DOD spending and fiscal conservatives’ preference to ignore last October’s budget deal that provides defense and non-defense programs a total of $30 billion in relief from the budget caps……

**Air Force’s $7.2B Wish List Restores 5 F-35s, 8 C-130Js**


Defense News © March 4, 2016

By Lara Seligman

In a $7.2 billion wish list of items the Air Force will submit to Congress, the service is asking for funds to restore the five F-35 joint strike fighters and eight C-130J transport planes it was forced to cut in its latest budget request. The document is par for the course of the Pentagon’s budget season. Congress asks for a so-called — unfunded priorities listl from each of the armed services every year. Lawmakers can choose to add funding to buy the requested items or ignore the request altogether……

**Air Force ‘Wish List’ includes Funds for Installation Support, End Strength Increase**

[http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/air-force-wish-list-includes-funds-for-installation-support-end-strength-increase/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=c0a55d2720-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-c0a55d2720-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29](http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/air-force-wish-list-includes-funds-for-installation-support-end-strength-increase/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=c0a55d2720-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-c0a55d2720-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29)

Defense Communities 360 © March 7, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Air Force’s unfunded requirements list for fiscal 2017 includes $1.2 billion for installation needs and $145 million to increase its active-duty end strength by 4,000 personnel. The service’s
total — wish list, which will be sent to Congress later this month, totals $7.2 billion, reports Air Force Times. About $2.9 billion of that amount would buy back capability the service stripped out of its FY 2017 budget request due to resource limitations. Almost $900 million of the installation requirements would go toward facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization (FSRM) for the service’s three components. The Air Force’s FY 2017 budget request focused on military construction recapitalization investments and maintained FSRM at minimal levels, a list obtained by Breaking Defense explains. As a result, the budget requires the service to adopt a — worst first approach to address commanders’ facility priorities.

Space Coast –

**Brevard defense sector hangs on next president**


Florida Today © February 18, 2016

By John Byron

The military is big in Brevard. The next president’s stand on defense could boost Brevard’s economy. Or cripple it. But asking whether a candidate cares about defense is a silly question — the answer is always yes. The voter must dig deeper to divine which candidate and what party will do more for this major driver of Brevard’s economy. How big is defense in Brevard? Seeking a precise answer tells one why economics is called the Dismal Science. But it’s possible to show the broad shape of Brevard’s defense income. A good guess at the total impact of defense spending in Brevard is well above $10 billion annually.

**After a series of delays, SpaceX launches upgraded Falcon 9 rocket**


Washington Post © March 4, 2016

By Christian Davenport

After several delays due to technical problems, a wayward boat and gusty high-altitude winds, SpaceX finally launched a commercial satellite to space Friday evening from Cape Canaveral. But an attempt to land the first stage of the unmanned and upgraded Falcon 9 rocket on a floating
platform in the Atlantic Ocean was unsuccessful. A few minutes after what appeared to be a flawless launch, commentators on SpaceX's live webcast said that the first stage was headed toward the platform. A camera on board showed what appeared to be a flash, and then went out. Later, SpaceX founder Elon Musk, the tech billionaire, tweeted that the rocket "landed hard" on the floating platform he calls an —autonomous space port droneship. Still, the miss is considered something of a success by SpaceX, and Musk tweeted that the "next flight has a good chance." ……

Team Orlando –

New Space for Team Orlando


Defense Communities 360 © February 24, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Metro Orlando Defense Task Force is expected to purchase an 84,000-square-foot building as part of an effort to retain the area’s defense simulation cluster in the event of a new BRAC round. The building near the Central Florida Research Park is being purchased with state funds to —mitigate the threat of base realignment and closure,— Thomas Baptiste, chairman of the task force, told the Orlando Business Journal. Baptiste said about half of the $28 million the task force secured in state funds will go toward the building’s purchase. The building will allow the Naval Support Activity Orlando team to move from existing space that is overcrowded and expensive to lease, according to the story. The newly purchased facility will be managed by the University of Central Florida, which sits next to the research park and Naval Support Activity Orlando…….

MacDill AFB –

Socom drone program at MacDill AFB will thrive despite budget cuts

http://www.tbo.com/list/military-news/less-money-but-more-action-for-socom's-drones-20160301/

Tampa Tribune © March 2, 2016
Drones help commandos see and target the enemy, a capability that grows more important as the military relies more on special operations forces in its battle against jihadis in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. So why has the White House recommended 26 percent less for drone procurement, research and development through Tampa-based U.S. Special Operations Command in its proposed new defense budget? Not to worry, according to a new study of military drone spending, as well as a congresswoman and one local expert who oversaw drone operations while in uniform. Despite a proposed cut from $132 million this year to $97 million next year, Socom will actually be able to do more with its drones under the new budget — and will add more of the unmanned aerial vehicles to its fleet. The difference reflects $45.6 million spent this year for a one-time classified program to acquire intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance packages for existing drones…..

Commandos at MacDill AFB gear up for the annual Warrior Games

http://www.tbo.com/list/military-news/warriors-on-the-court-20160306/

Tampa Tribune © March 7, 2016

By Howard Altman

Sitting on the floor of the MacDill Air Force Base gym, Army Sgt. Lauren Montoya swats a red, white and green volleyball across the net, where another group of men and women are sitting on the floor waiting to swat it back. All the while, her teammates, opponents and the audience in the stands whoop it up. Montoya is on the floor because she is one of about four dozen active-duty service members and veterans taking part in a round-robin sitting volleyball tourney. The adaptive sport event, set up so that even those missing limbs can participate, is a tuneup for the Defense Department's 2016 DoD/Warrior Care Policy Military Adaptive Sports Program Warrior Games. The games, which run June 15-21 at West Point, New York, give wounded, ill and injured service members and veterans a chance to compete against each other in seven different adaptive sports…..

Battle to retake Mosul has started

http://www.tbo.com/list/military-news/altman/battle-to-retake-mosul-has-started-20160306/

Tampa Tribune © March 6, 2016

By Howard Altman
A battle to retake a major urban area is never a simple task. It’s even more complex in a place like Iraq, a country beset by religious, sectarian and tribal strife. And it’s more complex still when the battle will take place in Mosul, a city that was once home to more than 2 million people and since June 2014 has been controlled by the so-called Islamic State. The Islamic State turned the last city it lost, Ramadi, into a booby-trapped nightmare before slinking away. Last week, on the lush grounds of Innisbrook Golf Club in Palm Harbor, I had a conversation about the coming attack to retake Mosul with the man who is leading it. Attired not in a uniform but a gray suit, Staff Gen. Taleb Shegati Alkenani, commander of Iraq’s Counter Terrorism Service, addressed the sensitivities of taking any kind of military action in a country so deeply divided……..

Eglin AFB –

**ADC Recognizes 10 Communities for Outstanding Support to Service Members, Military Families**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/news-from-adc/adc-recognizes-10-communities-for-outstanding-support-to-service-members-military-families/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=a7815bc0a1-RSS_dce360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-a7815bc0a1-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dce360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 1, 2016

The Association of Defense Communities and the Defense Communities Caucus on Monday announced the first class of —Great American Defense Communities,— an initiative launched this year to acknowledge the unique contributions cities, counties and regions that host installations make to improve quality of life for service members, veterans and their families. The 10 communities were selected by a panel of defense community advocates and experts from dozens of nominees based on the broad range of efforts they carry out on behalf of military personnel and their families, covering areas such as education, job opportunities, housing, family support during deployments and community appreciation. —All 10 of our inaugural class of honorees truly embodied the ideals this initiative was designed to celebrate — making host communities for our nation’s military installations _Great Places to Call Home_,’ I said ADC CEO Tim Ford. —The Great American Defense Communities program will help ADC and the Defense Communities Caucus share positive stories about the exemplary efforts being made in communities to support defense installations and their personnel, Ford said.

The inaugural class of honorees includes:

- Colorado Springs, Colo.
- Dayton, Ohio
- Ft. Leonard Wood Region, Mo.
Medical Group wins innovation award

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/190695/medical-group-wins-innovation-award#.VtnxW-Y007A

By Ilka Cole

The Air Force Surgeon General recognized the 96th MDG's collaboration in creating the United States Transportation Command's first Ebola transport isolation system as their most notable achievement. A 96th Medical Group team, recently won the Air Force Medicine Service’s 2015 Outstanding Achievement in Innovation Award. The Air Force Surgeon General recognized the 96th MDG's collaboration in creating the United States Transportation Command's first Ebola transport isolation system as their most notable achievement. The team's mission was to figure out how to transport Ebola patients from primitive areas where the virus is present without contaminating the aircraft and its crew...........

NS Mayport –

Mayport Goes To The Dogs


By Paige Gnann

Naval Station Mayport’s Military Working Dog (MWD) kennel has earned the title of Commander, Navy Region Southeast (CNRSE) MWD Kennel of the Year for 2015. The command was notified of their selection earlier this month and Kennel Master, Master-at-Arms 1st Class Joshua Lopez was given special recognition for his leadership at the kennel. Naval Station Mayport’s Kennel Master, MA1 Joshua Lopez, was instrumental in developing a working schedule that maintained a superior training and utilization which consistently exceeded requirements as outlined in OPNAV instruction. MA1 Lopez’s direct leadership is a testament to
the success of the Military Working Dog (MWD) program and is in keeping with Navy’s core values," said Capt. Christopher Gray with CNRSE……….

HSM-60 Says Goodbye to NS Mayport


Florida Times-Union © March 2, 2016

By Lt Cmdr. Caralyn Cain

After 15 years at Naval Station Mayport, the Jaguars of HSM-60 have made the move across town and across the river to Naval Air Station Jacksonville. The 193-member reserve Maritime Strike Squadron packed up, moved, and were back to operational status within a week’s time. HSM-60 was formerly known as Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light 60 (HSL-60). They transitioned to the HSM model this past summer and are now flying the fleet’s most technologically advanced helicopter weapon system, the MH-60R. HSM-60 is the only Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron in the Navy Reserve. The move itself was challenging, requiring a lot of manpower, time, and patience. The Squadron Maintenance Officer, Lt. Cmdr. Michael Renzi, who spearheaded the transition to the new spaces stated, —Our preparation for the move was thorough. The attention to detail and the exceptional effort of all our Sailors resulted in a very smooth transition."……

Mabus: Next Administration Will Have Final Say On Littoral Combat Ship Totals

http://news.usni.org/2016/03/02/mabus-next-administration-will-have-final-say-on-littoral-combat-ship-totals

USNI © March 2, 2016

By: Megan Eckstein

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus raised the possibility of a restored Littoral Combat Ship /Frigate program, noting for the first time publicly that the next administration – not this one – will make the final decision about how many small surface combatants to buy. Defense Secretary Ash Carter’s Dec. 14, 2015, memo that decreed the LCS/Frigate program would be halted after buying 40 ships instead of the planned 52, and that only one builder instead of two would finish out the ship class, clearly contradicted the Navy’s vision for building its future fleet. The Navy originally declined to comment to USNI News on the Carter memo. However, in contrast to the Carter memo’s statement that —the Navy’s strategic future requires focusing … more on new capabilities, not only ship numbers,— Department of the Navy Goals and Objectives for Fiscal
Avon Park Air Force Range –

**Cabinet spends $6.67 million to protect land**


The Ledger © March 2, 2016

By Jim Turner
Gov. Rick Scott and the Florida Cabinet agreed Wednesday to spend a combined $6.67 million on two large tracts of citrus and cattle land that will remain active ranches. The deals are expected to limit some pollutants from heading into Lake Okeechobee and provide a land buffer for the Avon Park Bombing Range. The deals, which limit the future uses of the land, break down to $4.32 million for 2,526 acres in northern Highlands County owned by S.Y. Hartt & Son, Inc., and $2.35 million for 1,189 acres in central Osceola County owned by Venture Four LLC.

**State OKs $4.3M conservation easement along Arbuckle Creek**


Environment Blogs © March 2, 2016

by Tom Palmer

The Florida Cabinet and Gov. Rick Scott have approved the purchase of a conservation easement over a 2,526-acre tract in northern Highlands County as part of the Everglades restoration. The deal with the S.Y., Hyatt Ranch along Arbuckle Creek, which flows from Lake Arbuckle in Polk County to Lake Istokpoga in Highlands County. The conservation easement prohibits the owner from intensifying agricultural operations and bans mining and oil drilling and restricts future development on the property. It also requires use of best management practices in fertilizer use. It is the latest in a series of conservation easements that have been purchased in this section of
the Kissimmee River Basin to either protect the Everglades or the provide a buffer for military operations at the nearby Avon Park Air Force Range........

Tyndall AFB –

Bay Defense Alliance shines light on local military's importance


WJHG © March 4, 2016

By: Danielle Ellis

The Bay County Chamber of Commerce is shining a light on our local military bases. At the third "First Friday" of the year Friday morning, the Bay Defense Alliance gave an update on their projects and the importance of the military presence in our community referring to Tyndall Air Base, Naval Support Activity Panama City, and the U.S. Coast Guard Station. Bringing awareness to the growing emphasis on the downsizing of the U.S. military, BDA President Tom Neuabuer elaborated on how critical it is to protect our local bases and their contributions to the Department of Defense. "I think we are very, very fortunate as a community to be a defense community," explained Neuabuer, "to have two bases here and over 10,000 people working on those bases. It's a very important part of our economy, but certainly a very important part of the fabric of our community." ........

NAS Pensacola –

NAS commander Hoskins to retire


By Will Isern

Naval Air Station Pensacola commanding officer Capt. Keith Hoskins will retire later this month. Hoskins will be succeeded by Capt. Chris Martin, who is currently undergoing prospective commanding officer training in Newport, R.I. A joint change of command and retirement ceremony will be held at the National Naval Aviation Museum aboard NAS Pensacola on March 24. Hoskins, who served as a Blue Angels pilot from 1999-2001, took command of NAS Pensacola in 2013 and oversaw the base's centennial celebration in 2014........
Florida National Guard –

**RED HORSE ready to ride**

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/191270/red-horse-ready-ride#.Vt2c5OY007A

DVIDS © March 6, 2016

The 202nd is one of nine RED HORSE squadrons in the Air National Guard and is led by Air Force Col. Robert Niesen. The commander expressed his confidence in the Airmen and his appreciation for their sacrifice. —It is especially gratifying to know that each and every one of you has willingly agreed to join in this endeavor,‖ said Niesen. —For all of you, it is an incredible thing that you are doing. It is wrought with the challenges of leaving family, friends and employers behind for an extended period. Please go forward with the peace of mind, knowing that we will take care of one another just as you, as good wingmen, will lookout for one another in the field.‖

NAS Whiting Field –

**Female Student Pilots Train At NAS Whiting Field**


WKRG © February 22, 2016

By Pat Peterson

NAS Whiting Field near Milton, Florida, is one of two primary training bases in the U.S. About 1,500 student aviators earn their wings at NAS Whiting annually. Many are female pilots.—One to two females per every ten students,‖ says Ensign Julia Martin. Martin recently earned her wings here and will soon receive advance training at a fleet replacement squadron.—I’m really excited, I’ve worked very hard here and I’ve trained with some of the best pilots in the world,‖ says Martin. —We don’t look at it as female or male, we look at it as being the best pilot you can be and that’s what we come here to do everyday.‖ Student pilots from Allied nations including Italy, Spain, Germany and Saudi Arabi also train at NAS Whiting Field………. 
CNIC Announces 2015 USS Bainbridge (CGN 25) Award Winner

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) announced the winner and honorable mentions in the 2015 Navy Community Service Program USS Bainbridge (CGN 25) Award Feb. 25. Naval Air Station (NAS) Whiting Field was selected as the fiscal year 2015 winner of the USS Bainbridge (CGN 25) award for overall excellence in community service. According to their winning entry, Sailors at NAS Whiting Field greatly improved the lives of more than 43,000 members of their local community by donating more than 15,000 hours through partnerships with local agencies. Sailors also provided critical assistance during disaster relief efforts, helping save the local community thousands of dollars and ensuring rehabilitation after flooding rains. The selection was highly competitive with the winner and honorable mentions being chosen from a field of 16.

NAS Whiting Field earns new award


WEAR TV © March 1, 2016

By Jasmine Anderson

Naval Air Station Whiting Field in Milton earned a new award. The base earned the Navy's Personal Excellence Flagship Award. It goes to commands that engage in outstanding community service activities that promote academics, life skills and civic education for youth. More than 70 members of NAS Whiting Field's team took part in programs designed to help youth in the community……..

NAS Key West –

Navy: 2016 Southernmost air show bigger than ever

http://keysnews.com/node/73361
KEYS NEWS © FEBRUARY 28, 2016

BY ADAM LINHARDT

The upcoming Naval Air Station Key West Southernmost Air Spectacular show on April 2-3 at Boca Chica Field is set to be even bigger than the last show in 2013 if the Navy's recent release of performers is any indicator. "I am very excited to be able to open the gates to our community," said NAS Key West commanding officer Capt. Steve McAlearney. "This air show is a great family event, and it's also an opportunity to show the visitors what an amazing Navy team we have here in Key West, and showcase the professionalism of our United States Navy as a whole." There will be military fighter demonstrations with the headliner being the Navy's premier flight demonstration team, the famous blue and gold Blue Angels, who will be joined by Boca Chica Field's own Fighter Squadron Composite 111 (VFC-111) Sun Downers in their F-5N Tiger II jets.........

DOD Issues –

McCain looks to shake up global military structure

http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/mccain-looks-to-shake-up-global-military-structure/article/2584176

Washington Examiner © February 25, 2016

By Jacqueline Klimas

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., provided more detail Thursday on what changes he hoped to make to the military's organizational structure this year, including examining if the current geographical combatant commands are still needed. McCain gave some examples of what he would be looking at, including whether three services need a medical corps or whether that can be consolidated. He also questioned the need for both a U.S. Northern Command and a U.S. Southern Command, divided along an arbitrary line. "Why should there be an arbitrary line at the Mexico/Guatemala border?" McCain told reporters at a Defense Writers Group breakfast in Washington. He also questioned why the headquarters of U.S. Africa Command is located in Stuttgart, Germany. "Is that what we had in mind when we formed an AFRICOM?" he asked.......
Defense Communities 360 © February 26, 2016

Two Republican members of the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee are supporting legislation to reverse planned drawdowns in the size of the Army and Marine Corps. The measure, introduced by Jerry Moran (Kan.) and co-sponsored by Roy Blunt (Mo.), would freeze the Army's active-duty end strength at 480,000 and the Marine Corps' at 184,000. Current plans call for the Army's active forces to drop to 450,000 by the end of fiscal 2018, and the Marine Corps' active end strength to drop to 182,000 by October and remain at that level over the duration of DOD's five-year planning horizon. The bill is a companion to the 2016 Protecting Our Security Through Utilizing Right-Sized End-Strength (POSTURE) Act introduced by Reps. Mike Turner (R-Ohio) and Chris Gibson (R-N.Y.) earlier this month……

Other Items of Interest –

Report: U.S. aircraft carriers’ ‘unchallenged primacy may be coming to a close’


By Thomas Gibbons-Neff

The United States’ aircraft carriers have always been an almost untouchable deterrent, steel behemoths capable of projecting the full weight of the U.S. military wherever they deploy. Yet while many militaries could never hope to match the U.S. carrier fleet in size and strength, countries such as China, Iran and Russia have spent recent years adjusting their forces and fielding equipment designed to counter one of the United States’ greatest military strengths. A report published Monday by the Center for a New American Security, a D.C.-based think tank that focuses on national security, claims that the Navy’s carrier operations are at an inflection point. Faced with growing threats abroad, the United States can either — operate its carriers at ever-increasing ranges … or assume high levels of risk in both blood and treasure.1……
Coast Guard Commandant Calls for Manpower Plus Up


Military.com © February 23, 2016

by Hope Hodge Seck

While many military service branches as grappling with manpower cuts, the Coast Guard is looking to expand, Commandant Adm. Paul Zukunft said Tuesday. Speaking at the U.S. Capitol as he delivered his service's annual State of the Coast Guard address, Zukunft paraphrased a line from the 1975 classic "Jaws". "Looking at the challenges we're facing in the world today: ladies and gentlemen, you're going to need a bigger Coast Guard," he said. Zukunft added that he was directing a Coast Guard Manpower Requirements Plan to develop a force size that took into account current strategy and risk management. At 88,000 strong, the service, which falls under the Department of Homeland Security, is by far the smallest of the uniformed services. An updated growth strategy will also allow the service to develop a Cyber Task Force, Zukunft said, which will turn the Coast Guard's cyber strategy into an operational arm of the service. "As we move forward, duty to people will take shape in a number of ways across our organization," he said. "You are going to see mission, service and individual level changes to best align our talent with demand in the 21st century." ……

The Pentagon's 'Force of the Future' plan just got trashed in Congress


Military Times © February 25, 2016

By Leo Shane III

Defense officials' hopes for sweeping personnel reforms were crushed by Senate Republicans on Thursday who attacked the ideas as —an outrageous waste of timel and the Pentagon's pick to implement them as unfit to serve. Brad Carson, the nominee to serve as undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness for nearly 11 months, received blistering criticism from members of the Senate Armed Services Committee for his work over the past year on the Force of the Future plan, work aimed at updating the military’s personnel system to better compete with civilian business benefits.........

US Air Force Unveils New B-21 Bomber
Defense News © February 26, 2016

By Lara Seligman

The US Air Force secretary unveiled the first official rendering of the new Long Range Strike Bomber and revealed its official designation: the B-21. In a speech at the Air Force Association's Air Warfare Symposium on Feb. 26, Secretary Deborah Lee James shared an artist's concept design of the next-generation bomber, which will be built by Northrop Grumman. She also announced the plane's long-awaited designation, calling it the B-21........

A new general takes command of the endless war in Afghanistan

Military Times © March 2, 2016

By Andrew Tilghman

Army Gen. John "Mick" Nicholson took command of U.S. forces in Afghanistan Wednesday, beginning a tour that will require big decisions about future force levels and use of air power for a mission now in its 15th year. During a ceremony at the American military headquarters in Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, Nicholson assumed the top job from Army Gen. John Campbell, who led the mission for the past 19 months and, in December 2014, oversaw the end of the "combat mission" known as Operation Enduring Freedom. Nicholson will lead a force of about 10,000 American troops at a time of mounting violence in some parts of the country. The Taliban is resurgent throughout Afghanistan's poppy heartland in the south, and there are signs that an emerging Islamic State faction is taking root in the east. At the same time, there is renewed scrutiny of President Obama's timeline for withdrawing U.S. forces........

Air Force Defends B-21 on Hill, but McCain Still 'Concerned'

Defense News © March 2, 2016

By Lara Seligman
Less than a week after Sen. John McCain threatened to block the Air Force’s new B-21 bomber so long as it was procured using a cost-plus contract, top service officials took to Capitol Hill to defend their acquisition strategy. Three top Air Force officials involved in B-21 development testified in a closed briefing before the Senate Armed Services Airland subcommittee Tuesday: Lt. Gen. Arnold Bunch, the Air Force’s top uniformed acquisition official; Randall Walden, director of the Rapid Capabilities Office, a small group inside Air Force acquisitions that handles secretive programs such as the X-37B space plane; and William Bailey, B-21 system program director. However, the meeting appears to have done little to appease the powerful chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee……

Ray Mabus, Longest-Serving Navy Secretary Since World War I, to Retire

http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/03/01/ray-mabus-longest-serving-navy-secretary-world-war-i-retire.html

Military.com © March 1, 2016

by Hope Hodge Seck

The secretary of the Navy will retire within the next year after nearly eight years in office, he confirmed Tuesday to a congressional panel. Addressing the House Appropriations Committee's subcommittee on defense for an annual hearing on the sea service budget, Navy Secretary Ray Mabus said the hearing would be his eighth and last before the committee. Mabus, 67, has held the office since May 19, 2009 -- serving 2,478 days in office under four different defense secretaries. He did not say during the hearing when exactly he planned to step down. The last Navy secretary to serve as long as Mabus was Josephus Daniels, who served 2,922 days under President Woodrow Wilson from 1913 to 1921. "For me, leading the Department of the Navy is the greatest honor of my life," Mabus said. "I couldn't be more proud of our sailors, our Marines and our civilians. I'm also proud of the many steps we've taken and the changes we've made to try to ensure ... the Navy and the Marine Corps in the future remains the greatest expeditionary fighting force the world has ever known."……

Proposed FY’17 Cuts in Navy Would Not Force Sailors out of Service


Defense Communities 360 © March 7, 2016
The Navy’s plan to eliminate 6,300 sailor slots in fiscal 2017 will not result in any personnel facing unemployment, Vice Adm. Bill Moran, deputy chief of naval operations for manpower, personnel, training and education, said last month. “Nobody is losing their jobs,” Moran told *Navy Times*. “There is absolutely no reason on Earth to do any force-outs.” Instead, officials will adjust the number of sailors joining and leaving the Navy to reach the lower number, 322,900 billets. The cuts primarily stem from the service’s proposal to cut an aircraft carrier air wing based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif., dock up to half of the fleet’s 22 cruisers and expedite training for new recruits……

**Georgia Lawmakers Gear up for Possible BRAC**

[http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/georgia-lawmakers-gear-up-for-possible-brac/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=c0a55d2720-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-c0a55d2720-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29](http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/georgia-lawmakers-gear-up-for-possible-brac/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=c0a55d2720-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-c0a55d2720-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29)

Defense Communities 360 © March 7, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Georgia House last week voted unanimously to form a study committee to identify ways to preserve the state’s military installations in a future base closure round. The committee will be made up of 15 House members appointed by Speaker David Ralston (R). The committee will hold at least five meetings and issue recommendations before the end of the year, reported the *Florida Times-Union*. “More than 225,000 Georgians are employed as personnel or active duty at one of our state’s 12 military bases, making this the fifth largest military population in the nation,” state Rep. Dave Belton (R) said in January before filing the resolution to create the committee. “As a retired Air Force major, I not only understand the economic benefit of these military installations, but the pride they bring to our great state and to those who they employ. Therefore, it is imperative that we take action to preserve the livelihood of those who give so selflessly each and every day.” The last BRAC round resulted in the closure of four Georgia installations — Fort McPherson in Atlanta, Fort Gillem in Forest Park, Naval Air Station Atlanta in Marietta and the Navy Supply Corps School in Athens. The fiscal 2017 budget request submitted last month by the Obama administration proposes a BRAC round in 2019.
March 14, 2016 – FDSTF Update

TF members --

1. **Next Task Force This Week** – The next meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, March 17, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM at the Courtyard by Marriott – 3425 N. Atlantic Ave., Cocoa Beach, FL 32931. Meeting agenda attached.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Number -- Open Session – 800-501-8979 Access code: 8784566**

3. **Attachments:**

   - Task Force meeting agenda
   - FDSTF Budget and Legislative Summary

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**

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**Articles of Interest:**

**BRAC –**
DoD Official: BRAC Round Will Save Money

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2016/03/07/morin-brac-savings/81451198/

Defense News © March 7, 2016

By Joe Gould

The US Congress‘ reluctance to close and consolidate military bases is standing in the way of the Defense Department's efficiency efforts, a senior Pentagon official said Monday. Shedding surplus infrastructure could net the Defense Department as much as 25 percent savings in some missions, if only Congress would agree to it, said Jamie Morin, director for the Pentagon’s Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation. —So it's not a popular answer, but base realignment and closure is an important piece of this, I said Morin, speaking on a panel of defense officials at the Center for Strategic and International Studies here.........

BRAC Represents Key Component of Pentagon’s Efficiency Drive, DOD Official Says

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/brac-represents-key-component-of-pentagons-efficiency-drive-dod-official-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=35ec7e979d-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-35ec7e979d-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 8, 2016

By Dan Cohen

A new BRAC round could save the Defense Department as much as 25 percent of the cost of some missions, Jamie Morin, director for the Pentagon’s office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, said Monday at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. But without Congress' assent, DOD will be unable to reap the savings from eliminating unneeded infrastructure and succeed in its cost-cutting reforms. —So it’s not a popular answer, but base realignment and closure is an important piece of this, I he said, reported Defense News. Last week, Pete Potochney, acting assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, said the department estimates it could save $2 billion annually from a new BRAC, which the administration has proposed should be launched in 2019. Morin indicated a significant portion of the savings associated with base closures stems from the reduced need for personnel........
Army Consolidation Effort Helps Reduce Cost of Carrying Excess Infrastructure

By Dan Cohen

While the Defense Department continues to push for a new BRAC round as the most effective way to deal with excess infrastructure, the Army has begun consolidating personnel into its newest facilities and shuttering unused buildings to manage its surplus capacity. The Army has ordered garrison and senior mission commanders to develop installation reduction plans, Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary of the Army for installations, energy and environment, told the House Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee last week. “The strategy for right-sizing within the installation means that we consolidate personnel into the best-quality buildings and we are able to shut down those buildings, which means you modify the temperature controls, you don’t have lights that you have to manage, and you put them pretty much in cold storage,” Hammack said.

DOD Looks to Replicate European Consolidation in the U.S.

Installation officials testifying last year about the Pentagon’s request for a new BRAC round were eager to tell Congress about the European Infrastructure Consolidation plan, as lawmakers previously had insisted the department address its excess capacity overseas before tackling its domestic infrastructure. On Capitol Hill last week, several members of the House Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee asked the services’ top installation officials about the costs and savings associated with the European consolidation and whether those results could serve as a barometer for the potential payoff from a domestic BRAC. The Air Force — which is responsible for the bulk of the initiative’s actions, including the divestiture of its Royal Air Force Mildenhall facility in the United Kingdom — plans to spend about $1.1 billion and expects to save between $275 million and $300 million annually, Miranda Ballentine, assistant secretary for installations, environment and energy, told the panel.
Judge, general and now doctor


Northwest Florida Daily News © March 9, 2016

By KELLY HUMPHREY

When Okaloosa County Judge T. Patterson Maney graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1970, there was no pomp and circumstance, no cap and gown, and no commencement speaker. —It was during the height of the Vietnam War protests, and some of the protestors had burned down the ROTC building,‖ Maney recalled. —We had the National Guard on campus, and they decided to cancel the graduation ceremony.‖ On May 8, Maney will get a second chance to walk in a commencement ceremony when he is awarded an honorary doctorate of laws.

According to a university press release, an honorary degree pays tribute to those whose lives and work exemplify professional, intellectual, or artistic achievement and who have made significant contributions to society, the state, and the University of Kentucky. Maney is one of four people to be honored this year, including one of the world’s preeminent astrophysicists, a pioneer in food chemistry, and a leader in serving victims of sexual violence.

—I knew I had been nominated, but when I was notified that I had been selected, I was surprised and humbled,‖ he said. —Usually, you have to be pretty famous, or an actor or a high government official to receive an honorary degree. I’m not any of those.‖

Maney, a retired brigadier general who was severely injured in Afghanistan, was selected for the honor based on his work in the military, the law, and on behalf of veterans. A third-generation University of Kentucky alumnus, he has many reasons to appreciate his alma mater.

—My grandfather went there, both my parents went there, and I met my wife there in Spanish class,‖ he said with a smile. —It was the only school to which I applied.‖

Maney went on to earn a law degree from UK’s arch rival, the University of Louisville, home of the Cardinals. Despite that conflict, there’s no mistaking where Maney and his family’s loyalty lies.

—My daughter Sarah is a fourth-generation alum,‖ he said. —She lives in Louisville, and she’s raising her two girls to be Wildcat fans. In fact, one of the girls told me, —The kids across the street are very nice — even if they are Cards fans.‘‖

Public Private Partnerships –
Air Force Seeks Larger Returns from Partnership Initiative

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/air-force-seeks-larger-returns-from-partnership-initiative/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=1dd78b1035-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-1dd78b1035-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 14, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Air Force Community Partnership Program has made tremendous strides over the past three years, allowing 53 installations and host communities to identify opportunities for reducing the military’s operating costs and improving mission support, according to written testimony recently submitted by Miranda Ballentine, assistant secretary of the Air Force for installations, environment and energy. Participants have completed more than 140 partnership agreements that have generated over $23 million in Air Force benefits and $24 million in community benefits, her testimony stated. “Beyond the tangible savings, the program creates an invaluable forum for fostering relationships and promoting innovation. Installations and communities now have the framework and tools needed to finalize many of the over 1,000 potential initiatives identified to date, such as shared medical/EMT training, joint small arms ranges and shared refuse management services,” Ballentine said.

DOD Budget–

Survey: US Voters Favor Cutting Carrier, F-35, Overall Defense Spending


Defense News © March 9, 2016

By Andrew W. Clevenger

A majority of Americans favor cutting the US defense budget in five out of seven key areas, including nuclear weapons and missile defense, according to a new University of Maryland survey released March 9. Nationally, a majority supports modest budget cuts to air power ($2 billion), ground forces ($4 billion), naval forces ($2 billion), nuclear weapons ($3 billion) and missile defense ($1 billion). No majority emerged for either cutting or increasing the budgets of the Marine Corps or Special Ops forces. In total, a majority of respondents would cut
The defense budget by $12 billion. When broken down by party, a majority of Republican respondents would leave the defense budget as is, while the majority of Democrats would cut it by $36 billion (including $11 billion cuts to both air power and ground forces), a larger cut than the $20 billion cut supported by a majority of Independents…….

MacDill AFB –

**SOCOM chief: US lacks plan for long-term detention of Islamic State fighters**


Stars and Stripes © March 8, 2016

The Pentagon does not have a plan for long-term detention of captured Islamic State fighters, despite more aggressive operations against the terrorist group in Iraq, Syria and now Libya, the top U.S. special forces commander told Congress on Tuesday. Before President Barack Obama took office, militants captured in Iraq and Afghanistan were sent to the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. But since Obama signed an executive order in 2009 to begin the process to close the facility, no new prisoners have been sent there…….

**SOCOM leaders, and their women Role Models**

[https://www.dvidshub.net/news/191735/socom-leaders-and-their-women-role-models#.VuF90Xo007A](https://www.dvidshub.net/news/191735/socom-leaders-and-their-women-role-models#.VuF90Xo007A)

DVIDS © March 9,2016

U.S. Special Operations Command personnel stood patiently and anxiously waited at USSOCOM headquarters for the results from a —Women's History Monthl essay writing contest, March 7. Evelyn Lachance, chief of knowledge management, USSOCOM, thought an essay competition recognizing influential women in the lives of Special Operations Forces (SOF) personnel would be a great way to kick-off "Women's History Month." "Women have always been the first role model a child comes in contact with; our mothers and other women in our lives have molded our character, taught us right from wrong, and loved us unconditionally," said Lachance…….

**CENTCOM Nominee Talks 'Tough Love' for Mideast Allies**
Defense News © March 9, 2016

By Joe Gould

The general tapped to oversee US Central Command said he would show — tough love to Middle Eastern allies reluctant to shoulder more of the fight against the Islamic State group. At his Senate Armed Services confirmation hearing Wednesday, Gen. Joseph Votel acknowledged the US needs to further engage regional powers. — We have to, in some cases, exercise tough love with our partners to ensure that they develop the capabilities … so that they take care of their security requirements, Votel said, adding later: "I think part of our challenge here is looking at the various interests and objectives ... and I look forward to trying to bring coherence to that with the partners we have invested in over a long period of time."………

Editorial: Keep valuable NOAA in Tampa area

Tampa Tribune © March 9, 2016

In some ways, the news that MacDill Air Force Base may need to evict the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration‘s aircraft fleet from its hangar can be seen as a positive development. When the NOAA fleet, which includes three Hurricane Hunter aircraft and six environmental monitoring planes, was originally assigned to MacDill in 1993, it was seen as a critical step toward ensuring the base remained busy enough to avoid closure. Now, the base’s host tenet, the 6th Air Mobility Wing, which flies refueling tankers, is adding eight KC-135 Stratotankers and needs the hangar being used by NOAA. The wing’s expansion underscores the military‘s robust use of the base, which is critical. Still, NOAA‘s departure would be a loss for MacDill and the community. It provides exceptionally valuable service, from providing data crucial to forecasting hurricanes to tracking oil spills. Its 110 employees are rooted in the community………

CENTCOM Embroiled In Climate of Fear

The Daily Beast © March 14, 2016
Analysts at U.S. Central Command say top officials have created a climate of intimidation during an ongoing congressional investigation into skewed ISIS intel. Army Gen. Joseph Votel is expected to take over as the head of U.S. Central Command later this month, and he'll be leading the military campaign against ISIS at a troubled time for his own organization. In interviews, half a dozen current and former officials have described the environment at CENTCOM headquarters as —toxic‖ and —hostile‖ owing to a long-simmering dispute over whether political influence was brought to bear on intelligence analysts whose job is to objectively assess the strength of ISIS and the effects of the U.S.-led efforts to destroy the group. The subjects of the analysts' frustration are the head of intelligence for CENTCOM, Maj. Gen. Steven Grove, and Gregory Ryckman, his civilian deputy. ……

Eglin AFB –

**F-35 Logistics System May Not Be Ready for Air Force IOC Target**


Defense News © March 10, 2016

By Lara Seligman

The latest version of the F-35's logistics system may not be ready by the time the Air Force wants to declare its jets combat-ready this summer, according to the program manager. The Air Force has a window between Aug. 1 and Dec. 31 to declare initial operational capability for its F-35As. Aug. 1 is the target date for Air Force IOC, and the joint program office has promised to meet that goal. But the JPO may be about 45 to 60 days behind schedule due to problems with the aircraft’s Autonomic Logistics Information System (ALIS), designed as a kind of internal diagnostic system that tracks the health of each part of each plane worldwide, according to JPO chief Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan……

US Southern Command –

**Dunford Arrives in Miami for Southern Command Visit**

By Jim Garamone

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff arrived here last night ahead of meetings with the leaders of U.S. Southern Command. Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. will meet with newly installed U.S. Southern Command chief Navy Adm. Kurt Tidd. The command covers Central and South America and much of the Caribbean Sea. There are 31 countries and 16 dependencies in its area of operations. The major focuses of the command are combating transnational organized crime, building partner capacity and being prepared for contingency operations. Southcom also oversees detainee operations at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The command works closely with interagency partners throughout the region. Southcom has excellent relations with State Department officials operating in the region and with law enforcement and intelligence entities and uses these contacts to advance national security objectives. The U.S. Coast Guard is an integral part of Southcom……..

**Dunford Salutes Florida-Based Anti-Drug Interagency Task Force**


US Department of Defense © March 9, 2016

By Jim Garamone

When a watch stander for the Joint Interagency Task Force South here directs an aircraft or ship to stop a craft carrying cocaine, that person gets to ring the bell in the joint operations center. Yesterday, a noncommissioned officer who had earned that right offered Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. the opportunity to ring the bell to mark a successful interdiction. ―I couldn’t do it‖, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said with a laugh. ―I could tell … he really, really wanted to do it‖. The chairman said he was impressed by the professionalism, expertise and dedication exhibited by the members of the task force’s joint operations center during his visit……..

**US Southern Command Short of Dozen Ships – Commander**


Sputnik News © March 10, 2016

The US military command covering the land and sea of Latin America and the Caribbean faces a shortage of approximately 14 ships in order to interdict drugs and other contraband, US Southern
Command (SOUTHCOM) Commander Adm. Kurt Tidd said in a congressional testimony on Thursday. "If I were to accomplish the goal of 40 percent interdiction, I would require 21 ships," Tidd told the US Senate Armed Services Committee. On average, he said the Southern Command has "about six to seven." Drug interdiction and stopping other illicit trafficking into the United States is among the key priorities for the Southern Command, particularly as a growing number of Americans are using heroin trafficked from Latin America.

Southcom Commander Reports on Visits to Area of Responsibility


Department of Defense © March 10, 2016

By Terri Moon Cronk

In his first 60 days leading U.S. Southern Command, Navy Adm. Kurt W. Tidd has visited various nations in his area of responsibility to discuss stability, security and future cooperation with military leaders and other regional officials, the Southcom commander said today. Tidd briefed Pentagon reporters following his testimony on the command's posture before the Senate Armed Forces Committee. —I was very encouraged by the committee’s interest in our mission and the nations we partner with, the admiral said, adding that security challenges that affect his command’s missions were among the topics at the hearing.

NS Mayport –

Four Milcon Projects Added to Navy’s ‘Wish List’

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/four-milcon-projects-added-to-navys-wish-list/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=35ec7e979d-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-35ec7e979d-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 8, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Navy included four military construction projects costing $219 million as part of its $5.1 billion list of requirements that didn’t fit into its fiscal 2017 budget request.

The four projects include:
• magazine recapitalization, Naval Station Norfolk/Chambers Field, Va. — $27 million
• Seawolf-class service pier, Naval Base Kitsap/Bangor, Wash. — $73 million
• — Al school dormitory, NAS Pensacola, Fla. — $53 million
• advanced wastewater treatment plant, Mayport, Fla. — $66 million……..

Cutter Valiant returns to Mayport; seized 5 tons of cocaine, 23 suspected traffickers


Florida Times-Union © March 9, 2016

By Saphara Harrell

A Mayport Coast Guard crew retrieved more than $141 million worth of illegal drugs while recently deployed on the Pacific coast of Central America for eight weeks. The 78-member crew of the Coast Guard’s Cutter Valiant returned home to Naval Station Mayport on Wednesday, after seizing almost five tons of cocaine. Adam Chamie, the commanding officer of the Cutter Valiant, called – in a prepared statement – the haul of drugs recording breaking. “This patrol represents the most interdictions by a Valiant crew in her 49-year history,” Chamie said in the statement. “We were all very proud to be a part of it.” ……..

HSM-60: Goodbye, NS Mayport


Jax Air News © March 9, 2016

By Lt. Cmdr. Caralyn Cain

After 15 years of operating from Naval Station Mayport, the — Jaguars of HSM-60 have made the move across town and along the Saint Johns River to Naval Air Station Jacksonville where more space is available for the squadron. The 193-member Navy Reserve Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron packed up, moved and was back to operational status within a week’s time. The Jaguars were formerly known as Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light (HSL) 60. They transitioned to the MH-60R Seahawk model this past summer and are now flying the Fleet’s most technologically advanced helicopter anti-submarine weapon system…………
Homestead ARB –

**Petition to pressure Homestead council circulates; golf course still in limbo**


Miami Herald © March 4, 2016

By Monique O. Madan

Wayne Rosen isn't giving up. The prominent developer, whose latest housing project isn't getting traction on the Homestead City Council's dais, is taking matters into his own hands. With hopes of pressuring council members, residents of Keys Gate subdivisions are backing Rosen by way of an online petition. On the table? Having the council overturn a decision made by Homestead’s planning and zoning board and allow him to go forward on rezonings to build single-family homes near a beer warehouse, speedway and airbase. In exchange, Rosen would pledge to renovate the rundown Keys Gate Golf and Country Club. —I learned Friday evening that Mr. Rosen has withdrawn his application for zone variances that he had submitted to the city of Homestead,‖ said Keys Gate delegate Ted Moscynski Jr. in an email to his neighbors. Rosen, who had the item on an upcoming City Council agenda, pulled out after a Miami Herald article was published and the council was not happy. —He believes he has only three votes, which is not enough for passage of his request,‖ Moscynski Jr. added, asking residents to target and contact council members who have shown opposition to Rosen's proposal. So far, the petition — calling on the council to approve all of Rosen's rezoning requests — has gathered 489 names, nearly half of the goal of 1,000. It's unclear whether all who have signed are Homestead residents……

Tyndall AFB –

**How the improved F-22 trains for future wars (with F-35s)**


Air Force Times © March 12, 2016

By Oriana Pawlyk

As the Air Force's most advanced aircraft, the F-22 is in such high demand that Raptor pilots and crews are constantly deploying for training and wartime missions. It's no doubt that the Raptor
has been put on a pedestal in the Air Force’s trophy case. Even though the service only has 186 in inventory, according to Air Combat Command, it’s likely the world will see more of it in months to come. —The overarching picture of how we’re modernizing the F-22 is that we’re looking for capabilities out there that other assets in the entire [Defense Department] inventory cannot fill‖, Maj. Justin Anhalt, an F-22 requirements officer and program element monitor, told Air Force Times on March 8...........

NSA Panama City –

Tyndall, NSA Panama City on groundwater test site list for military

http://www.wjhg.com/home/headlines/Tyndall-NSA-Panama-City-on-groundwater-test-site-list-for-military-371742531.html

WJHG © March 10, 2016

By: Jennifer McDermott

The military plans to examine hundreds of sites nationwide to determine whether chemicals from foam used to fight fires have contaminated groundwater and spread to drinking water, the Defense Department said. The checks are planned for 664 sites where the military has conducted fire or crash training, military officials told The Associated Press this week. There are four sites on the list at Tyndall Air Force Base and three sites at NSA Panama City. Since December, tests have been carried out at 28 naval sites in mostly coastal areas. Drinking water at a landing field in Virginia and the groundwater at another site in New Jersey have been found to contain levels above the guidance given by the federal Environmental Protection Agency, the Navy said. Results of the other tests have either come up under federally acceptable levels or are pending..........

NAS Pensacola –

NAS change of command is March 24


Pensacola News-Journal © March 9, 2016

Pensacola NAS will hold a change of command ceremony at 1 p.m. March 24 at the National Naval Aviation Museum. Capt. Keith Hoskins, who is also retiring from the Navy during the same ceremony, will pass command to Capt. Christopher Martin. Capt. Hoskins, whose naval career closes after 27 years of service, has been the Pensacola NAS commanding officer for the past three years. During his tenure, a yearlong celebration was held in commemoration of the air station’s 100th anniversary in 2014. Capt. Martin, a 24-year naval veteran and E-2 Hawkeye
pilot, comes to NAS Pensacola from the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Ala. Rear Adm. Michael White, Commander, Naval Education and Training Command onboard the air station, will be the guest speaker………

NAS Whiting Field –

Thousands of volunteer hours bring national recognition


Over 400 NAS Whiting Field team members spent their nights, weekends and days off volunteering in 2015, accumulating more than 15,000 service hours for the year. The hard work and dedication of the sailors, Marines and civilians involved has earned the medium-sized base a USS Bainbridge Award -- a worldwide recognition for overall excellence in community service. "When team members are stationed here, this is their shore duty, it's their time to be with their family, it's their time to take off to go visit family that might not be here," Petty Officer 1st Class David Hernandez said. "Some of the firefighters that are here will spend 12 hours a day training at an outlying field, doing their duties and when they go home, their families are winding down and their kids might already be asleep -- but they juggle the volunteer time and want to help serve the communities they live, and not just the Navy." ………

Patrick AFB –

Drone rules remain up in the air for now

http://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/local/2016/03/05/drone-rules-remain-air/81320868/

Florida Today © March 6, 2016

By Wayne T. Price and R. Norman Moody
Twice in the past year, pilots from Patrick Air Force Base have had incidents with drones. Those drones could have been operated by hobbyists or people taking photos over the Banana River, which borders the Air Force base. Either way, the remotely piloted vehicles entered restricted air space setting up possible tragedies. —It could put a hole in a wing, it could shut down an engine,— said Lt. Colonel John Lowe, chief of safety for the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick. —It could be devastating.— Welcome to the more crowded skies. Brevard County and the entire country are discovering that drones — remote-controlled, unmanned aerial vehicles — are no longer just a tool of the military………

DOD Issues –

**Air Force Secretary Warns of Consequences if McCain Blocks B-21**


Defense News © March 8, 2016

By Lara Seligman

As Sen. John McCain continues his crusade against the Air Force’s next-generation B-21 bomber, service secretary Deborah Lee James is warning of the cost in both dollars and time of terminating the contract. —It is always possible to terminate a contract — you terminate, you pay fees to terminate, you can rebid it, which of course takes more money and time,— James said March 7 during a briefing at the Pentagon. —So these things are always possible. We certainly hope it won’t come to that.— James’ statement was a pointed answer to McCain’s recent pledge to block funding for the Air Force’s new bomber so long as it is procured using a cost-plus contract — a contract vehicle he has railed against in the past………..

**Defense Secretary Ashton Carter OKs final strategy for women in combat**


Washington Times © March 11, 2016

By Kellan Howell
Defense Secretary Ashton Carter approved Thursday final plans from military service branches and the U.S. Special Operations Command to open up all combat jobs to women, and authorized the military to begin integrating female combat soldiers —right away. All of the services submitted their plan to integrate women into combat roles by Jan. 1 following Mr. Carter’s December decision to open all jobs to women with no exceptions. —When I announced my decision back in December to open all career fields to qualified women, I emphasized that the implementation of this change must be handled the right way, because the combat effectiveness of the world's finest fighting force is paramount, Mr. Carter said in a statement. —Having reviewed their exceptionally thorough work, I am pleased all of the services developed plans that will effectively carry out this change and make us even better in the future, he said……

Other Items of Interest –

**Pentagon Considers Returning Army Brigade to Europe**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/pentagon-considers-returning-army-brigade-to-europe/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=35ec7e979d-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-35ec7e979d-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 8, 2016

By Dan Cohen

DOD officials are deliberating over plans to permanently relocate one or more Army brigade combat teams (BCTs) to Europe amid growing concern over the threat posed by a newly aggressive Russia. Air Force Gen. Philip Breedlove, commander of U.S. European Command, discussed the prospect of enlarging the U.S. footprint in Europe with Pentagon officials last week, reported Military Times. A decision to send thousands of troops to the continent would come on top of the $3.4 billion European Reassurance Initiative included in the department’s latest budget request. That initiative calls for rotating a brigade-sized force through Eastern Europe. The Army eliminated two heavy brigades from Europe in 2012, leaving only a Stryker BCT and an airborne BCT to repel a Russian incursion on the continent. In January, the National Commission on the Future of the Army called for permanently stationing an armored BCT in Europe due to the region’s —value as a stationing location for potential contingencies in the Middle East.

**US Navy to Build USS Fort Lauderdale**


Military.com © March 8, 2016

by Larry Barszewski
The U.S. Navy is honoring the city with a combat ship bearing its name: the USS Fort Lauderdale. The ship is a newly designed kind of "maneuverable surface" warship equipped with advanced weapons and propulsion systems, the city announced Monday. The ship is designed to carry out a variety of missions in coastal waters, including mine, submarine and surface warfare. "I've been working on this thing since 2009," Mayor Jack Seiler said Monday, calling it "one of the most prestigious accolades in the history of our city." Seiler and a group of businessmen went to Washington in 2011 to push for naval recognition of the city. Seiler has said in the past that having a ship named for the city recognizes the longtime Broward Navy Days program and the city's spot as a popular port for sailors on shore leave. This year's Fleet Week will be held May 2-9 at Port Everglades………

US Air Force Faces 500 Fighter Pilot Shortfall


Defense News © March 9, 2016

By Lara Seligman

The US Air Force is about 500 fighter pilots short of the total requirement, a deficit that is expected to grow to more than 800 by 2022, top service officials warned Congress. Air Force officials blamed the shortage on recent reductions in active duty fighter and fighter training squadrons due to budget cuts, according to written testimony submitted to the Senate Armed Services subcommittee March 8. The service was forced to rebalance its fighter force structure in 2012 due to severe fiscal constraints, slashing the force by 100 aircraft, according to the statement. There are currently 54 squadrons in the Air Force, significantly less than the 134 fighter squadrons that existed during the Gulf War in the early 1990s………

Congress seems willing to give Air Force more F-35s … and F-22s?


Air Force Times © March 9, 2016

By Phillip Swarts

Top Air Force acquisitions personnel who went to Capitol Hill Tuesday seemed to find friendly support from Congress for restoring cut F-35 buys to the fiscal year 2017 budget. The service had delayed purchasing five F-35 Lightning IIs that were set for 2017 – a move the service said
would save close to $700 million – and dropping the Air Force's buy for the year from 48 aircraft down to 43………

**Services Losing the Battle to Sustain Buildings**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/services-losing-the-battle-to-sustain-buildings/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=12304cd0de-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-12304cd0de-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 10, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Defense Department facilities continue to deteriorate as the Budget Control Act spending caps have forced officials to limit funding for installation support in recent years in favor of higher priority needs. The department's latest assessment indicates that 18.9 percent of its facility inventory is in failing condition, with an additional 13.2 percent in poor condition. Last year, only 7 percent of its inventory was in failing condition. Unless the statutory spending caps are lifted in the out-years, —the department will continue to take risk in funding to sustain and recapitalize existing facilities,‖ according to the written testimony Pete Potochney, acting assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, submitted to the House Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee last week……

**Study on Merger of Installations, Operational Energy Organizations Coming, DOD Official Says**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/study-on-merger-of-installations-operational-energy-organizations-coming-dod-official-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=12304cd0de-RSS_DC360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-12304cd0de-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_DC360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 10, 2016

By Dan Cohen

A report on the status of the merger that created the office of the assistant secretary of defense (ASD) for energy, installations and environment should be available later this year, according to recent testimony submitted by Pete Potochney, the acting head of the office. The fiscal 2016 defense authorization bill directed DOD to prepare the report, one year after the merger of the ASD for operational energy plans and programs and the office of the deputy undersecretary of
defense for installations and environment. —I can tell you that through the merger operational energy functions have benefited from additional resources and collaboration with complementary functions related to installation energy, facilities investment and management, and basing,‖ Potochney noted last week in his testimony to the House Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee………..

US Gen. Scaparrotti To Be Next Head of European Command


Defense News © March 11, 2016

By Aaron Mehta

Army Gen. Curtis "Mike" Scaparrotti will be announced later today as the next head of US European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, according to a defense official speaking on background. Scaparrotti, currently the top US general in Korea, will succeed Gen. Philip Breedlove in the role. In a statement, Defense Secretary Ash Carter praised Scaparrotti’s —proven leadership during past assignments, including his time commanding the ISAF Joint Command in Afghanistan from 2011 to 2012. —General Scaparrotti is one of the U.S. military's most accomplished officers and combat leaders, and it is my hope that the Senate will act quickly on his nomination,‖ Carter said. Breedlove also chimed in with a statement, reading in part that he —cannot think of a more qualified leader to take these commands forward‖ than Scaparrotti. The switch happens at a time of adjustment for the US in Europe and potentially large changes at NATO, as the allied nations continue to adjust to the realities of a resurgent Russia………..
March 21, 2016 – FDSTF Update

TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Conference Call/Webex** – The next conference call of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, April 21, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Number -- Open Session -- 800-501-8979**  
   **Access code:** 8784566

3. **FY 16-17 Florida Defense Task Force Grant Application** – The Florida Defense Support Task Force has released the FY 2016-2017 grant funding application (attached). This application will also be posted this week on the Task Force web site:  
   Please note that the deadline for submission is April 21, 2016.

Regards,  
BG.

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Articles of Interest:
Congress Fails to Appreciate How the BRAC Ban Is Hurting Communities, Analyst Says

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/congress-fails-to-appreciate-how-the-brac-ban-is-hurting-communities-analyst-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=628bc3b17b-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-628bc3b17b-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 18, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Over the past four years, lawmakers have come up with multiple reasons to reject the Pentagon’s request to hold one or more rounds of base closures, but none of them have held up under scrutiny, especially as DOD faces severe spending constraints, says Mackenzie Eaglen, a resident fellow at American Enterprise Institute. —Congress has dug in for too long on opposing the long-overdue next base closure round. The irony is that this is hurting communities and the military — not helping them, contrary to popular opinion,‖ Eaglen writes in a commentary published in Forbes. The argument that BRAC does not save money is refuted by the $12 billion the first five rounds are saving annually, she writes. Even the 2005 round, with its emphasis on realigning missions rather than closing facilities outright, is saving $4 billion each year……

Members of New York’s Congressional Delegation Oppose BRAC


Defense Communities 360 © March 17, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Two New York lawmakers said they will oppose a new round of base closures, partially to protect installations such as Fort Drum. —I take the threat of BRAC very seriously and will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure the stability of Fort Drum and all of our units,‖ Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D), who serves on the Senate Armed Services Committee, told the Watertown Daily Times. —This base is also the single biggest economic driver in the region and the loss of jobs that would stem from BRAC would have devastating effects,‖ Gillibrand added.
Rep. Elise Stefanik (R) echoed Gillibrand’s comments, telling the paper she would oppose a new BRAC round and work —against any push that would harm our military readiness.

All The Misleading Reasons Not To Do BRAC


Forbes © March 17, 2016

By Mackenzie Eaglen

When it comes to politically difficult decisions, members of Congress are as good as anyone at finding —new! reasons not to do something. Few causes engender more creativity in excuse-making than the Pentagon’s base closure process, informally known as BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure). A few years ago after Congress helped impose the fiscal handcuffs known as the Budget Control Act, the legislative branch (inadvertently) bolstered the already strong case for eliminating wasteful spending on excess real property and infrastructure in the world’s largest organization: the Defense Department.

DOD Budget–

House Armed Services Committee Chair Backs GOP Budget Proposal


Defense News © March 15, 2016

By Joe Gould

House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry said Tuesday he would vote for the House Budget Committee spending blueprint unveiled Tuesday even though it gambles on the next administration boosting defense via emergency funding. House Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price, R-Ga., announced Tuesday his panel will consider a 2017 budget resolution this week that calls for $1.07 trillion in spending next year, a deal-breaker for the far-right House Freedom Caucus, whose members sought a $30 billion budget cut. It's unclear whether the budget will make it out of the committee, which has several Freedom Caucus members. Some defense hawks may have problems of their own with another part of the plan. Though it touts $74 billion for the overseas contingency operations (OCO), which at first blush looks like an
increase over the $59 billion for OCO in the president’s 2017 budget request, that larger figure actually combines the Pentagon and State Department OCO requests.

**Sequestration Budget Cuts Pose 'Greatest Risk' to DoD**


Defense News © March 17, 2016

By Joe Gould

The US defense secretary and Joint Chiefs chairman warned lawmakers that scrapping the two-year budget deal would be catastrophic for US national security interests. The congressional testimony Thursday came as fiscal conservatives in the House Freedom Caucus, citing the nation’s rising deficit, are pressing to abandon the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 and go back to the $1.04 trillion level under automatic spending cuts known as sequestration, set in 2011. (This would cut President Obama's request by $30 billion.) Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford, in an exchange with Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said a return to sequestration would require a rewrite of the US national defense strategy and expose the nation to —significant risk,— from Russia, China, Iran, North Korea and violent extremism, Dunford said.

**Republican Senators Challenge DOD Leaders over FY’17 Funding**


Defense Communities 360 © March 21, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Military leaders and the Senate Armed Services Committee squared off last week over whether the administration’s fiscal 2017 budget request is adequate to protect the nation. Committee Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.) argued that the department’s request is billions of dollars short as the military faces a litany of global threats, reported [Stars and Stripes](http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2016/03/17/sequestration-budget-cuts-pose-greatest-risk-dod/81924766/).—The unfunded requirements of the military services now total nearly $18 billion, McCain said.—That represents the additional ships, airplanes, helicopters, fighting vehicles, training and other programs that our military leaders say they need simply to carry out our increasingly antiquated defense strategy at an acceptable level of risk.— To accommodate the shortfall projected for FY 2017 — which Defense Secretary Ash Carter said was $11 billion — the department protected
readiness accounts while trimming modernization efforts. The spending proposal includes $524 billion in the base budget and $59 billion in the overseas contingency operations account……

MacDill AFB –

MacDill AirFest to fill skies even before weekend extravaganza


Tampa Tribune © March 15, 2016

By Howard Altman

The skies over MacDill Air Force Base will be busier than usual over the next several days as aircraft head here for this weekend’s Tampa Bay AirFest 2016. People in and around the Tampa Bay area can expect to see more military aircraft Wednesday through Sunday, said officials from the 6th Air Mobility Wing, the base host unit. The formal display of air power takes place Saturday and Sunday at MacDill, with gates opening 8 a.m. and performances starting at 11 a.m. The Air Force Thunderbirds aerial performing team will fly each day at 3 p.m.. As many as 200,000 people are expected. Those who appreciate military aircraft are in for a treat. Nearly every type in the U.S. Air Force inventory will be headed to MacDill, said Maj. Ryan Garlow, AirFest director. That includes the F-35 Lightning II and the F-22 Raptor, Garlow said. So far, only a MiG-17 owned by aerial performer Randy Ball has arrived at MacDill. The plane did battle with U.S. aircraft during the Vietnam War. But it will soon have company as more than two dozen static aircraft displays are set up at the base for visitors to tour and discuss with air crew members. The most active times for aircraft traffic will be from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., with most arriving Wednesday through Friday, Garlow said.

MacDill kicks-off AirFest with Richard “Dick” Cutshall Memorial Run

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/192399/macdill-kicks-off-airfest-with-richard-dick-cutshall-memorial-run#.VuwS1Xo02qw

DVIDS © March 15, 2016

MacDill kicked off the Tampa Bay AirFest 2016 festivities by honoring the base’s very first Air Boss. More than 50 members of Team MacDill participated in the annual Richard —Dick— Cutshall AirFest Memorial Run, March 11, 2016, at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. —This
event allows us to pay tribute to an important MacDill member," said Master Sgt. Bradford Johnson, a participant and a first sergeant assigned to the 6th Comptroller Squadron. "He paved the way for a better relationship and strengthened the bridge we now call community relations."

**Senate Confirms Army Generals At MacDill**


News talk Florida © March 18, 2016

By Kurt Shriner

The Senate has confirmed President Barack Obama's choices to lead two of the military's most important warfighting commands. Senators late Thursday approved the nominations of Army Gen. Joseph Votel to run U.S. Central Command and Gen. Tony Thomas to take over as the top officer at U.S. Special Operations Command. Both commands are headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. At Central Command, Votel will oversee U.S. military operations in Syria, Iraq and 18 other countries. He succeeds Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, who is retiring. Thomas, who also received a fourth star, replaces Votel at Special Operations Command. He had been serving as commander of the secretive Joint Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Votel and Thomas both graduated in 1980 from the U.S. Military Academy.

**Coming home: AirFest guest of honor saw the opening of MacDill AFB in 1941**


Tampa Tribune © March 18, 2016

By Howard Altman

Tom Kugler bounds through Hangar 3, headed toward the MacDill Air Force Base flight line at a clip beleying his age. "Oh God, I want to get out there," he says. Nearly 96, Kugler has traveled from his home in Lawrence, Kansas, to MacDill, where he is a guest of honor for Tampa Bay AirFest 2016. Last held in 2014, AirFest is being held this year in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of MacDill's dedication. While as many as 200,000 people are expected to pass through the gates on Saturday and Sunday, not many will be able to say they were here when Brig. Gen. Clarence Tinker, then the base commander, presided over the dedication ceremony on April 16, 1941. But Kugler can. And there's good reason for his exuberance. The last time he
was on base was February 1942. He was on board a B-24 Liberator heavy bomber, which he thought was bound for Australia.

Eglin AFB –

**F-35 Cost May Drop to $85 Million by 2019**


Military.com © March 16, 2016

by Hope Hodge Seck

Despite its history of cost overruns, the Pentagon's fifth-generation fighter program is on course to realize significant savings in coming years, the program manager said this week. Jeff Babione, Lockheed Martin's program manager for the F-35 program, told reporters Tuesday that the cost of the F-35A -- the Air Force variant of the aircraft -- was expected to drop from nearly $100 million per plane to about $85 million by 2019, thanks to efficiencies and cost-cutting manufacturing technologies. The B and C variants designed for the Marine Corps and Navy, which are heavier and purchased in smaller quantities, are not included in the 2019 goal. By contrast, the Navy's F/A-18E/F Super Hornet fighter aircraft cost about $60 million apiece. "We think that price with this capability will be unbeatable," Babione said. "You'll be able to afford a fifth-generation airplane for what would be a fourth-generation price for anything else offered in the free world.

Hurlburt Field –

**Carter names new AFSOC leader; other general officer assignments**


Air Force Times © March 17, 2016

By Oriana Pawlyk
Defense Secretary Ash Carter has named Air Force Lt. Gen. Marshall Webb to lead Air Force Special Operations Command. Webb is currently serving as commander, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Special Operations Headquarters, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Mons, Belgium. Since assuming his position in August 2014, Webb directly reports to Air Force Gen. Phillip Breedlove, the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe. He is a command pilot with more than 3,700 flying hours, including 117 combat hours in Afghanistan, Iraq and Bosnia, according to his biography, and has flown rotary-wing aircraft including the MH-53H/J/M, CV-22B, UH-1H/N and MC-130……

US Southern Command –

US Southern Command Showcases Strength in Diversity
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/192740/us-southern-command-showcases-strength-diversity#.Vu_3XXo02qw
DVIDS © March 17, 2016

The United States Southern Command awarded 15 service members the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (GAFPB) during a ceremony March 16 at its headquarters in Doral, Florida. Participants represented the diversity and athleticism of this combatant command during a two-day physically-challenging evaluation of military proficiency and physical skills. The GAFB challenges participants through multiple timed events administered by a Senior German Commissioned or Non-commissioned Officer. It's a prestigious designation for German troops that they must earn to become an NCO or earn a commission and is one of the few badges open to foreign forces. ………

Tyndall AFB –

You got it, we bought it
Tyndall AFB © March 16, 2016

By Senior Airman Dustin Mullen
Take a minute and look around Tyndall. With every glance it is easy to see the impact of contract provided capabilities; from the planes, the facilities, the furniture, the computers and the tools used to maintain the most advanced air superiority fighter on the planet. Likely, those capabilities were provided by the dedicated men and women of the 325th Contracting Squadron. The 325th CONS exists to provide services and supplies to sustain Team Tyndall warfighters. —Basically, through the contracts we write, we deliver mission capability,‖ said Ms. Norma Myers, 325th CONS director of business operations. —Our contracts are warfighting platforms, vital to sustaining Tyndall as a combat air power projection platform. Not only do we make local impact, but our contracts provide world-wide capabilities. —We have awarded research and development contracts that provide airfield damage repair capabilities, and unexploded ordinance mitigation, that are protecting the lives of our deployed members down range,‖ she added……..

Florida National Guard –

**Mortar gun crews test their limits**

[https://www.dvidshub.net/news/192724/mortar-gun-crews-test-their-limits#.VuwTyXo02qw](https://www.dvidshub.net/news/192724/mortar-gun-crews-test-their-limits#.VuwTyXo02qw)

DVIDS © March 17, 2016

The mortar gun crews assigned to Task Force Hurricane tested their proficiency and ability to work harmoniously as a crew during the gunner’s examination held on Camp Blanding Joint Training Center during pre-mobilization training Feb. 19, 2016 thru March 11, 2016. Task Force Hurricane, comprised of 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Miramar, Fla., and Troop A, 1st Squadron, 153d Cavalry Regiment, based in Bonifay, Fla., is scheduled to mobilize to Fort Bliss, Texas, to be validated for mobilization. After the validation period, the Task Force will deploy to Camp Lemonier, Djibouti to perform security operations in the region……..

NAS Whiting Field –

**Alabama Training Facility for NAS Whiting Field Reopens after 10-Year Hiatus**
By Dan Cohen

Officials from Naval Air Station Whiting Field, Fla., and Baldwin County, Ala., on Monday held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to reopen Navy Outlying Landing Field (NOLF) Summerdale after it had been idle for more than 10 years. Regular use of the airfield on the Alabama Gulf Coast for touch-and-goes was suspended in 2005 when Training Air Wing 6 at NAS Pensacola began transitioning its training aircraft from the T-34 Turbomentor to the T-6A. Since then, the Navy decided to lengthen the runways at Summerdale by 1,150 feet to accommodate the transition at Training Air Wing 5, based at Whiting Field, from the T-34 to the T-6B Texan II aircraft.

DOD Issues –

**Air Force Committed to Total Force Integration**

By Dan Cohen

The Air Force continues to make strides to achieve greater integration of the service’s active and reserve components as a single force through changes affecting both operational and personnel policies. —The Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve provide the nation a vital capability that is functionally integrated and operationally indistinguishable from the active force, I said Secretary Deborah Lee James, according to a news release. —This maximizes our total force and secures [our] top priorities of taking care of people, balancing today’s readiness with tomorrow’s modernization, and making every dollar count. The service is pursuing more than 78 total force integration proposals, including 41 recommended by the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force, designed to break down existing barriers to a total Air Force.
Generals Worry Army, Marines Unready For A New War

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2016/03/16/army-marines-readiness-war-congress/81876210/

Defense News © March 16, 2016

By Joe Gould

Top Army and Marine Corps generals warned lawmakers their combat readiness is ebbing and expressed concern they would be unable to fight and win another war in the midst of budget cuts, two wars and heightened global threats. Gen. Robert Neller, the Marine commandant, said his service is supplying trained and ready troops to regional combatant commanders but would be hard-pressed to rapidly respond to another major crisis — a significant statement as the US stares down threats from an aggressive Russia, a rising China, a belligerent North Korea and an extremist-sponsoring Iran. —Our ability to meet other regional requirements for major contingency plans, we would be able to do that, but we probably would not be able to do that in the time frame that the current plans call for us to arrive to participate in that conflict,‖ Neller told the House Armed Services Committee………

VCNO Michelle Howard: Navy Paying Down Readiness Debt Slower Than it Would Like

http://news.usni.org/2016/03/16/vcno-michelle-howard-navy-paying-down-readiness-debt-slower-than-it-would-like

USNI © March 17, 2016

By John Grady

What it came down to for senior service leaders in a Senate Armed Services Readiness and Management Support subcommittee hearing was having more missions than money, and what resources had to be moved around to pay for current operations. For the Navy, Adm. Michelle Howard, vice chief of naval operations, said in her prepared testimony that it was —sustainment, restoration and modernization of existing buildings, piers, runways, hangars, utility systems.l Later in answer to a question, she said priorities in shore infrastructure work are with the shipyards, to overcome delayed maintenance and extended deployments. Those postponements and delays in caring for necessary infrastructure —eventually will have an effecton other Navy programs, Howard said. Her prepared testimony said the Navy was funding infrastructure accounts at 70 percent against the Defense Department goal of 90 percent. The Navy is paying down its readiness debt —more slowly than we prefer‖ Howard said………
Other Items of Interest –

**LCS Cut Ripples Through Navy’s New 30-Year Shipbuilding Plan**


Breaking Defense © March 14, 2016

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter cut the Littoral Combat Ship program by 12 vessels last fall, but the surface fleet will feel the impact for decades. The long-term ramifications are laid out in detail by the Navy’s forthcoming 30-year shipbuilding plan, excerpts of which were obtained by Breaking Defense. Last year’s 30-year plan projected the Navy would meet or exceed its goal of 308 — battle force ships in twelve years (2022-231 and 2035-2036), peaking at 321 ships — which Carter called excessive — in 2028. By contrast, and entirely as a result of the LCS cut, this year’s projection is that the Navy will fulfill the 308-ship requirement in only eight years, 2021-2028, peaking at 311 vessels — just three ships above the goal………

**Florida launches effort to lure veterans from other states**


Orlando Sentinel © March 17, 2016

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**The military created nation's best child care system**
By Sarah Butrymowicz and Jackie Mader, The Hechinger Report

What would it take for Mississippi to transform its child care system from one of the lowest ranked in the nation to one of the best? The Department of Defense, whose services for children went from a struggling system to what many experts now say is the national gold standard of child care, may have the answers. The DoD prides itself on having high standards, holding centers accountable to meeting them and providing the support they need to do so. Roughly 95 percent of the Department of Defense’s more than 800 centers — some in the U.S., some abroad — are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, or NAEYC. Compare that to Mississippi, where fewer than 30 centers in the state’s system — or about 2 percent of licensed centers — meet the basic criteria for accreditation, which includes meeting standards for curriculum, teaching and community relations. In national surveys of state oversight and program standards for child care, the Department of Defense repeatedly comes out on top. In a 2013 report from the nonprofit Child Care Aware, the DoD’s child care system was the only one to earn a B, the highest grade awarded. Mississippi got an F, along with 20 other states. It was ranked 43 out of the 50 states, plus the Department of Defense and District of Columbia. (Child Care Aware works with the Department Defense to help military families find and afford care when they are not on a military base.)
March 28, 2016 – FDSTF Update

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Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:
BRAC –

**Congress Fails to Appreciate How the BRAC Ban Is Hurting Communities, Analyst Says**


Defense Communities 360 © March 18, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Over the past four years, lawmakers have come up with multiple reasons to reject the Pentagon’s request to hold one or more rounds of base closures, but none of them have held up under scrutiny, especially as DOD faces severe spending constraints, says Mackenzie Eaglen, a resident fellow at American Enterprise Institute. —Congress has dug in for too long on opposing the long-overdue next base closure round. The irony is that this is hurting communities and the military — not helping them, contrary to popular opinion,‖ Eaglen writes in a commentary published in Forbes. The argument that BRAC does not save money is refuted by the $12 billion the first five rounds are saving annually, she writes. Even the 2005 round, with its emphasis on realigning missions rather than closing facilities outright, is saving $4 billion each year……

**Members of New York’s Congressional Delegation Oppose BRAC**


Defense Communities 360 © March 17, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Two New York lawmakers said they will oppose a new round of base closures, partially to protect installations such as Fort Drum. —I take the threat of BRAC very seriously and will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure the stability of Fort Drum and all of our units,‖ Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D), who serves on the Senate Armed Services Committee, told the Watertown Daily Times. —This base is also the single biggest economic driver in the region and the loss of jobs that would stem from BRAC would have devastating effects,‖ Gillibrand added.
Rep. Elise Stefanik (R) echoed Gillibrand’s comments, telling the paper she would oppose a new BRAC round and work —against any push that would harm our military readiness.

All The Misleading Reasons Not To Do BRAC


Forbes © March 17, 2016

By Mackenzie Eaglen

When it comes to politically difficult decisions, members of Congress are as good as anyone at finding —new! reasons not to do something. Few causes engender more creativity in excuse-making than the Pentagon’s base closure process, informally known as BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure). A few years ago after Congress helped impose the fiscal handcuffs known as the Budget Control Act, the legislative branch (inadvertently) bolstered the already strong case for eliminating wasteful spending on excess real property and infrastructure in the world’s largest organization: the Defense Department.

DOD Budget–

House Armed Services Committee Chair Backs GOP Budget Proposal


Defense News © March 15, 2016

By Joe Gould

House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry said Tuesday he would vote for the House Budget Committee spending blueprint unveiled Tuesday even though it gambles on the next administration boosting defense via emergency funding. House Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price, R-Ga., announced Tuesday his panel will consider a 2017 budget resolution this week that calls for $1.07 trillion in spending next year, a deal-breaker for the far-right House Freedom Caucus, whose members sought a $30 billion budget cut. It’s unclear whether the budget will make it out of the committee, which has several Freedom Caucus members. Some defense hawks may have problems of their own with another part of the plan. Though it touts $74 billion for the overseas contingency operations (OCO), which at first blush looks like an
increase over the $59 billion for OCO in the president’s 2017 budget request, that larger figure actually combines the Pentagon and State Department OCO requests.

Sequestration Budget Cuts Pose 'Greatest Risk' to DoD


Defense News © March 17, 2016

By Joe Gould

The US defense secretary and Joint Chiefs chairman warned lawmakers that scrapping the two-year budget deal would be catastrophic for US national security interests. The congressional testimony Thursday came as fiscal conservatives in the House Freedom Caucus, citing the nation’s rising deficit, are pressing to abandon the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 and go back to the $1.04 trillion level under automatic spending cuts known as sequestration, set in 2011. (This would cut President Obama's request by $30 billion.) Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford, in an exchange with Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said a return to sequestration would require a rewrite of the US national defense strategy and expose the nation to —significant risk, from Russia, China, Iran, North Korea and violent extremism, Dunford said.

Republican Senators Challenge DOD Leaders over FY’17 Funding

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/republican-senators-challenge-dod-leaders-over-fy17-funding/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=9fc588b061-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-9fc588b061-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 21, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Military leaders and the Senate Armed Services Committee squared off last week over whether the administration’s fiscal 2017 budget request is adequate to protect the nation. Committee Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.) argued that the department’s request is billions of dollars short as the military faces a litany of global threats, reported Stars and Stripes. —The unfunded requirements of the military services now total nearly $18 billion, McCain said. —That represents the additional ships, airplanes, helicopters, fighting vehicles, training and other programs that our military leaders say they need simply to carry out our increasingly antiquated defense strategy at an acceptable level of risk. To accommodate the shortfall projected for FY 2017 — which Defense Secretary Ash Carter said was $11 billion — the department protected
readiness accounts while trimming modernization efforts. The spending proposal includes $524 billion in the base budget and $59 billion in the overseas contingency operations account……

MacDill AFB –

MacDill AirFest to fill skies even before weekend extravaganza


Tampa Tribune © March 15, 2016

By Howard Altman

The skies over MacDill Air Force Base will be busier than usual over the next several days as aircraft head here for this weekend’s Tampa Bay AirFest 2016. People in and around the Tampa Bay area can expect to see more military aircraft Wednesday through Sunday, said officials from the 6th Air Mobility Wing, the base host unit. The formal display of air power takes place Saturday and Sunday at MacDill, with gates opening 8 a.m. and performances starting at 11 a.m. The Air Force Thunderbirds aerial performing team will fly each day at 3 p.m.. As many as 200,000 people are expected. Those who appreciate military aircraft are in for a treat. Nearly every type in the U.S. Air Force inventory will be headed to MacDill, said Maj. Ryan Garlow, AirFest director. That includes the F-35 Lightning II and the F-22 Raptor, Garlow said. So far, only a MiG-17 owned by aerial performer Randy Ball has arrived at MacDill. The plane did battle with U.S. aircraft during the Vietnam War. But it will soon have company as more than two dozen static aircraft displays are set up at the base for visitors to tour and discuss with air crew members. The most active times for aircraft traffic will be from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., with most arriving Wednesday through Friday, Garlow said.

MacDill kicks-off AirFest with Richard “Dick” Cutshall Memorial Run

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/192399/macdill-kicks-off-airfest-with-richard-dick-cutshall-memorial-run#.VuwS1Xo02qw

DVIDS © March 15, 2016

MacDill kicked off the Tampa Bay AirFest 2016 festivities by honoring the base’s very first Air Boss. More than 50 members of Team MacDill participated in the annual Richard —Dick— Cutshall AirFest Memorial Run, March 11, 2016, at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. —This
event allows us to pay tribute to an important MacDill member," said Master Sgt. Bradford Johnson, a participant and a first sergeant assigned to the 6th Comptroller Squadron. "He paved the way for a better relationship and strengthened the bridge we now call community relations."

**Senate Confirms Army Generals At MacDill**


By Kurt Shriner

The Senate has confirmed President Barack Obama's choices to lead two of the military's most important warfighting commands. Senators late Thursday approved the nominations of Army Gen. Joseph Votel to run U.S. Central Command and Gen. Tony Thomas to take over as the top officer at U.S. Special Operations Command. Both commands are headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. At Central Command, Votel will oversee U.S. military operations in Syria, Iraq and 18 other countries. He succeeds Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, who is retiring. Thomas, who also received a fourth star, replaces Votel at Special Operations Command. He had been serving as commander of the secretive Joint Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Votel and Thomas both graduated in 1980 from the U.S. Military Academy.

**Coming home: AirFest guest of honor saw the opening of MacDill AFB in 1941**


By Howard Altman

Tom Kugler bounds through Hangar 3, headed toward the MacDill Air Force Base flight line at a clip belying his age. "Oh God, I want to get out there," he says. Nearly 96, Kugler has traveled from his home in Lawrence, Kansas, to MacDill, where he is a guest of honor for Tampa Bay AirFest 2016. Last held in 2014, AirFest is being held this year in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of MacDill’s dedication. While as many as 200,000 people are expected to pass through the gates on Saturday and Sunday, not many will be able to say they were here when Brig. Gen. Clarence Tinker, then the base commander, presided over the dedication ceremony on April 16, 1941. But Kugler can. And there’s good reason for his exuberance. The last time he
was on base was February 1942. He was on board a B-24 Liberator heavy bomber, which he thought was bound for Australia.

Eglin AFB –

**F-35 Cost May Drop to $85 Million by 2019**


Military.com © March 16, 2016

by Hope Hodge Seck

Despite its history of cost overruns, the Pentagon's fifth-generation fighter program is on course to realize significant savings in coming years, the program manager said this week. Jeff Babione, Lockheed Martin's program manager for the F-35 program, told reporters Tuesday that the cost of the F-35A -- the Air Force variant of the aircraft -- was expected to drop from nearly $100 million per plane to about $85 million by 2019, thanks to efficiencies and cost-cutting manufacturing technologies. The B and C variants designed for the Marine Corps and Navy, which are heavier and purchased in smaller quantities, are not included in the 2019 goal. By contrast, the Navy's F/A-18E/F Super Hornet fighter aircraft cost about $60 million apiece. "We think that price with this capability will be unbeatable," Babione said. "You'll be able to afford a fifth-generation airplane for what would be a fourth-generation price for anything else offered in the free world.

Hurlburt Field –

**Carter names new AFSOC leader; other general officer assignments**


Air Force Times © March 17, 2016

By Oriana Pawlyk
Defense Secretary Ash Carter has named Air Force Lt. Gen. Marshall Webb to lead Air Force Special Operations Command. Webb is currently serving as commander, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Special Operations Headquarters, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Mons, Belgium. Since assuming his position in August 2014, Webb directly reports to Air Force Gen. Phillip Breedlove, the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe. He is a command pilot with more than 3,700 flying hours, including 117 combat hours in Afghanistan, Iraq and Bosnia, according to his biography, and has flown rotary-wing aircraft including the MH-53H/J/M, CV-22B, UH-1H/N and MC-130……

US Southern Command –

US Southern Command Showcases Strength in Diversity
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/192740/us-southern-command-showcases-strength-diversity#.Vu_3XXo02qw
DVIDS © March 17, 2016

The United States Southern Command awarded 15 service members the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (GAFPB) during a ceremony March 16 at its headquarters in Doral, Florida. Participants represented the diversity and athleticism of this combatant command during a two-day physically-challenging evaluation of military proficiency and physical skills. The GAFB challenges participants through multiple timed events administered by a Senior German Commissioned or Non-commissioned Officer. It's a prestigious designation for German troops that they must earn to become an NCO or earn a commission and is one of the few badges open to foreign forces. ……..

Tyndall AFB –

You got it, we bought it

Tyndall AFB © March 16, 2016
By Senior Airman Dustin Mullen
Take a minute and look around Tyndall. With every glance it is easy to see the impact of contract provided capabilities; from the planes, the facilities, the furniture, the computers and the tools used to maintain the most advanced air superiority fighter on the planet. Likely, those capabilities were provided by the dedicated men and women of the 325th Contracting Squadron. The 325th CONS exists to provide services and supplies to sustain Team Tyndall warfighters. —Basically, through the contracts we write, we deliver mission capability,‖ said Ms. Norma Myers, 325th CONS director of business operations. —Our contracts are warfighting platforms, vital to sustaining Tyndall as a combat air power projection platform. Not only do we make local impact, but our contracts provide world-wide capabilities. —We have awarded research and development contracts that provide airfield damage repair capabilities, and unexploded ordinance mitigation, that are protecting the lives of our deployed members down range,‖ she added………

Florida National Guard –

**Mortar gun crews test their limits**

[https://www.dvidshub.net/news/192724/mortar-gun-crews-test-their-limits#.VuwTyXo02qw](https://www.dvidshub.net/news/192724/mortar-gun-crews-test-their-limits#.VuwTyXo02qw)

DVIDS © March 17, 2016

The mortar gun crews assigned to Task Force Hurricane tested their proficiency and ability to work harmoniously as a crew during the gunner’s examination held on Camp Blanding Joint Training Center during pre-mobilization training Feb. 19, 2016 thru March 11, 2016. Task Force Hurricane, comprised of 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Miramar, Fla., and Troop A, 1st Squadron, 153d Cavalry Regiment, based in Bonifay, Fla., is scheduled to mobilize to Fort Bliss, Texas, to be validated for mobilization. After the validation period, the Task Force will deploy to Camp Lemonier, Djibouti to perform security operations in the region………

NAS Whiting Field –

[Alabama Training Facility for NAS Whiting Field Reopens after 10-Year Hiatus](https://www.dvidshub.net/news/192724/mortar-gun-crews-test-their-limits#.VuwTyXo02qw)
Officials from Naval Air Station Whiting Field, Fla., and Baldwin County, Ala., on Monday held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to reopen Navy Outlying Landing Field (NOLF) Summerdale after it had been idle for more than 10 years. Regular use of the airfield on the Alabama Gulf Coast for touch-and-goes was suspended in 2005 when Training Air Wing 6 at NAS Pensacola began transitioning its training aircraft from the T-34 Turbomentor to the T-6A. Since then, the Navy decided to lengthen the runways at Summerdale by 1,150 feet to accommodate the transition at Training Air Wing 5, based at Whiting Field, from the T-34 to the T-6B Texan II aircraft.

DOD Issues –

Air Force Committed to Total Force Integration

The Air Force continues to make strides to achieve greater integration of the service’s active and reserve components as a single force through changes affecting both operational and personnel policies. —The Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve provide the nation a vital capability that is functionally integrated and operationally indistinguishable from the active force, I said Secretary Deborah Lee James, according to a news release. —This maximizes our total force and secures [our] top priorities of taking care of people, balancing today’s readiness with tomorrow’s modernization, and making every dollar count. The service is pursuing more than 78 total force integration proposals, including 41 recommended by the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force, designed to break down existing barriers to a total Air Force……
Generals Worry Army, Marines Unready For A New War

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2016/03/16/army-marines-readiness-war-congress/81876210/

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Florida launches effort to lure veterans from other states


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4. **Attachments:**
   - Legislative summary
   - TPG Monthly Report

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Articles of Interest:

MacDill AFB –
New Socom leader Thomas known for broad experience, honest talk


Tampa Tribune © March 29, 2016

By Howard Altman

By now, Army Gen. Joseph Votel is a familiar figure in Tampa, where he’s led U.S. Special Operations Command since August 2014 and is set to take over U.S. Central Command from the retiring Army Gen. Lloyd Austin III in a Wednesday afternoon ceremony at MacDill Air Force Base. He’s been widely lauded as the right man at the right time to run Centcom. Less well known beyond military circles in Tampa is Raymond —Tony— Thomas III, the man who is replacing Votel at Socom, also during a change of command ceremony at the base that’s home to both commands. Both men are 57……..

MacDill AFB goes after next AirFest after drawing up to 120,000 in March


Tampa Tribune © March 31, 2016

By Howard Altman

Despite a lightning storm that shut down Tampa Bay AirFest2016 for about three hours, officials at MacDill Air Force Base are pleased with the overall turnout and will apply by the service’s August deadline to hold another one, most likely in 2018. Air Force Col. Daniel Tulley, the base commander, —was pleased, especially knowing we had a poor day’s worth of weather on Saturday,— said Air Force Capt. Jessica Brown, spokeswoman for the 6th Air Mobility Wing, the base host unit. —We had been preparing for this event for several months, and we thought it was a pretty amazing show.1 Between 80,000 and 120,000 people came through MacDill’s gates during the three days of the AirFest, which opened March 18 with a private event for troops, veterans, senior citizens and others, and closed March 20. During the previous AirFest, in 2014, an estimated 200,000 passed through the gates during the two days of the public portion of the event……..

Eglin AFB –
Army’s New Multi-Mission Launcher Platform Fires Raytheon Missile for Intercept Test


Executive Biz © March 29, 2016

By Scott Nicholas

The U.S. Army has fired a Raytheon-built interceptor missile using a new Multi-Mission Launcher platform and mobile ground-based weapon system during a demonstration at Eglin Air Force Base. The Army said Thursday its Cruise Missile Defense Systems project office and Aviation and Missile Research, Development and Engineering Center teamed up to develop the Indirect Fire Protection Capability Increment 2-Intercept platform to address potential aerial threats. The IFPC Inc 2-I system works to defend against unmanned aircraft systems, cruise missiles, rockets, artillery and mortars and consists of the MML mounted on a medium tactical vehicle, the service branch added……………

Reaper continues legacy of RPA firsts at WSEP


Tyndall AFB © March 31, 2016

By 1st Lt. Amanda Farr

The MQ-9 Reaper demonstrated a wide range of weapons capability firsts during the air-to-ground Weapon System Evaluation Program here from March 14 - 17. Students of the MQ-9 platform from the 26th Weapons Squadron, U.S. Air Force Weapons School, Nellis AFB, Nevada, participated in the WSEP for a unique training opportunity - engaging maritime threats. In 2015, the 26th WPS became the first Reaper squadron to fire live weapons at maritime platforms and remains the only RPA squadron to do so. As maritime threats to the U.S. and its allies increase worldwide, it is vital for RPA teams to understand the strategic importance of firing over water. "Air Force Reaper crews better know how to find, fix, track, target, engage, and assess maritime targets and do so in an integrated fashion," said Lt. Col. Bryan Callahan, 26th WPS commander. "That's why this WSEP is so important and why it's critical that we hit all of our shots." Also known as Combat Hammer, this air-to-ground WSEP, hosted by the 86th Fighter Weapons Squadron, is designed to evaluate a weapon system from cradle-to-grave in a combat representative environment. For this WSEP, the Reaper's participation in maritime
operations will provide critical data to every combatant commander that has water in their area of responsibility.

NAS Jacksonville –

Neighbors worried about noise at Cecil Airport


Action News Jax © March 29, 2016

by Erica Bennett

From takeoff to practice rounds in the air, you name it, it’s going on at Cecil Airport. Unfortunately, our house is right under the flight path, so that makes it pretty annoying, homeowner Michael Hardy said. According to some in the Forest Hammock neighborhood, so does the late night flying. We’re told one jet was heard passing at 10:30 p.m. Monday. Way too late for most, but Ashley Williams said she’s OK. —It doesn’t bother me. Hey, it’s the cost of our freedom, so I’m fine with it, she explained. Some of the added air traffic is from Naval Air Station Jacksonville. The third-largest Navy base in America started doing repairs to its 75-year-old runway last summer. As a result, approximately 1,800 military personnel, 9 fixed wing squadrons and 37 aircraft have been temporarily relocated to Cecil.

NS Mayport –

Simulator teaches Jacksonville Navy sailors to steer billion dollar ships


Action News Jax © March 29, 2016

by: Bridgette Matter

Navy sailors in Jacksonville are learning to steer billion dollar ships with a simulator in Mayport. The U.S. Navy gave Action News Jax an inside look at the simulator, which saves taxpayers millions of dollars in fuel costs and is a safer alternative than learning on a real ship. Sailors practice risky exercises, from towing another ship to navigating in dangerous weather conditions. In one simulation, a person fell overboard and was floating in the water. Sailors had to turn the ship around and rescue the person. Capt. Daniel Gillen said the simulator is similar to a video game. —This simulator gives us an opportunity to practice electronically because our underway
time is very valuable, Gillen said. Any kind of ship can be simulated. Anika Herrmann came to the states from the German navy to see how a larger navy operates. She trains young officers and said using the simulator is safer for the ships and sailors. There are several simulators around the world but Naval Station Mayport houses the only one in Florida.

Tyndall AFB –

**Tyndall's 95th Fighter Squadron wins Raytheon Award as top fighter squadron in US Air Force**


WJHG © March 24, 2016

The 95th Fighter Squadron at Tyndall Air Force Base prides itself in upholding its mission—"Provide air dominance for America." Now, that excellence is being recognized worldwide. The 95th, known as the "Boneheads", has been awarded the Raytheon Trophy, given out yearly to the top fighter squadron in the United States Air Force. "The Raytheon Trophy is both very prestigious and well-known throughout the United States Air Force and we are deeply humbled and very excited to be recognized as the top air superiority squadron in the Air Force for 2015," said Lt. Col. Daniel Lehoski 95th Fighter Squadron Commander. The Raytheon Trophy traces its roots back decades. It's been awarded every year since 1953 and is given to the top air-superiority and air-defense squadron in the Air Force. Nominees are graded on air-defense and air-superiority mission performance, operational mission performance, organizational readiness inspection results, training exercise participation, unit and individual achievements and awards…..

Florida National Guard –

**Florida National Guard honors 25th Gulf War Anniversary Veterans reunite together in shared experiences**

As 11 a.m. approached, Soldiers and friends embraced excitedly and exchanged boisterous greetings with friends they hadn’t seen in many years, as over 100 people traveling from all over Florida came to honor the 25th anniversary of Operation Desert Storm. The ceremony, hosted by the Florida Army National Guard at the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, was an opportunity to officially commemorate the anniversary and the new war memorial at the Camp Blanding Museum, and a place for Gulf War veterans to come and share common experiences. Florida State Representative Jimmie T. Smith, representing District 34, and chair of the Veterans of Military Affairs Subcommittee, who served in Operation Desert Storm with the 101st Airborne Division, pointed out the opportunity for reflection that came with the ceremony and the new Gulf War monument. —It gives you a chance to really reflect on a part of history and your part in history. So when you come here and see the changes of the world and you can know that you were a part of that, that means a lot,‖ said Smith. —To know that you can also reflect back on the fact that you stood for liberty and stood for your country and actually projected force for America across the world; I mean that’s a very big thing to have, to have an event like this to remember that. A lot of the time we forget the effect we as individuals have had.‖

NAS Whiting Field –

County seeks recreational use of Whiting land


Navarre Press © March 30, 2016

By Rob Johnson

The shortage of land available to expand recreational facilities in Santa Rosa County is prompting commissioners to ask the Navy to let it use part of a vacant 300-acre parcel in a section of Whiting Field. District 3 Commissioner Don Salter suggested last week that the county prepare a —master plan‖ to determine how much space might be available if the Navy is amenable to sharing part of Whiting’s Holley Outlying Field.

Patrick AFB –

Patrick AFB, Community Partnership Expands Opportunities for Youth Sports Programs
A newly signed memorandum of agreement between Patrick Air Force Base and Satellite Beach, Fla., will provide expanded opportunities for military and community youth to participate in recreational leagues and other programming. Children in Satellite Beach will be able to participate in the school-age care and open recreation programs offered by the installation, said Pam Jordan, family services flight chief for the 45th Space Wing. Similarly, military dependents will have opportunities to participate in community sports leagues and instructional programming in Satellite Beach, reported Space Coast Daily. Patrick AFB has been working jointly with the Space Coast Economic Development Commission and Satellite Beach community leaders to find creative ways to leverage existing capabilities and resources under the Air Force Community Partnership program. The effort has looked for ways to increase the use of underutilized facilities to improve the quality of life for military personnel and their families, and the base’s host community, according to the story.

NAS Key West –

**Blue Angels descend this weekend**

http://www.keysnet.com/2016/03/30/507782/blue-angels-descend-this-weekend.html

KeysNet © March 30, 2016

The U.S. Navy's world-renowned Blue Angels Flight Demonstration Squadron returns to the Lower Keys with an electrifying exhibition of flying skills April 2 and 3 for the 2016 Southernmost Air Spectacular. Presented by Naval Air Station Key West, the air show takes place at NAS Key West's Boca Chica Field, mile marker 8 on U.S. 1. Gates are to open at 9 a.m. both days, with the show slated to begin at 10 a.m. The last time the Blue Angels performed in Key West was 2013. NAS Key West was the winter home of the Blue Angels in the 1960s. The squadron dates back to 1946 and is famed for its brilliant formation flying and skilled demonstration of maneuvers that are employed in aerial combat. ……..

**On top of the world**

**Riding high with the Blue Angels**
The Boss, or lead pilot of the Navy’s Blue Angels precision flying team, gives the cue in a rhythmic, almost singsong cadence that would sound as reassuring as a lullaby — if the blue and gold F/A-18 Hornet hadn’t just changed direction and gone vertical in a heart-stopping instant. The full afterburner takeoff propels the jet nearly straight up and prompts anyone older than 35 to start quoting lines from —Top Gun.‖ Lieutenant Tyler —Feedbag‖ Davies provided the ride of a lifetime to three lucky locals Wednesday afternoon, in advance of the weekend’s Southernmost Air Spectacular at Naval Air Station Key West on Saturday and Sunday. Schools Superintendent Mark Porter, Key West High School Principal Amber Archer Bosco and Key West Citizen photographer Mike Hentz donned the blue flight suits and helmet, listened closely to the final instructions to keep their hands off the ejection handle, climbed into the seat behind Davies, held on and tried to stay conscious as increasing g’s, or gravitational forces, tried to send the blood from their brain pooling into their legs…………

Other Items of Interest –

**REPI Program Leverages Local Partnerships to Protect Military Missions**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/repi-program-leverages-local-partnerships-to-protect-military-missions/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=7d8c7a00eb-BRSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-7d8c7a00eb-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 29, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program, one of the Pentagon’s most effective tools for limiting encroachment and preserving critical habitat surrounding military activities, in recent years has strived to increase collaboration with other federal agencies and non-traditional partners to better leverage congressional funding and expand the benefits of its projects. Through fiscal 2015, REPI has protected nearly 438,000 acres in 88 locations across 30 states on projects aimed at avoiding land use conflicts, typically by engaging
in buffer partnerships that obtain easements on land bordering installations and training ranges, according to the program’s 10th Annual Report to Congress. The program’s partners — states, communities and conservation groups — supplied 47 percent of the $1.1 billion spent on REPI projects since Congress authorized such partnerships in 2002……..

Air Force Creates Office for Large-Scale Energy Projects

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/energy/air-force-creates-office-for-large-scale-energy-projects/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=7dd066081a-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-7dd066081a-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © March 30, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Air Force has established the Office of Energy Assurance, an activity focused on developing privately financed, large-scale clean energy projects as part of an integrated facility energy portfolio. Secretary Deborah Lee James announced the office’s establishment last week during a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. She said the organization will take an enterprise-wide approach to identify and pursue projects that provide resilient, cost-effective, cleaner power to Air Force installations, according to a news release. The office already is up and running and anticipates having 10 large-scale projects in service or procurement across the country by the end of 2017, said Miranda Ballentine, assistant secretary for installations, environment and energy……..

Five Texas Communities Collect $15.5M to Strengthen Local Bases


Defense Communities 360 © April 4, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The state of Texas on Thursday awarded $15.5 million to five Texas communities for infrastructure projects and other initiatives intended to stave off the closure of neighboring installations in a future BRAC round. The grants, awarded by the Texas Military Preparedness Commission, represented the second half of the Legislature’s $30 million appropriation for the fiscal 2016-2017 biennium. Last December, the commission awarded $14.1 million to four
Texas communities under the state’s Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant program to help communities support local installations. —Texas remains at the vanguard of supporting the U.S. military and the communities in which they serve,‖ Gov. Greg Abbott (R) said in a written statement. —Now more than ever, it is incumbent upon the state of Texas to dedicate the resources needed to preserve the installations of the brave men and women in uniform just as they have preserved our freedom for generations.‖
TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Conference Call/Webex**  – The next conference call of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, April 21, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM.

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   **Access code:** 8784566

3. **FY 16-17 Florida Defense Task Force Grant Application** -- The Florida Defense Support Task Force has released the FY 2016-2017 grant funding application. This application is posted on the Task Force web site:  
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4. **Attachments:**

   - DRAFT Agenda for Conference Call
   - Notes from bi-weekly TPG conference call
   - Webex Instructions/Invite

Regards,  BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**Pennsylvania Lawmaker Questions DOD’s Request for Base Closures**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/pennsylvania-lawmaker-questions-dods-request-for-base-closures/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=36150f4e6d-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-36150f4e6d-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © April 5, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Pennsylvania Rep. Bill Shuster (R) has asked Defense Secretary Ash Carter to justify the Pentagon’s request to hold a BRAC round in 2019, demanding him to explain why a new round would be more likely to achieve projected costs savings than the 2005 round and why it would yield a basing footprint that aligns with DOD’s assessment of global threats in the decade following 2019. —The United States is facing a serious and wide array of threats to our national security, the likes of which we have not witnessed in decades, and now is not the time to slash infrastructure in search of unproven and alleged cost savings,‖ according to the April 1 letter from Shuster, a member of the House Armed Services Committee........

**New Army Analysis Reveals Higher Excess Capacity Figure**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/new-army-analysis-reveals-higher-excess-capacity-figure/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=466aa949a8-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-466aa949a8-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © April 7, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Army believes that up to 33 percent of its infrastructure could be excess to its needs by fiscal 2019 when its active-duty end strength drops to 450,000, under a recently completed parametric analysis. The new analysis updates an earlier estimate concluding that 21 percent of the Army’s capacity would be excess when its end strength shrinks to 450,000. That estimate, however,
relied on a facility approach, according to an Army presentation obtained by Politico. The newer parametric analysis found that the Army’s surplus infrastructure reached 29 percent in FY 2012 before it started to draw down its active forces from a level of 562,000 soldiers……..

**Congress to Hold off New Base Closures for Now, Colorado Lawmaker Says**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/congress-to-hold-off-new-base-closures-for-now-congressman-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=c0ab243816-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-c0ab243816-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © April 12, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The leadership of the House Armed Services Committee remains opposed to DOD’s request for a new BRAC round, said Colorado Rep. Doug Lamborn (R), but Colorado Springs leaders need to be prepared for the prospect that Congress OKs a BRAC at some point. —It’s an issue that isn’t going away,‖ Lamborn told local business leaders Monday. —How we respond as a community is a big deal.‖ State and regional officials intend to press the case for the Pentagon to expand missions in Colorado through lobbying efforts and an assessment of the military’s economic contribution to the state, reported the Colorado Springs Gazette……..

DOD Budget–

**Senate May Step ahead of House on Appropriations**


Defense Communities 360 © April 5, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Senate possibly could move ahead of the House in considering fiscal 2017 spending measures as the House GOP remains hung up over topline spending and has not yet adopted a budget blueprint for the next fiscal year. In the absence of a budget resolution or a deeming resolution — an alternative mechanism for setting topline spending — the House may have to
wait until May 15 to take up individual appropriations bills on the floor. The Senate appears ready to move spending bills to the floor later this month, with the military construction-veterans affairs title anticipated to be marked up in subcommittee next week, reported CQ Roll Call…….

Top Appropriator Draws A Line on DoD Spending


Defense News © April 8, 2016
By Joe Gould

Meet the new budget fight, same as the old budget fight. If Republicans want more money for defense, Democrats will insist on extra funds for non-military programs too. Parity, a key part of Democrats' negotiating position in last year's bipartisan budget agreement, is again a watchword, according to Senate Appropriations Vice-chair Barbara Mikulski, D-Md. That's whether Senate Republicans seek to add to the Pentagon’s fiscal 2017 budget through the Overseas Contingency Operations account, or otherwise. —No matter what they do, we want parity.—said Mikulski, a key player in negotiating last year's budget deal. —A budget deal is a budget deal, and if they want to add to defense and use OCO to do it, we stick to our three principals: Parity between defense and non-defense, reasonable allocations and no poison pill riders. I…………

Spending Caps Limit Funding for Facility Needs, Officials Say

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/spending-caps-limit-funding-for-facility-needs-officials-say/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=c0ab243816-RSS.dc360.EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-c0ab243816-5574537&ct=t%28RSS.dc360.EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © April 12, 2016
By Dan Cohen

All three military departments are accepting risks to their facilities in their fiscal 2017 budget requests by postponing needed sustainment and restoration projects, the Pentagon’s top installation officials told lawmakers Thursday. Insufficient investment in recent years has resulted in the degradation of many Navy installations’ piers, runways and other facilities, Steven Iselin, principal deputy assistant secretary for energy, installations and environment, told the Senate Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee. The Air Force included funding in its budget proposal for only 30 construction projects out of 500 requested by major commands, said Miranda Ballentine, assistant secretary for installations, environment and energy, reported Military Times. She said she expects the backlog of degrading facilities to grow……
Space Coast –

### Nailed It: SpaceX’s Reusable Rocket Makes Historic Landing


Defense One © April 10, 2016

**By Tim Fernholz Quartz**

After four failed attempts, SpaceX has successfully landed the first stage of its Falcon 9 rocket on a sea-going platform. The landing is a critical success in founder Elon Musk’s mission to disrupt the space access business, cutting the costs of a launch by reusing the first stage of the company’s Falcon 9 rockets. The rocket delivered a Dragon spacecraft full of cargo destined for the International Space Station into orbit.

MacDill AFB –

### Hurricane hunters will stay within 50 miles of MacDill AFB


Tampa Bay Times © April 6, 2016

**By William R. Levesque, Times Staff Writer**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Wednesday that it plans to find a home for its famed hurricane hunter aircraft that is within 50 miles of MacDill Air Force Base. That is the first concrete indication by NOAA that the planes, which fly into tropical storms to measure their intensity and forecast their path, will remain in the region. The Air Force needs NOAA’s hangar space at MacDill and has told the agency it needs to move by July 1, 2017. The news broke when Sen. Bill Nelson said in a Twitter announcement that the aircraft "will stay in Tampa Bay." An email NOAA sent to Nelson on Wednesday said the agency was going to seek a "request for information" from airports in the Tampa Bay area to find a home for the aircraft.
While NOAA says the hurricane hunters' new home is "temporary," the agency is seeking to enter into a 10-year lease by January.

Eglin AFB –

**New Residential Neighborhood Opens at Eglin AFB**


Defense Communities 360 © April 8, 2016

By Dan Cohen

A new 747-residence neighborhood at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., is starting to welcome its first residents ahead of its grand opening scheduled for May 3. The new homes, a mix of duplexes and single-family units, feature a British West Indies architectural style that reflects a Florida Gulf sensibility, reports Air Force Civil Engineer Center (AFCEC) Public Affairs. The neighborhood has homes for airmen and their families of all ranks, from junior enlisted to general grade officers, and includes a 12,000-square-foot community center. —We expect 32 new move-ins in April, said Kim Cariker, community management director for Corvias Military Living, the Air Force’s privatized housing partner. Many of the neighborhood’s newest residents lived in base housing built in the 1950s that is scheduled for demolition to make room for new construction.

**EOD Warrior Foundation to host memorial weekend in May at Eglin AFB**


Examiner © April 8, 2016

Many people are not familiar with Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technicians or what they do in our military. The more civilians learn about them, the more they become interested in learning about the dangerous and important work these warriors do. EOD technicians, many of whom work with bomb sniffing dogs, are typically the front line of defense for combat engineers and other Soldiers, all inclusive of the branches. The EOD Memorial Wall, honoring fallen
EOD technicians is open to the public at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. The memorial is a great place for civilians to learn about the EOD warriors who have lost their lives in the line of duty, and there have been many.

US Southern Command –

**US SOUTHCOM aids Honduras with firefighting capability**


Janes © April 4, 2016

By Daniel Wasserbly

A US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) task force was called upon to help Honduran personnel contain a large-scale wildfire, highlighting the command's diverse mission set in South America. A fire started on 29 March in Jeanette Kawas National Park and began spreading across a significant area, prompting President Juan Orlando Hernández on 31 March to request US support for the Honduran Fire Department, Air Force, and Army, which were battling the fire with ground assets and two UH-1N Huey helicopters. SOUTHCOM's Joint Task Force-Bravo (JTF-Bravo), which is based at Honduras' Soto Cano Air Base, joined with UH-60 Black Hawk utility helicopters and CH-47 Chinook cargo helicopters, hoists for stranded citizens, and 'Bambi Buckets' to douse the fire with water from Laguna de Los Micos, according to a 3 April JTF-Bravo report. Such aid requests are done through the local US embassy, then the US State Department makes a decision and informs the US Department of Defense, which tasks the appropriate command, a SOUTHCOM spokesperson told *IHS Jane's*.

Tyndall AFB –

**F-22 Raptors are back in Europe**


Air Force Times © April 11, 2016

By Oriana Pawlyk

F-22 stealth jets are back in Europe for more exercises with NATO and partner allies, U.S. European Command announced Monday. The Raptors deployed to RAF Lakenheath, England, from the 95th Fighter Squadron at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, and will continue training in
Europe until May, EUCOM said. The exact number of fighter jets and airmen was not disclosed. The multirole fighter aircraft will forward deploy from the United Kingdom to NATO bases to "maximize training opportunities, affirm enduring commitments to NATO allies, and deter any actions that destabilize regional security."……..

Florida National Guard –

**Florida National Guard sending 700 soldiers to Africa**


Miami Herald © April 7, 2016

By Carol Rosenberg

About 700 Florida National Guard troops are headed to the Horn of Africa again to be part of U.S. military operations against al-Qaida and other violent extremists in East Africa, a wing of the war on terror. The Guard said in an announcement Thursday that the Miami-based 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, nicknamed the —Hurricanes,‖ and Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 153rd Cavalry Regiment depart this weekend respectively from airports in Fort Lauderdale and Panama City — for a 12-month mission in support of Operation Freedom’s Sentinel.‖ ………

Defense Industry –

**3 Companies That Could Change the Defense Industry**

http://www.fool.com/investing/general/2016/04/10/3-companies-that-could-change-the-defense-industry.aspx

Motley Fool © April 10, 2016

Combat in this century certainly hasn't shaped up to be anything like that of the 20th. Massive ground wars involving hundreds of thousands of people have given way to sophisticated tactics for preventing terrorist attacks and cyber warfare. Bottom line: The defense industry of tomorrow will require less steel and more silicon. With this idea in mind, some of the Motley Fool's best and brightest got together and put forth their premier ideas for investing in an
increasingly dynamic and advanced industry. Everything was on the table, from laser beams to drone warfare. Interested in investing in the future of the United States defense industry? Read on to learn about three companies that could change it forever. ………

**Arms makers take on Pentagon's cost cop**


Politico © April 11, 2016

By Ellen Mitchell

Some of the nation’s leading defense companies are declaring war on a powerful enemy — an obscure Pentagon official named Shay Assad who has helped cut more than $500 million from military contracts with his aggressive scrutiny of their costs. The industry’s tactics include blanketing congressional committees with proposals that would make it harder for Assad and his contracting officers to get detailed breakdowns of the companies' expenses, according to documents obtained by POLITICO. But Assad, the Pentagon's pricing director for the past five years, refuses to back down, saying: "We are going to be relentless in pursuing getting the good deal for the taxpayers." —That's the way it is," said Assad, a 65-year-old Bostonian with the heavy accent to match. —If companies don't like it, people have an objection to it, we're not

**DOD Issues –**

**U.S. Cyber Command should be combatant command, DoD's top cyber warrior says**


Military Times © April 5, 2016

By Andrew Tilghman

The head of U.S. Cyber Command told Congress on Tuesday that his command should be elevated to become its own unified combatant command, a move that would make it one of the most powerful institutions in the Defense Department. The idea of upgrading CYBERCOM has been discussed inside the Pentagon for months and the comments from Adm. Michael Rogers, the CYBERCOM commander, signals that senior military leaders may be nearing a final decision on the matter. "A combatant commander designation would allow us to be faster, which
would generate better mission outcomes,‖ Rogers told the Senate Armed Services Committee. —I would also argue that the department's processes of budget prioritization, strategy and policy are all generally structured to enable direct combatant commander input into those processes. That's what they're optimized for. I believe that cyber needs to be a part of that direct process,‖ Rogers said………

**DoD Forging Strategy, Joint Staff Revamp for Complex Fights**


Defense News © April 5, 2016

By Joe Gould

The Pentagon is developing a new, classified national military strategy, and recommendations for a top-level organizational overhaul, so it can better face —dynamic and complexl fights, according to Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Pentagon's top echelon is ill-suited to address challenges from nations like Russia, Iran and China, whose ambiguous or "grey" actions fall just shy of overt provocation, and foes who cross the boundaries of the US geographic combatant commands (COCOMs), Dunford told a Center for Strategic and International Studies audience March 29………

**US Army Chief Sounds Alarm: Military at ‘High Risk’**


Defense News © April 8, 2016

By Jen Judson

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley sounded the alarm that the US Army is currently in a state of —high risk! when it comes to being ready enough to defend the nation and respond to a large conflict. —On the 'high military risk,' to be clear, we have sufficient capacity and capability and readiness to fight counterinsurgency and counterterrorism,‖ Milley said at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing Thursday. —My military risk refers specifically to what I see as emerging threats and potential for great power conflict and I am specifically talking about the time it takes to execute the task ... and the cost in terms of casualties.‖………
Future of Army Report To Hit Carter's Desk Next Week


Defense News © April 7, 2016

By Jen Judson

The Army's report on which National Commission on the Future of the Army recommendations it plans to implement and which ones it plans to reject is expected to hit the defense secretary's desk next week, the Army chief of staff said. The NCFA — established by Congress to study the future force and structure — delivered its 63 comprehensive recommendations to Congress at the end of January and the Army has been reviewing these and the reasoning behind them since the release. —We’ve done a very rigorous study of the 63 recommendations,‖ Gen. Mark Milley said at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on the Army budget Thursday……..

Other Items of Interest –

Carter Unveils Goldwater Nichols Reform


Defense News © April 5, 2016

By Aaron Mehta and Joe Gould

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter wants to clarify the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, see service chiefs have a greater hand in acquisition, and winnow the number of four-star billets, all part of a major reform effort to the rules that govern the Pentagon. Carter’s proposals come under the aegis of reforming the 1986 Goldwater Nichols Act, which gave the Pentagon its modern structure. While the system worked well for a time, both members of Congress and Pentagon leaders have expressed a belief that the system needs to be reworked for the modern battlefield. Speaking at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Tuesday, Carter made the case for why and how the Goldwater-Nichols legislation should be changed……..

McMaster: Army May Be Outnumbered AND Outgunned In Next War
"We are outgunned — outmanned — outnumbered — outplanned," George Washington raps in Act I of the hit musical Hamilton. Few American commanders since the Revolution have had to worry about being inferior to the enemy in both numbers and technology. But between rising threats, declining US manpower, and steep cuts to Army modernization, Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster told the Senate, being outgunned and outmanned might become the norm — so we’d better stop shrinking the Army before it’s too late. "We are outranged and outgunned by many potential adversaries," McMaster said, "[and] our army in the future risks being too small to secure the nation."

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**Perks, and drawbacks, of the military child lifestyle**


Pacific Daily News © April 10, 2016

By Anelyse Morris

Moving every three years, parents missing holidays, losing contact with your closest friends — these are normal for the military child. April is the Month of the Military Child, which celebrates and recognizes both the struggles and blessings the military lifestyle offers to military dependents. The Department of Defense and Department of Defense Education Activity celebrates the month. DoDEA, a military school system, operates on island and includes Guam High School. Below are some advantages and disadvantages of a military child lifestyle……

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**Michigan Looks to Economic Study to Help Grow Defense Presence**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/michigan-looks-to-economic-study-to-help-grow-defense-presence/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=c0ab243816-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-c0ab243816-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © April 12, 2016
By Dan Cohen

A study sponsored by the Michigan Defense Center is expected to shape state efforts to preserve its Army and Air National Guard facilities following a future BRAC round as well as to attract new missions. DOD accounts for an estimated $8 billion in annual spending in Michigan, an impact the center would like to grow. About 67 of Michigan’s 83 counties are a place of business under at least one defense contract, said Sean Carlson, the agency’s executive director. The $400,000 study — being prepared by Matrix Design Group — should provide officials an understanding of what military activities would best fit the state’s industries and workforce, reported Crain’s Detroit Business. The study should be completed within several weeks........

Watchdog: Challenges Ahead For Boeing’s KC-46 Tanker


Defense News © April 11, 2016

By Lara Seligman

Although Boeing has largely addressed early development problems with its KC-46 tanker, a government watchdog is warning the company has a challenging road ahead to complete testing, deliver the required number of aircraft to the US Air Force, and get the planes FAA certified. Test officials believe Boeing’s test schedule for the KC-46 program is —optimistic, according to an April report by the Government Accountability Office. The program office projects Boeing will need an additional four months beyond the August 2017 target to deliver 18 full-up tankers due to testing and parts qualification issues, the report states..........
April 18, 2016 – FDSTF Update

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   - DRAFT Agenda for Conference Call
   - FINAL Legislative Summary
   - Webex Instructions/Invite

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

**BRAC –**

**BRAC off the Table, Ayotte Declares**

[http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/brac-off-the-table-ayotte-declares/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=e0b150dee4-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-e0b150dee4-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29](http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/brac-off-the-table-ayotte-declares/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=e0b150dee4-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-e0b150dee4-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29)

Defense Communities 360 © April 13, 2016

By Dan Cohen

At the outset of her panel’s budget hearing Tuesday, Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.), chair of the Senate Armed Services’ Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee, removed all doubt as to where she stands on the Obama administration’s request to hold a new BRAC round in 2019. —I continue to oppose another BRAC round for many reasons,‖ said Ayotte before she reiterated many of arguments she has cited in the past, including the higher-than-promised implementation cost of the last round. —I do not want to give the department the open-ended authority to pursue another BRAC round that will potentially incur significant upfront costs when we do not have the room in our budget in the next few years to afford many fundamental readiness investments that are right before us‖ she said……..

**Pentagon to Congress: We Need Base Closures**


Defense News © April 15, 2016

By Joe Gould and Aaron Mehta

Pentagon officials say the Defense Department is wasting money on excess facilities and needs Congress to step in and close them, but they face an uphill fight. Pointing to 22 percent excess capacity across DoD, a senior Pentagon official is urging lawmakers to consider a new round of the politically unpopular Base Realignment and Closures process, known by the acronym BRAC. According to a DoD report to Congress on the need for BRAC, the Army’s excess
capacity is 33 percent; the Air Force's is 32 percent; the Defense Logistics Agency's is 12 percent, and the Navy's is 7 percent………..

Pentagon: 22 percent of military bases will be excess by 2019


UPI © April 16, 2016

By Daniel Uria

A Pentagon report to Congress found 22 percent of U.S. military bases and facilities will be considered excess by 2019. Deputy Secretary of Defense Bob Work said lawmakers should consider a new round of controversial Base Realignment and Closures or BRACs. "As Department of Defense leadership has repeatedly testified, spending resources on excess infrastructure does not make sense," Work said. "Therefore, we urge Congress to provide the Department authorization for another round of BRAC."………..

Army, Air Force most vulnerable in Pentagon's new base closure plan


Military Times © April 15, 2016

By Andrew Tilghman

The Pentagon is renewing its controversial push to close some military bases, and a new study suggests the Army could be impacted the most significantly. The Defense Department on Friday sent a report to Congress that concludes the military's current network of installations has about 22 percent more space than is needed. It found that the Army has 33 percent excess capacity, the Air Force has 32 percent more space than it needs and the Navy is over by 7 percent. The Defense Logistics Agency has 12 percent excess, according to the 20-page report, the first of its kind in 12 years. Military Times obtained a copy of the document on Friday………..

Thornberry Rejects Pentagon’s Latest Case for BRAC

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/thornberry-rejects-pentagons-latest-case-for-brac/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=28e5b9e2e6-
The Defense Department’s new analysis of its excess capacity may provide ammunition for top officials to press the case for the Obama administration’s request to hold a BRAC round in 2019 before some lawmakers, but Mac Thornberry (R-Texas), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, dismissed its conclusions outright. In a written statement released Friday, Thornberry criticized the department for estimating excess capacity using force structure levels projected for 2019. —The capacity report the Pentagon belatedly delivered to Congress simply doesn’t tell us what we need to know. In envisioning a military far smaller than anyone thinks is wise, it fails to comply with the law as badly as it fails to justify a BRAC round,‖ he stated. Congress directed the department to measure its excess capacity using 2012 force structure levels because existing levels fail to provide sufficient capability to meet global threats, Thornberry said………

Public Private Partnerships –

**Greater Collaboration across the Fence Line Is Key to Achieving ‘Base of the Future,’ ADC Paper Says**


Defense Communities 360 © April 18, 2016

By Dan Cohen

States and communities have a significant role to play in helping military installations adapt to a variety of challenges — including budget constraints, aging infrastructure, evolving missions and weapons systems, and a generational changes in social attitudes — prompting DOD to consider a new model for delivering installation support, according to a new paper released by the Association of Defense Communities. *The Base of the Future: A Call for Action by States and Communities* outlines a multi-pronged approach to foster increased collaboration between installations and their host communities. The paper is a synthesis of panel discussions and breakout sessions held during ADC’s Nov. 5, 2015, policy forum titled —Concepts, Strategies and
Actions for Moving to the Base of the Future. The forum featured more than 120 experts from DOD, state and local government, industry and the United Kingdom……..

Eglin AFB –

**7th SFG has been ‘the very best of the best’**


Northwest Florida Daily News © April 16, 2016

By Kelly Humphrey

Since May 13, 2005, parts of Northwest Florida have been buzzing about the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne). That’s the day the Pentagon released a Base Realignment and Closure list that recommended the legendary unconventional warriors should move from their longtime home at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to Eglin Air Force Base. Even before the recommendation became official in November 2008, local business owners, government officials and real estate agents began planning for the 7th’s arrival. At the same time, Army officials began preparing their folks for a move……..

US Southern Command –

**Secretary of the Air Force visits Soto Cano**

[https://www.dvidshub.net/news/195031/secretary-air-force-visits-soto-cano#.Vw1Lg3o02qw](https://www.dvidshub.net/news/195031/secretary-air-force-visits-soto-cano#.Vw1Lg3o02qw)

DVIDS © April 11, 2016

by Capt. Christopher Mesnard

The men and women of Joint Task Force-Bravo hosted Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James Apr. 8, 2016, at Soto Cano Air Base, as she wrapped up her visit to various units in the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility. James used her time during the visit to meet with Airmen of the 612th Air Base Squadron and other members of JTF-Bravo, to discuss the importance the base plays in the Central and South American regions……..
Homestead ARB –

**Four Bases in Running to Host F-35A Reserve Units**

[http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/four-bases-in-running-to-host-f-35a-reserve-units/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=e0b150dee4-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-e0b150dee4-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29](http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/four-bases-in-running-to-host-f-35a-reserve-units/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=e0b150dee4-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-e0b150dee4-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29)

Defense Communities 360 © April 13, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Air Force will consider four locations — Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.; Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla.; Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas; and Whiteman AFB, Mo. — as candidates for the first Reserve-led F-35A Lightning II units, officials said Tuesday. The service expects to select the preferred and reasonable alternatives in the fall, with the fifth-generation fighter aircraft slated to begin arriving at the first location by the summer of 2023. —The Air Force is committed to a deliberate and open process to address F-35 basing,‖ Jennifer Miller, deputy assistant secretary for installations, said according to a news release. —As we progress through the basing process, we will share information so interested communities are aware of what to expect.‖

Patrick AFB –

**Patrick kicks off Month of the Military Child**


Patrick AFB © April 11, 2016

by Chrissy Cuttita

45th Space Wing Public Affairs

The 45th Force Support Squadron kicked off "Month of the Military Child" with their second annual "Play for a Day" event held on Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., April 9. The event included a variety of activities to introduce the military community to many of the squadron’s services available at Patrick. While families enjoyed giant inflatables, boat rides, cartoon character visits and food at the base marina and golf course, children also had the opportunity to go through a "deployment line." "Growing up as a military child, I know first-
hand the sacrifices our children make from PCSing and leaving behind good friends, to being without mom or dad, while they are deployed. It's not easy, but military kids are flexible, adaptive and most importantly resilient," said Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, 45th SW commander. "The events held here over the weekend helped bring our community closer together and showed our kids what it looks like when a parent is preparing to deploy……..

Patrick AFB solidifies partnership with Brevard Schools


Patrick AFB © April 15, 2016

by 45th Space Wing Public Affairs

 Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, 45th Space Wing commander, and the Brevard County School Board signed a memorandum of agreement during a quarterly Military Child Education Working Group meeting April 15 at the Patrick AFB Youth Center. The agreement is designed to address the transition of military dependent students in a way that models and exemplifies partnership, flexibility, inclusiveness and information sharing for all schools that serve military dependent students. The MOA signing is a part of the 45th Force Support Squadron's Public-Public; Public-Private Partnership known as the P4 initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to create strategic partnerships with local communities through finding creative ways to leverage capabilities and resources.

Other Items of Interest –

Army exercises shipping abilities at Port of Jacksonville facility


Florida Times-Union © April 11, 2016

By Sebastian Kitchen & David Bauerlein

A new $30 million cargo facility at the Port of Jacksonville won’t open until later this summer, but trains began pulling in Sunday loaded with military gear. The U.S. Army is breaking in the Intermodal Container Transfer Facility at Dames Point, going through readiness exercises in which military personnel unload heavy equipment from rail cars and onto a nearby ship. Soldiers will unload the equipment and take it in a convoy 1.7 miles to the cruise ship terminal, where
they will eventually load it onto a U.S. Navy vessel. That will take about four days. Lt. Col. Benjamin Walters, commander of the 832nd Transportation Battalion, said preparedness is a priority for top Army leaders and this exercise allows the units to deploy as if they are shipping overseas. He said about 300 soldiers are deployed to the port to move about 760 pieces of equipment.

Navy Admiral Tapped To Head New F-35 Fleet Integration Office


Defense News © April 12, 2016

By Lara Seligman

The Navy secretary on Tuesday tapped Rear Adm. Roy —Trigger‖ Kelley to head up the service’s new F-35 joint strike fighter fleet integration office. As head of the new office, Kelley will act as liaison between the joint program office and the US Navy as the service prepares to integrate the F-35C into the fleet. The F-35C carrier version will be the last JSF variant to reach initial operational capability, a milestone planned for 2018. The Air Force has a similar integration office, headed by Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Harrigian.

Congress, our military is losing the ability to win. Let’s get the defense budget right


Fox News © April 15, 2016

By Justin T. Johnson

It doesn’t matter if it’s the Golden State Warriors, the Denver Broncos, or the U.S. Women’s National Team, the world’s best sports teams are built on three basic things: the best people, the best training, and the best equipment. The same is true of defense forces: people, training and equipment are the three legs of a strong and ready military. Unfortunately, devastating budget cuts have left the U.S. military short of all three. Consequently, our armed forces are rapidly losing their ability to win. Here are three pillars of a championship team and world class military.
April 25, 2016 – FDSTF Update

TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** – The next meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, May 19, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM. The meeting will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton – 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee FL.

2. **FY 16-17 Florida Defense Task Force Grant Applications** – Staff is currently reviewing 8 grant applications. These applications will be mailed out to Task Force members for their review and consideration early next week.

3. **Attachments:**
   - Veterans Legislative Summary Slide Show from FDVA
   - Notes from TPG Conference Call

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –
Readiness Subcommittee Retains Ban on BRAC

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/readiness-subcommittee-retains-ban-on-brac/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=5c58d6b130-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-5c58d6b130-55784537&ct=1%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © April 20, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee dismisses the Obama administration’s latest request to hold a BRAC round in 2019, according to its portion of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill. The language in the draft bill released Tuesday stating that, —Nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize an additional Base Realignment and Closure round,‖ affirms the committee’s intent to reject DOD’s request to authorize another base closure round, the panel states. The subcommittee will mark up its portion of the annual policy bill Thursday at 9:30 a.m. In a change from past years, the legislation includes language clarifying that the BRAC prohibition is not intended to bar the department from preparing an analysis of its infrastructure needs if required by statute or requested by a congressional committee, including the infrastructure assessment required under last year’s authorization bill………

In the Face of Opposition, Smith Vows to Advance Pentagon’s BRAC Request


Defense Communities 360 © April 22, 2016

By Dan Cohen

DOD’s new analysis of excess capacity failed to persuade one of its key targets, House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-Texas), that it badly needs a new round of base closures. Thornberry dismissed the study’s results — that the department’s excess capacity would be 22 percent under force levels projected for 2019 — over their reliance on a force structure he said is inadequate to meet the global threats confronting the nation. —The capacity report the Pentagon belatedly delivered to Congress simply doesn’t tell us what we need to know. In envisioning a military far smaller than anyone thinks is wise, it fails to comply with the law as badly as it fails to justify a BRAC round,‖ Thornberry said in a written statement last Friday. On Thursday, Rob Wittman (R-Va.), chairman of the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee, echoed Thornberry’s reaction to the study during his opening remarks to the markup of his panel’s portion of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill………
Defense study re-ignites debate over base closings


Daily Press © April 23, 2016

By Hugh Lessig

Armed with a new study on excess space, the Defense Department says it will mothball parts of military installations or attempt wholesale shutdowns unless Congress approves another base-closing round. A key congressional committee says not so fast. The House Armed Services readiness panel, chaired by Northern Neck Republican Rob Wittman, has approved language that rejects the administration's request for another Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commission in 2019. It is part of the proposed 2017 defense authorization bill. The committee left open the door for more study, just not the one the department is currently peddling………

A Washington ritual: Pentagon, Congress at odds over bases

http://bigstory.ap.org/article/5a448d39717a46588770aa971e121324/washington-ritual-pentagon-congress-odds-over-bases

AP © April 25, 2016

By Robert Burns

The Pentagon thinks it has a winning argument for why Congress should allow a new round of military base closings. The case goes like this: The Army and Air Force have vastly more space for training and basing troops than they need, and trimming the surplus would save money better used to strengthen the military. Congress, however, has its own logic: Closing bases can hurt local economies, which can cost votes in the next election. Besides, some lawmakers say, the Pentagon has cooked the books to justify its conclusions or at least has not finished doing the math. Lawmakers are fiercely protective of bases in their district or state and generally prefer to ignore or dismiss any Pentagon push to close them. Nearly every year the Pentagon asks Congress for authority to convene a base-closing commission. The answer is always the same: not this year. And probably not anytime soon, either………

DOD Budget–

DoD Policy Bill's Top Line An Open Question
The House Armed Services Committee will take up the 2017 policy bill next week, but with a budget resolution stalled, it is unclear how much money it will have to authorize for Defense Department programs. The National Defense Authorization Act does not set spending levels, but the committee tends to fall in line with the House budget resolution and set a guide for appropriators. Last year, it skirted statutory budget caps by paying for base budget items through the wartime overseas contingency operations (OCO) account, which triggered a showdown with the White House. On Tuesday, the HASC military personnel, tactical air and land forces, seapower and projection forces subcommittees hold their markups of the 2017 NDAA. The HASC readiness, emerging threats and capabilities, and strategic forces subcommittees hold their markups Wednesday………

Faltering due to Spending Caps, Appropriators Say

Ongoing constraints on defense spending, along with increased operational requirements, are hampering DOD’s ability to address its —aging and structurally deficient— workplace facilities, the Senate Appropriations Committee says in its report accompanying the fiscal 2017 military construction-veterans affairs spending bill. Recent facility condition assessment data reveals that about one in four defense facilities are rated as being in poor or failing condition, the lawmakers wrote. —Our limited milcon budget for fiscal year 2017 leaves limited room for projects that would improve aging workplaces and, therefore, could adversely impact routine operations and the quality of life for our personnel,‖ Pete Potochney, acting assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, told the committee earlier this month………..

OCO Funds Would Help Defense Committee Foot Bill for Extra Priorities
The fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill scheduled to be marked up next week by the House Armed Services Committee will shift $23 billion in funding from DOD’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account to the base defense budget in order to pay for new weapons, higher troop levels and other spending priorities the committee is adding to the annual policy measure. The move would provide an extra $18 billion in base defense spending beyond the Obama administration’s budget request, which calls for shifting only $5 billion from the OCO account to the base budget. The end result is that the House’s authorization bill would adhere to both the $551 billion topline for the base defense budget agreed to in October’s two-year budget deal as well as the $59 billion figure established for the war funding account. That account is not subject to the Budget Control Act spending caps........

**Armed Services chairman defends defense bill's spending levels**

The Republican chairman of the House Armed Services Committee said on Thursday that sticking with the same spending amount in his annual defense policy bill as the president requested is the best chance for the measure to be signed into law. —We looked seriously at asking for more money for defense,‖ Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) told reporters. —The judgment was that this gives us — being at the same total level as the president gives us — a chance of getting an appropriations bill signed into law and an authorization bill signed ... so we want to take that opportunity.‖........

**House Speaker Supports Thornberry’s Move to Bolster DOD’s Base Budget with OCO Funds**

The House Speaker Supports Thornberry’s Move to Bolster DOD’s Base Budget with OCO Funds
House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) on Thursday defended his decision to use $23 billion from DOD’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account to fund base budget needs in the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill as a way to make up for a troubling shortfall in readiness across the military while avoiding White House opposition to the annual defense policy and appropriations bills. The move would provide an extra $18 billion in base defense spending beyond the Obama administration’s budget request, which would be used to pay for 27,000 more active-duty personnel, 25,000 more reservists, 11 more F-35 Joint Strike Fighters and 14 more F/A-18E/F fighter Super Hornets than DOD requested……….

MacDill AFB –

**Macdill, 75 years of excellence**


MacDill AFB © April 20, 2016

by Airman Adam R. Shanks, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

Team MacDill kicked off its 75th birthday week April 15, 2016, with a carnival open to all base residents. The idea to commemorate the base's anniversary with a carnival came from the 6th FSS. "We decided to have the carnival, because it was a big way to get the base excited for MacDill's 75th," said Lt. Col. Carina Harrison, the commander of the 6th Force Support Squadron (FSS) here. With MacDill Air Force Base's 75th birthday upon us, we take a look into the base mission since it began and how it has grown to be an integral part of the Tampa Bay community. MacDill AFB is named in honor of Col. Leslie MacDill, a pilot in the Army Air Corps who died in a BC-1 plane crash shortly after taking off from Bolling Field, D.C. in 1938. Shortly after the accident, Secretary of War Harry H. Woodring announced his decision to rename Tampa's Southeast Air Base in MacDill's honor………

Eglin AFB –

**Families move into new base housing**

By LEAH JOHNSON

Moving trucks still line the street. Construction workers hammer away at unfinished houses. What used to be a field of trees is now home to a cookie-cutter neighborhood and pastel-colored houses. Earlier this month, about 36 families living on Eglin Air Force Base walked into their brand new homes built by Corvias Military Living, a development, construction and property management firm. Corvias broke ground on the homes last May. By 2019, about 564 more active-duty airmen with families will get a set of keys, too. —Everything is brand new and nice, said Stan Morehead, business director for Corvias.

Up in the air: F-35 training program remains strong despite reduction in aircraft, students

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/article/20160423/NEWS/160429532

By KELLY HUMPHREY

Way back in 2005, local political, business and military leaders were swooning at the possibility that the 33rd Fighter Wing would soon become home to the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Integrated Training Center. Its arrival would put Eglin Air Force Base at the epicenter of training for both pilots and maintainers of the military’s fighter jet of the future. The Base Realignment and Closure Committee (BRAC) recommended that up to 107 jets be stationed at the base, and a multi-million dollar training complex be constructed to serve students from the Navy, Marines and Air Force, as well as international pilots from eight allied countries. In 2009, the University of West Florida’s Haas Center for Business Research and Economic Development published a report on the potential economic effects BRAC activities could have on Okaloosa County.

NAS Jacksonville –

Rep. Ander Crenshaw's retirement could drastically change Jacksonville's voice in Washington

Sixteen years after taking office, Rep. Ander Crenshaw shocked supporters Wednesday when he announced the end of a political career that ran through the state Legislature and the U.S. House of Representatives. Sixteen years after taking office, Rep. Ander Crenshaw shocked supporters Wednesday when he announced the end of a political career that ran through the state Legislature and the U.S. House of Representatives. In Congress, Crenshaw fought for military funding, disability rights and fiscal conservatism. But over Easter break, he said, he reflected on his time in Congress and whether he was ready for it to end. —It seemed like a good time to just turn the page and see what’s next. It wasn’t any one thing. It was just overall thinking about what I want to do. I look forward to seeing what the future holds.\\

NS Mayport —

**Jacksonville Native Keeps Navy’s Newest, Most Advanced Helicopters Flying**


Mayport Mirror © April 13, 2016

By MC1 Sunday Sawyer Juarez
A 2000 Orange Park High School graduate and Jacksonville, Florida native is serving with a U.S. Navy helicopter squadron that flies the Navy’s newest and most technologically-advanced helicopter. Petty Officer 1st Class William Winistorfer is an aviation electrician’s mate with the —Air Wolvesl of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 40, a Mayport, Florida based squadron that operates the Navy’s next generation submarine hunter and Anti-Surface Warfare helicopter, the MH-60R Seahawk. Each helicopter is nearly 65 feet long, may weigh up to 23,500 lbs. (max gross) and can travel over 120 miles per hour for nearly 320 miles on a tank of gas.\\

**Valiant Partners With Panama Coast Guard**


Mayport Mirror © April 20, 2016

By Ensign James Martin, USCGC Valiant
In early March, the crew of CGC Valiant was wrapping up a 2-month Joint Inter Agency Task Force South (JIATFS) counter narcotics patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. During the patrol, the crew had interdicted eight go-fast vessels, seized 4.7 tons of cocaine valued at over $141 million, and detained 23 suspected smugglers. Before heading back through the Panama Canal, the ship stopped at Vasco Nuñez de Balboa Naval Base near Panama City, Panama, for a three-day port visit. Despite their accomplishments, Valiant’s crew had one more job to do before returning to homeport in Mayport, Florida. Prior to the start of the patrol, the ship worked with Panama’s Coast Guard Liaison Officer and the Coast Guard’s Office of International Affairs to plan a partner nation engagement with Panama’s National Air and Naval Service, known as SENAN (Servicio Nacional Aeronaval).

Navy considering Mayport to base unmanned aircraft


First Coast News © April 21, 2016

Naval Station Mayport is one of three bases being considered to be the East Coast home of the MQ-4C Triton Unmanned Aircraft System (Triton UAS). The Triton UAS is a "multiple-sensor unmanned aircraft" that is about 48 feet long with a wingspan of 131 feet, the Navy said in a statement. The aircraft would conduct operations over water, including maritime intelligence and surveillance and reconnaissance data collection. Naval Air Station Key West and a NASA facility at Wallops Island, Virginia, are also being considered to host the aircraft, along with 400 military personnel plus family members who come with an East Coast base. Construction of the base is slated to begin in 2017. The Navy is preparing an Environmental Assessment for all three sites which will help determine where to station the aircraft.

Mayport could be new home to Navy's drones, 400 more sailors


Florida Times-Union © April 23, 2016

By Andrew Pantazi

The U.S. Navy has announced Mayport Naval Station is one of three possible bases for a squadron of unmanned surveillance drones. In addition to Mayport, Key West Naval Air Station and the NASA Flight Facility in Wallops Island, Va., are being considered. U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson wrote Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, arguing in favor of the Florida bases. The Navy intends to have five bases around the world for the drones. The U.S. Government Accountability Office
projected the drones would go into production in May. The Virginian-Pilot said that the environmental assessments for the three proposed bases could be ready for public comment by late June. The MQ-4C Triton drones can fly more than 24 hours at a time and survey 2.7 million square miles in a single mission. They can be used for surveillance and search-and-rescue missions, Nelson’s office said. The eight drones in the squadron would also bring 400 sailors and their families, a potential economic boon to whichever base is selected. ―Florida is also uniquely positioned to be able to respond to the U.S. Southern Command area of operations,‖ Nelson wrote. ―I hope that the additional benefits Florida would bring to MQ-4C Triton operations will factor in your decision.‖ Florida’s bases, he wrote, are also equipped to host the drones because of how close they are to the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea……..

Tyndall AFB –

**Tyndall AFB to hold open house on new study**


My Panhandle © April 19, 2016

By Taylor Smith

Tyndall AFB, Florida, Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Study has been updated and study information will be shared with the community at an open house on 20 April 2016, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. at, Parker Community Center, 1001 West Park Street. This study is an update of the 2008 AICUZ study, identifying aircraft noise and accident potential zones created by anticipated flying operations at Tyndall AFB, Florida. The research provides data applicable in recommending land uses, which are focused on ensuring the safety, health and welfare of the public and compatible with the Air Force’s continuing flying mission. The data derived from the AICUZ study is intended for use by local citizens and governmental officials involved in land use planning and community development. The goal of the AICUZ program is to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens in the surrounding communities while preserving the operational capabilities of Tyndall AFB. Representatives from the Air Force will be available to answer questions about the AICUZ study update at the open house……..

NSA Panama City –

**Never again': Ceremony reflects on causes, costs of Holocaust**
By COLLIN BREAUX

Millions were killed in the Holocaust, and Naval Support Activity Panama City (NSA PC) vowed Wednesday genocide on that scale will not happen in the future. —Never Again: Heeding the Warning Signs! was the theme for Wednesday’s Holocaust remembrance ceremony, which brought together NSA PC personnel, students and members of the local Jewish community to remember the conditions that led to the widespread killing of Jews, homosexuals, the disabled and many others. NSA PC Chaplain John Gibson said the ceremony was a chance for people of diverse backgrounds to come together to study the lessons learned from the Holocaust, which affected the whole human race………

NAS Pensacola –

NAS Pensacola gate changes a headache for some

More than two months after Pensacola Naval Air Station closed its main entrance to the public, gate guards continue to turn away a steady stream of visitors. Many tourists are unaware of the security changes, said Sterling Gilliam, director of the National Museum of Naval Aviation. "We have been working hard to get the word out, but we continue to have a lot of visitors turned away," he said Wednesday. The base announced the gate changes in February, saying the move was needed to bring the base in line with Department of Defense Standards for military base security nationwide. Traffic through the main gate on Navy Boulevard is now limited to base personnel, active-duty military, visitors with Department of Defense identification and visitors cleared through the visitor center to visit Barrancas National Cemetery. Other visitors are told to make the 10- to 15-minute drive to the west gate on Blue Angels Parkway………
Florida Guard door gunners conduct Aerial Gunnery training in Camp Shelby


DVIDS © April 22, 2016

While the remainder of Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 111th Aviation Regiment conduct annual training at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, a select group of individuals with a vital set of skills, required training a little more off-site. Bravo Company, Detachment 1 traveled from Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Fla. to Camp Shelby, Miss. this week to qualify their CH-47F (Chinook) door gunners for an upcoming deployment to Kuwait in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. Commander of Detachment 1, 1st Lt. Robert Borger, deployed in 2011 with the entire 1-111th Aviation Battalion. Their mission was to move equipment and personnel out of Iraq. Without the same specifically detailed mission as last time, his Soldiers need to be prepared for anything, and the training and qualifications they completed at Camp Shelby help them accomplish this task……..

DOD Issues –

What a Presidential Transition Means for Defense


Defense Communities 360 © April 24, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The nation is intently focused on the current drama that is the president race — who’s collecting delegates, whether it’s fair or rigged, and who will end up winning the party nominations. But, according to a story published in The Atlantic, behind this cloud of politics are teams of policy experts, senior thought leaders and former high-ranking civil servants hurriedly preparing for the presidential transition. —It’s a little bit like planning the D-Day invasion,‖ said Chris Lu, deputy secretary of labor and a leader of then-President-Elect Barack Obama’s transition team. —You can’t start planning on the day after Election Day. You have to have a battle plan in place beforehand.‖….
Other Items of Interest –

Engines for F-35 fighter jet to be built in Palm Beach County


Sun-Sentinel © April 12, 2016

Pratt & Whitney's plant in northwestern Palm Beach County will be one of two sites producing F-35 fighter-jet engines under a new $1.4 billion contract from the Department of Defense. They also will be produced in Middletown, Conn. The new contract comes on top of $360 million in funding that had already been awarded to Pratt to sustain the F135 engine production line. Pratt committed to opening a jet-engine production line in Palm Beach County in 2012, announcing a $63 million investment in Pratt's plant. The company employs more than 850 people at its campus west of Jupiter. Spokesman Matthew Bates said Pratt will be hiring new employees at the site to meet its engine delivery commitments.

Armed Services Panel Would Reverse End Strength Reductions

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/armed-services-panel-would-reverse-end-strength-reductions/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=5c58d6b130-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-5c58d6b130-55784537&ct=1%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © April 20, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Planned drawdowns in the size of the Army, Marine Corps and Air Force would be reversed, under a draft of the House Armed Services’ Military Personnel Subcommittee’s portion of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill released Tuesday. The most dramatic change under the panel’s mark would be for active-duty Army forces, which would increase from an authorized level of 475,000 in FY 2016 to 480,000 in FY 2017. The Pentagon’s budget request calls for the service’s active-duty end strength to drop to 460,000 in FY 2017. Significantly, the draft bill would set the service’s permanent active-duty end strength at 480,000, in contrast to the Pentagon’s plan for active forces to fall to 450,000 by the end of FY 2018. The end strength of the Army National Guard would increase from an authorized level of 342,000 in FY 2016 to 350,000 in FY 2017, under the panel’s draft legislation. The administration’s budget request calls for the Army National Guard to shrink to 335,000 soldiers in FY 2017. The size of the Army Reserve would increase from 198,000 in FY 2016 to 205,000 in FY 2017, rather than declining further to 195,000 as requested by DOD.
Facing Election Fight, Forbes Pushes F-22 Revival


Defense News © April 21, 2016

By Lara Seligman

Facing a competitive election battle in a new district, US Rep. Randy Forbes is leading a popular, if improbable, charge to restart production of Lockheed Martin’s F-22 stealth fighter jet. The longtime Virginia Republican recently spearheaded a proposal for this year’s defense policy bill that would urge the Air Force to look into restarting the F-22 Raptor production line. Although Forbes does not sit on the House Armed Services tactical air and land forces subcommittee, the chairman incorporated Forbes’ language into the subcommittee’s markup, released Tuesday………..

Bye Bye QDR; Hello Stand-Alone Cyber Command: HASC Markup

http://breakingdefense.com/2016/04/bye-bye-qdr-hello-stand-alone-cyber-command-hascmarkup/?__hstc=174454333.1be2105f70ca117474b418e08d5d45be.1455034968297.1459949352934.1461591482192.7&__hssc=174454333.1.1461591482192&__hsfp=232547961

Breaking Defense © April 22, 2016

By Colin Clark and Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

The Quadrennial Defense Review is dead. Long live a unified combatant command known as Cyber Command. Ok, it doesn’t quite ring like Long Live The Queen, but you get the idea. House Armed Service Committee staffers briefed reporters on some of the more important bits of the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. Top of the list in the mind of this scribe are the demise of the QDR and the elevation of Cyber Command. I’ve covered every QDR and have to say I loved them. As a reporter they gave us unparalleled access to fundamental debates about the strategy, policies and politics of the Pentagon and its constituents, which was one of the goals of Congress in creating them. But the QDR also became famous for the unfortunate process that came to be known as salami slicing. Instead of doing what the founding legislation said it should do — make hard and rational choices based on America’s interests and our strategy for achieving them — the QDR often became a proxy for Pentagon budget wars. That, in the end, is why QDRs lost the respect of those who had supported them………. 
Air Force Sets Retirement Date For Chief of Staff Gen. Welsh


Defense News © April 11, 2016

By Stephen Losey

Gen. Mark Welsh, the Air Force's chief of staff, will retire on July 1. In an email Sunday, Air Force spokesman Maj. Christopher Moore said that the date of the chief of staff transition ceremony, in which Welsh will welcome his successor as the top officer in the Air Force, has not yet been set. Moore said the transition ceremony date will be announced when the White House reveals its nominee to be the next chief of staff, but it is unclear how soon that will happen. Pentagon watchers believe the top three candidates to replace Welsh are Gen. Darren McDew, head of U.S. Transportation Command, Air Combat Command head Gen. Herbert "Hawk" Carlisle, and Air Force Space Command head Gen. John Hyten……..
May 2, 2016 – FDSTF Update

TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** – The next meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, May 19, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM. The meeting will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton – 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee FL.

2. **FY 16-17 Florida Defense Task Force Grant Applications** – Staff is currently reviewing 8 grant applications. These applications will be mailed out to Task Force members for their review and consideration early this week.

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**

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**Articles of Interest:**

**BRAC –**

**Wittman Says He Remains Open to DOD’s BRAC Request**

[Link to Article]
Despite inserting an ironclad ban on the Pentagon launching a BRAC round in 2019 in his panel’s portion of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill, Virginia Rep. Rob Wittman (R) says he would consider DOD’s case for a new round of base closures. —We’re not against looking at another BRAC,— Wittman, chairman of the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee, told the Daily Press. —But let’s make sure we’re doing it on parameters set by Congress.— Wittman was making the point that DOD’s recent excess capacity analysis was based on force structure levels projected for 2019.

**Defense bill's ban on base closures survives**


By Rebecca Kheel

Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.) offered and withdrew an amendment to an annual defense bill Wednesday that would have allowed the Pentagon to carry out another round of base closures. —The central cloud hanging over this committee is we don’t have the resources to do what we have to do,— said Smith, ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee. —In a situation like that, you try to save resources wherever you can save them. [Base closures] would be one way of doing that.— Smith withdrew the amendment to the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act because of procedural issues, but said he wanted to offer it nonetheless to urge the committee to continue assessing the issue. Right now, the 2017 National Defense Authorization would explicitly prohibit a new round of what’s known as Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). The Pentagon recently submitted a report to Congress arguing for another BRAC, saying it will have 22 percent excess capacity by 2019. The last round of BRAC was in 2005. Lawmakers have repeatedly denied requests for another round because of the potential for negative economic effects on the communities around bases, making the prospect politically unpopular.
Fox News © April 25, 2016

The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee is proposing an increase in the defense budget by billions of dollars to halt a severe combat readiness problem that he and other Republicans accuse President Barack Obama of ignoring. Rep. Mac Thornberry's annual defense policy bill, to be released Monday afternoon, would shift $18 billion from the account that finances ongoing war operations to pay for additional ships, jet fighters, helicopters and more that the Pentagon didn't ask for in its $583 billion request. To make up for the shortfall in war spending, the Texas congressman is counting on Obama's successor to submit a supplemental budget to Congress in early 2017………..

Defense Policy Bill Calls for Big Boost in Funding for Facilities

Defense Communities 360 © April 26, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The full committee version of the House Armed Services' fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill would significantly bolster funding for facilities as part of its aim to restore shortfalls in military readiness. The legislation supports 90 percent of requirements for facilities sustainment and 88 percent of requirements for facilities restoration and modernization across DOD, an increase of 19 percentage points above the administration’s budget request in each category, according to a summary of the chairman’s mark. —Facility maintenance and sustainment is the area where the military has assumed great risk as it compensates for sharply reduced resources. This funding will be used to restore and maintain real property, ranging from barracks to hangars, and runways to hospitals, the summary states…….

HASC Passes Major DoD Policy Bill for 2017

Defense News © April 28, 2016
By Joe Gould

The House Armed Services Committee early Thursday voted to add billions to a list of Defense Department weapons programs and signed off on a $583 billion Pentagon budget that blurs the lines between wartime funding and base-budget requirements. In a bipartisan 60-2 vote, the committee approved its version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which uses the war account to skirt statutory budget caps — and salvage items cut from the Obama administration's budget and placed on the services' — unfunded priorities — lists. That includes 27,000 more active-duty troops and 25,000 reservists; $3 billion for 14 more F/A-18E/F aircraft for the Navy and 11 more F-35 joint strike fighters across the services; and a $2 billion plus-up to the Navy's shipbuilding budget………..

Carter Slams Thornberry Wartime Funding Plan


Defense News © April 27, 2016

By Aaron Mehta

As the House Armed Services Committee gathers to hash out its version of the defense spending bill, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter appeared Wednesday before the Senate to lambaste HASC Chairman Mac Thornberry's spending strategy. Thornberry, the Texas Republican who took over the HASC leadership last year, has developed his committee's spending plan around taking $18 billion from the special overseas contingency operations (OCO) wartime fund and investing it into buying more weapon systems. Thornberry's language would also end OCO come April, forcing the next president to request a new war-funding supplemental………

Carter Troubled by House GOP Plan to Cut Wartime Money


Military.com © April 28, 2016

by Richard Lardner

Defense Secretary Ash Carter said Wednesday that he's deeply troubled by a House Republican proposal to reduce wartime funding by $18 billion to pay for weapons and troops the Pentagon didn't request. Testifying before the Senate Appropriations defense subcommittee, Carter said the plan advocated by Rep. Mac Thornberry of Texas risks money that is critical for warfighting
missions at a time when U.S. troops are deployed in fights against the Islamic State group and other extremists. "While I don't expect this committee to consider such a proposal, I have to say that this approach is deeply troubling, and flawed for several reasons," Carter said. "It's gambling with warfighting money at a time of war — proposing to cut off our troops' funding in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria in the middle of the year."

HASC Passes Major DoD Policy Bill for 2017


Defense News © April 28, 2016

By Joe Gould

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Armed Services Committee Advances Authorization Bill

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/armed-services-committee-advances-authorization-bill/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=cac17ecc40-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-cac17ecc40-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © April 29, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Following a markup lasting more than 16 hours and votes on hundreds of amendments, the House Armed Services Committee early Thursday morning approved the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill 60-2. The $610 billion measure adds $18 billion to DOD’s base budget for weapons, personnel and training not included in the department’s budget request, but funds
operations overseas for only seven months. The annual policy bill received broad support even though the decision to shift funding from DOD’s overseas contingency operations account troubled many Democrats. —At some point, we are going to have to live within our means, a means we decided to provide,‖ Adam Smith (D-Wash.), the committee’s ranking member, said just before he voted in favor of the bill. The measure retains existing restrictions on the transfer of detainees from the prison at Guantánamo Bay to the United States and on building or converting facilities in the United States to house detainees. Committee members rejected an amendment from Smith to lift the restrictions, reported CQ Roll Call………..

Space Coast –

**SpaceX's GPS bid beat Air Force estimate by 40 percent**


Florida Today © April 28, 2016

By James Dean

SpaceX has slashed the going rate for launches of Global Positioning Systems satellites, highlighting the challenge United Launch Alliance faces as it is forced to compete for some national security missions. SpaceX’s winning bid of $82.7 million for a GPS III launch, announced Wednesday, was 40 percent below what the Air Force had estimated the mission might cost, a senior Air Force official said Thursday. The deal emerged from the first contract opened to competition by the Air Force in more than a decade, a period during which only ULA was certified to perform such launches. But apparently unable to approach SpaceX’s price, ULA chose not to bid for the GPS III mission last fall, scuttling the promised competition………

MacDill AFB –

**Gwen Graham-back MacDill AFB amendment added to NDAA**


Florida Politics © April 27, 2016
U.S. Rep. Gwen Graham is among the Armed Services panel members currently slogging through a marathon session to craft a national defense budget for FY 2017. The infamously complex and time-intensive process of producing the annual National Defense Authorization Act began early Wednesday morning and as of press time clocked in at around six hours long, with about 30 member-sponsored amendments considered and some 70 left to go. The upside for Graham, besides bringing Chief of Staff Julia Gill Woodward’s infant son along for the legislative odyssey? Graham managed to shepherd an amendment of her own into the bill. Her amendment to the mammoth H.R. 4909 proposal is intended to support MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, the massive military installation where the U.S. Central Command, better known as CENTCOM, is located. The Graham-sponsored language provides that, should the appropriations process for the base go forward as laid out elsewhere in the bill — which calls for construction of a new Army Reserve Center/Aviation Support Facility at the site — —the Secretary of the Army may relocate and construct replacement skeet and grenade launcher ranges necessary to clear the site for new Army Reserve facilities.

Effort to trim four-star commanders to have no impact at MacDill AFB

http://www.tbo.com/list/military-news/macdill-likely-to-keep-both-four-star-generals-20160501/

Tampa Tribune © May 1, 2016

By Howard Altman

To improve military efficiency in the face of budget cuts and nimble adversaries, a congressional committee is taking aim at the number of generals and admirals. But for the most part, the proposals won’t affect the commands headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa. MacDill has plenty of top commanders — 23 among the 886 general and flag officers across the U.S. military — but only two are at the highest, four-star level that Congress has in the crosshairs. These are all full generals and admirals. And even here, MacDill is seen as safe because its two four-stars head up four-star commands, known as unified combatant commands — U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command. MacDill, in fact, is the only base in the continental U.S. with two of them. The positions under the gun are the four-stars in smaller headquarters, called component commands.

DOD Issues –

America's Navy Is Spread Too Thin
Earlier this month, I had the privilege of being on a panel as part of the Naval War College’s Regional Alumni Symposium, discussing the strategic importance of the Black Sea region, along with Michael Kofman of the Center for Naval Analysis and Chris Marsh of the School of Advanced Military Studies. After all, as Marsh noted, the Black Sea is assuming much greater importance as part of China’s ambitious — one road, one belt system, designed to link the Asia-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic worlds — a point made graphically clear by Parag Khanna’s connectography maps, while Kofman called attention to Russia’s new power-projection capabilities emanating from Crimea. Yet for all our eloquence in calling for the Black Sea to assume greater importance in American strategic thinking, equally compelling cases were being made for why additional U.S. attention and resources need to be deployed in the Mediterranean, the Baltic Sea and the Arctic Ocean. And without the ability to instantaneously transport equipment and personnel from one area to another, the United States must either massively increase its defense and security expenditures to increase its presence in all theaters, trust that allies will finally meet the challenge and increase their own spending to fill in the gaps, or accept risks in certain areas……….

Other Items of Interest –

Thornberry Markup Promotes Prototyping, Experimentation


Defense News © April 25, 2016

By Aaron Mehta

House Armed Services Committee chairman Rep. Mac Thornberry is proposing giving each service the ability to develop new technologies under a flexible budget scheme, as part of a larger push for molecularity in Pentagon systems. The language, included in section 1702 of Thornberry’s markup of the NDAA, would allow the services to have budget flexibility to — experiment with, prototype, and rapidly deploy weapon system components and other technologies” without requiring those programs be tied to an existing major program. In essence,
each service would have a pool of money which would be saved specifically to experiment and develop prototypes of technologies that would benefit multiple systems, rather than having it tied to a single development program…….

Failing Airfield Infrastructure May Be Jeopardizing Safety, House Panel Says


Defense Communities 360 © April 28, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee is asking the Defense Department for an update on the condition of airfield infrastructure due to concerns that the statutory budget caps have caused DOD to shortchange investment in its facilities, according to report language in the panel’s portion of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill. —The committee is concerned that the risk assumed in infrastructure investments has resulted in the deterioration of runways, taxiway pavements, parking ramps, and aircraft hydrant fueling systems that may pose a safety risk to aircrews, a hazard to aircraft, and have an adverse impact on military operations and training,‖ the panel states. When prioritizing investments, infrastructure in the worst condition that directly supports military operations and training should be addressed first, it said…….

Committee Votes to Bolster Navy End Strength

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/committee-votes-to-bolster-navy-end-strength/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=1152208fe8-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-1152208fe8-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © April 28, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Navy’s end strength would drop by only 4,000 billets, rather than 6,000, under an amendment the House Armed Services Committee adopted Wednesday during its marathon markup of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill. The provision would increase the number of sailors by nearly 2,000 above the Pentagon’s requested level of 322,900 to accommodate a requirement that the Navy’s cruisers be kept in service, reported CQ Roll Call. The Navy’s
budget request called for docking up to half of the fleet’s 22 cruisers to reduce staffing needs and extend the ships’ service lives as part of the cruiser modernization program.

**For all its political influence, Florida lacking in congressional clout**


TCPalm © April 28, 2016

By Ledyard King, USA Today

Florida is a political juggernaut, wooed by presidential candidates and often pivotal in deciding who occupies the White House and which party controls Congress. But the nation's third-largest state punches below its weight in Congress. Only one of the Florida delegation's 29 members — two senators and 27 House members — is chairman of a committee: Republican Jeff Miller, who runs the House Veterans' Affairs panel. And the state's congressional clout likely will diminish further next year. Miller is one of eight House members from the Sunshine State who decided not to.

**Senate confirms first female combatant commander**


Military Times © April 29, 2016

By Leon Shane III

Senators confirmed Air Force Gen. Lori Robinson as the new head of U.S. Northern Command during wrap-up work late Thursday, making her the first woman to serve as a combatant commander. Robinson’s confirmation was approved without opposition before lawmakers started their weeklong congressional recess. Lawmakers also confirmed Army Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti to serve as the new head of U.S. European Command and Army Gen. Vincent Brooks to lead U.S. Forces Korea. All of the nominees faced friendly questioning during their nomination hearings earlier this month, and positive reviews from members of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Robinson previously served as commander of Pacific Air Forces. She is a senior air battle manager with more than 900 flight hours in the E-3B/C and E-8C aircraft, and has previously held leadership roles in U.S. Air Forces Central Command and Air Combat Command.
Navy Would Retain 10 Carrier Air Wings under Policy Bill


Defense Communities 360 © May 2, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill approved Thursday by the House Armed Services Committee would preserve the Navy’s 10 aircraft carrier air wings, blocking the administration’s proposal to cut a carrier air wing based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif., along with its five associated squadrons. The Navy had argued its proposal would reduce squadron costs and allocate aircraft among the remaining squadrons, which would boost readiness by reducing the dwell time between deployments. —When you lay the predictability of our carrier schedule — and of course our carrier force deploys and operates with an air wing on top of it … the number of operational carriers that you have is no more than nine at any one time,‖ Rear Adm. Mike Manazir, director of air warfare, told the Senate Armed Services Committee last month ……. 
May 9, 2016 – FDSTF Update

TF members --

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** – The next meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be on Thursday, May 19, 2016 beginning at 9:00 AM. The meeting will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton – 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee FL. DRAFT meeting agenda attached.

2. **FY 16-17 Florida Defense Task Force Grant Applications** – Task Force members are currently reviewing 8 grant applications in preparation for the May 19th meeting.

3. **Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) Meeting on May 18th in Tallahassee** – The Florida Defense Alliance will hold its semi-annual meeting on Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at the Doubletree Hotel beginning at 9 AM. On the evening of May 18th, there will be a no-host mixer with members of the Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) and the Florida Defense Support Task Force (FDSTF). FDA meeting agenda and details of the mixer forthcoming later this week.

4. **Attachments:**
   - DRAFT Task Force Meeting Agenda
   - TPG monthly report

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

The House of Representatives Just Fashioned A Heavily Overspending, Pork-Filled Defense Bill


Forbes © May 1, 2016

By Charles Tiefer

This past week, the House’s armed services committee wrote, and reported out, the $610 billion FY2017 spending bill (—defense authorization!). Unleashing itself from past constraints, it diverted for pork spending a big piece of a $90 billion fund – by a striking threat to short-change the troops in the ISIS and Afghan field, leaving them without authorized food or ammunition part-way into the fiscal year. The unspoken logic for causing the troop support to lapse, had two cynical pillars. Chairman —Mac Thornberry (R-Tex) can milk the fisc, in this election year, of $18 billion for the contractors in Representatives’ districts, fortifying the wastrels’ re-election.  Second, in case Trump (or, for that matter, anyone else who was hawkish) got elected, the necessity of an early-2017 troop survival bill would arm Trump instantly, upon election, to ram through whatever U-turns he wants in military affairs………..

Thornberry Fires Back At SecDef Over OCO Spending

http://breakingdefense.com/2016/05/thornberry-fires-back-at-secdef-over-oco-spending/


By Colin Clark

HASC Chairman Rep. Mac Thornberry, responding to comments by Defense Secretary Ash Carter which we reported yesterday, rejected criticisms about a spending gimmick the House Armed Services Committee chairman hopes to use to improve readiness for the U.S. military. Thornberry was reacting to comments Carter made en route to Stuttgart for the European
Command change of command ceremony. — The proposal is take the money out of the wartime funding account during wartime, Carter had said. The HASC bill would limit Overseas Contingency Operations funding to seven months for fiscal 2017 — counting on the next president to request the last five months’ funding in a separate bill — and shift $18 billion to what Thornberry describes as modernization and readiness………

White House Opposes House Plan to Bolster DOD Base Budget

Defense Communities 360 © May 6, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The House GOP’s plan to shift $23 billion from DOD’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account to boost the department’s base budget would be — grossly irresponsible, as it only funds operations overseas through April 2017, White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest said Thursday. President Obama’s budget called for using only $5 billion from the OCO account for DOD’s base budget needs. The House plan — which is included in the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill — would force the next president to request supplemental war funding early next year. The maneuver is — not the way that we should be demonstrating our clear commitment to our men and women who are risking so much to protect our country, Earnest said. House appropriators are expected to follow the authorization measure’s funding framework in the FY 2017 defense spending bill, reported CQ Roll Call………..

White House: HASC Budget Plan 'Grossly Irresponsible'

Defense News © May 6, 2016

By Aaron Mehta

The White House has joined Defense Secretary Ash Carter in slamming a plan, approved by the House Armed Services Committee, that would end the Pentagon’s wartime supplemental fund come April 2017. At a May 5 news conference, White House spokesman Josh Earnest expressed concern over the plan, championed by HASC Chairman Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, which would end the use of the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) account early in order to
force the next president to request a new war-funding supplemental. —President Obama believes that funding our war effort a few months at a time is grossly irresponsible and not the way that we should be demonstrating our clear commitment to our men and women in uniform who are risking so much to protect our country,‖ Earnest said…………

Eglin AFB –

**Eglin’s environmental team named best in DOD**


Air Force © May 3, 2016

By Mike Spaits

Eglin's environmental team won the Defense Department's top environmental prize, earning the 2016 Secretary of Defense Environmental Quality Team award. The award recognizes individuals, teams and installations that support mission readiness through its environmental activities. Through its commitment to environmental excellence, stewardship of community resources and sustainability to the warfighter, Eglin AFB created programs to support the 96th Test Wing and its 47 tenant units to help accomplish their missions. "This award is a tremendous achievement that reflects the dedication of the Eglin environmental management team," said Brig. Gen. Chris Azzano, the 96th TW commander. —This group of skilled professionals incorporates energy efficiency, sustainability and environmental stewardship into everything we do, and I know Team Eglin is proud of them."………

**Army Rangers showcased their capabilities at open house**


Northwest Florida Daily News © May 7, 2016

By Abraham Galvan

The annual Ranger Open House on Saturday showcased the capabilities of the 6th Ranger Training Battalion at Camp James E. Rudder on Eglin Air Force Base. Visitors saw line and free-fall parachute demonstrations, hand-to-hand combat and other demonstration as well as a reptile show. They also could throw tomahawks, fire weapons and enjoy other activities and displays…….
Hurlburt Field –

**Forces converge for Emerald Warrior 2016**


Air Force © May 4, 2016

By Capt. Zach Anderson

Several hundred U.S. and partner-nation military members gathered inside King Auditorium here May 2 for a mass in-briefing session that marked the official kick off of Emerald Warrior 2016. Emerald Warrior is an annual Defense Department exercise that focuses on irregular warfare and hones special operations forces air and ground combat skills. The two-week exercise will allow participants to execute advanced tactical scenarios and strengthen joint warfighting relationships for future deployments. The exercise leverages lessons learned from past and current overseas contingency operations to provide trained and ready forces to combatant commanders. Army Gen. Raymond A. Thomas, the U.S. Special Operations Command commander, addressed the crowd at the briefing and declared Emerald Warrior a —pivotally important exercise. —We have to transform ourselves through these types of exercises to prepare for the future fight that will be out there,‖ Thomas said…..

Team Orlando –

**U.S. military awards defense contracts with Orlando ties**


Orlando Sentinel © May 6, 2016

By Marco Santana

The U.S. military handed out two contracts with connections to Orlando and two others with Florida ties Thursday. Defense giant Lockheed Martin, which employs more than 7,000 people in two Orlando locations, landed a $424 million contract to develop a target and threat simulator to support U.S. Navy operations. Lockheed was the only company to submit an offer for the work. Meanwhile, the U.S. Army's Orlando-based Program Executive Office, Simulation,
Training and Instrumentation, known as PEO-STRI, awarded a contract to Raytheon for its range tracking and imaging system. The contract is worth nearly $351 million and work is expected to be done by May 5, 2021. Orlando is home to a large cluster of defense companies, which often receive work from the U.S. military. Every year, the industry's major conference is held at Orange County Convention Center. In addition to the two Orlando contracts, Fort Walton Beach's Jacobs Technology will provide testing and training to the Navy as part of a $427 million contract.

NAS Jacksonville –

**New captain at the helm of Naval Hospital Jacksonville**


Florida Times-Union © May 6, 2016


There’s a new man at Naval Hospital Jacksonville's helm after Capt. John Le Favour passed command of the Navy’s third largest hospital to Capt. David Collins during a Friday ceremony. Collins' new command not only includes the hospital at Jacksonville Naval Air Station, but five health clinics in Jacksonville, Key West, Kings Bay and Mayport as well as Albany, Ga. Le Favour’s Aug. 8 2014 appointment came as the hospital was dealing with the aftermath of some medical-negligence claims and a 2006 Times-Union report stating that it was five times more likely to get sued than its civilian counterparts in Northeast Florida.

Homestead ARB –

**Homestead Council Advances Rosen’s Development Plan**


South Dade Newsleader © April 29, 2016
Homestead City Council agreed four to two to move forward with a proposal by developer Wayne Rosen to amend the development of regional impact (DRI) plan in southeast Homestead. At its meeting on Wednesday April 20, Council heard a notice of proposed change (NOPC) to the DRI for land around the golf course and east of the Villages of Homestead. Of the sixteen planning sectors in that area, eight would have no changes. The state and regional planning agencies found remaining changes did not create new impacts and were not substantial deviations from the current master plan.

Tyndall AFB –

THUNDERBOLTS STORM TYNDALL AFB

Marines.mil (c0 May 6, 2016

By Cpl. Jonah Lovy, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort

Fourteen pilots with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 251 at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina, are participating in the Weapons Systems Evaluation Program at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, to sharpen their skills May 6-20,2016. —The pilots will start out with basic fighter maneuvers, which are one on one engagements between our aircraft and Air Force F-16s and F-22s,‖ said Capt. Kyle Wilson, the ground safety officer for VMFA-251. —After everyone gets acclimated to the area they begin the missile shoots.‖ The program gives pilots experience with flying against real aircraft outside a simulation. The real world training helps Marines be tactically proficient and prepared to deploy. —When we are out there training and launching missiles the Air Force is going to observe how we perform,‖ said Capt. Jonathan Gilson, a pilot with VMFA-251. —It is a good experience for all the pilots to actually employ their training and to improve their proficiency. It is good for a pilot to actually have the experience of having something come off the aircraft.‖

NSA Panama City –

Naval Support Panama City shows appreciation for spouses
http://www.newsherald.com/article/20160506/LIFESTYLE/160509208

News Herald © May 6, 2016

By COLLIN BREAUX
Of the 13 years Tiffany and Shane Parton have been married, he has been deployed during nine. And Shane, a diving instructor at Naval Support Activity Panama City (NSA PC), is about to head overseas again, during which time Tiffany will stay behind to watch over their 3-year-old twins. But she’ll have more than the children to take care of. Military spouses also look after the family vehicles and pets, while service members focus on their important and dangerous jobs, Tiffany said Friday. —Everyone says ‘thank you for your service’ to military members,‖ she said. —Our jobs are equally hard. We are left behind. A spouse is what sustains a service member’s sanity.‖ Those experiences led Tiffany, who works with the Navy’s Fleet and Family Support Center, to organize a military spouse appreciation day, held Friday at the NSA PC Long Glass Conference Center. Military spouses were offered free manicures, pedicures, eyebrow waxing, facials and massages, along with door prizes and refreshments. Some spouses mingled as they sat with their children at tables decorated with black cloth and bouquets.

NAS Whiting Field –

ADC Congratulates 2016 Defense Community Award Winners – Whiting Field

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/news-from-adc/adc-congratulates-2016-defense-community-award-winners/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=b46ac9dd4a-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-b46ac9dd4a-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © May 4, 2016

By Dan Cohen

ADC is proud to announce the 2016 recipients of its Defense Community Awards. Winners will be recognized during the 2016 Defense Communities National Summit, June 20-22 in Washington, D.C.

- Installation Excellence Award — Naval Air Station Whiting Field, Fla.
  - Recognizes a DOD installation from any military branch that has successfully built strong partnerships with communities, regions and/or states to (1) enhance community-military collaboration; (2) promote installation efficiency and innovation; (3) advance DOD energy efficiency goals; and/or (4) serve as a national model for community-military partnerships.

NAS Whiting Field announces change of command for Training Squadron Six
Training Squadron Six observed a change in leadership Friday, Apr. 29, when Lt. Col. Richard C. Roberts, USMC formally relieved Cmdr. Wade A. Iverson, USN, as the commanding officer of Naval Air Station Whiting Field based squadron. Capt. Matthew Coughlin, USN (ret), a former NAS Whiting Field commanding officer, served as the guest speaker for the event. The ceremony is a proud Navy tradition where the assembled officers, staff and crew may witness the official transfer of authority from one officer to another. Surrounded by the proud displays of Naval aviation history apparent throughout the Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, the location was specifically chosen by Iverson to reflect the early push that directed his Navy career. Coughlin, who served with Iverson years earlier, reflected on that motivation………

NAS Whiting Field recognized by ADC

The Association of Defense Communities honored Naval Air Station Whiting Field with its Installation Excellence Award for 2015, said a press release from NAS Whiting Field. The award recognizes the command’s continuing emphasis on strengthening relationships with Northwestern Florida and Southeastern Alabama localities. ADC presents awards to individuals and organizations that support enhanced ties between military and the area in which the military bases reside. The Installation Excellence Award is the only award of the six which is presented to a Navy, Marine Corps, Army or Air Force facility. The organization reviews Department of Defense installations from any military branch that have successfully built strong partnerships with communities, regions and/or states to — (1) enhance community-military collaboration; (2) promote installation efficiency and innovation; (3) advance DoD energy efficiency goals; and/or (4) serve as a national model for community-military partnerships.………

Corry Station –

Pensacola’s Corry Station celebrates opening of new $5M youth center
School age military children will find plenty to keep them busy when a new $5.1 million youth center opens next week on Naval Air Station Pensacola’s Corry Station. The 11,000-square-foot facility, which can accommodate 125 children, includes four colorful activity rooms, a teen center and a homework technology center along with an outdoor playground and a covered recreation/basketball area. NASP Commanding Officer Capt. Christopher Martin and other officials got an early look at the newly completed center during a ribbon-cutting ceremony recently. Martin was impressed with the interior design of the building and the outdoor recreation options that are available. —This is an awesome facility,‖ he said. Jack Reed, operations officer for Naval Air Station Pensacola’s Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR), agreed. —This is a great facility, not only for the warfighter but for their family members as well," Reed said. —It really encompasses what MWR and the Navy is all about.‖ The new facility will also benefit younger children, Martin said, because the NASP Corry Station Child Development Center (CDC) next door will be able to reconfigure the previously shared space and increase its ability to care for children ages newborn to 5 years….

Center for Information Dominance Conducts Change of Command

The information warfare (IW) community’s training arm, the Center for Information Dominance (CID), held a change of command ceremony, May 3. Capt. William —Bill Lintz relieved Capt. Maureen Fox as CID’s commanding officer during the time-honored tradition, conducted at the National Naval Aviation Museum on Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola. Fox, a native of New Castle, Delaware, assumed command of CID on Sept. 26, 2014. She led extensive efforts across several Navy echelons and agencies to define cryptologic, intelligence and information systems training requirements in support of the Chief of Naval Operations’ strategies for further advancing and ingraining IW into naval operations…….

DOD Issues –

**Authorization Bill Would Update Goldwater-Nichols Reforms**

Defense Communities 360 © May 3, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The House version of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill attempts to update the landmark 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act by imposing a handful of changes to DOD’s organizational structure and how it formulates strategy. The legislation, which was approved last week by the House Armed Services Committee, would extend the term of chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from two years to four and stagger it so that it bridges consecutive administrations. It also expands the advisory role of the chairman — to provide independent advice on ongoing operations and on the allocation and transfer of forces across regions to bridge service and COCOM [combatant command] boundaries, according to a summary of the measure……..

**Army shrinks to smallest level since before World War II**
Army Times © May 7, 2016

By Jim Tice

The Army's latest headcount shows that nearly 2,600 soldiers departed active service in March without being replaced, an action that plunges manning to its lowest level since before World War II. During the past year the size of the active force has been reduced by 16,548 soldiers, the rough equivalent of three brigades. Endstrength for March was 479,172 soldiers, which is 154 fewer troopers than were on active duty when the Army halted the post-Cold War drawdown in 1999 with 479,424 soldiers, the smallest force since 1940, when the active component numbered 269,023 soldiers.............

Other Items of Interest –

Georgia House Forms BRAC Committee

The Georgia House last week formed a 15-member study committee to identify ways to safeguard the state's military installations in the event a new round of base closures is launched. ―We’ve got to be proactive,‖ state Rep. John Corbett (R) said Monday. ―We can’t wait until we’re on the list to be closed to start,‖ said Corbett, who was appointed to the committee along with 14 other lawmakers. Moody Air Force Base and Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base are located in counties that he represents. After four installations were shuttered following the 2005 round, Georgia lawmakers are hoping to avoid a repeat. ―In 2005, we lost four bases out of 13. We really can’t be doing that again,‖ said Rep. Dave Belton (R), who proposed the study committee. Belton will serve as the committee’s chairman, reported the Glasgow Daily Times. .......
Excess Capacity Study Ignores Army’s Latest Training Requirements, Experts Say

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/excess-capacity-study-ignores-armys-latest-training-requirements-experts-say/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=b46ac9dd4a-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-b46ac9dd4a-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © May 4, 2016

By Dan Cohen

DOD’s analysis showing the Army has a significant amount of unneeded capacity across installations hosting combat units ignored the introduction of new weapons and tactics by the Army over the past 25 years requiring more land for training, according to experts interviewed by the Colorado Springs Gazette. The analysis the department released last month concluded that 42 percent of the Army’s maneuver infrastructure is excess to its needs, using 1989 as a baseline for measuring infrastructure requirements. The analysis showed that each of its battalions averaged 23,288 acres of training land in 1989. Using the Army’s projected force structure for fiscal 2019, that figure would rise to 40,405 acres, the report stated. But following the Persian Gulf War and studies that transformed how the Army fights, units became responsible for larger chunks of land, requiring training to change…….

NSA recognizes Embry Riddle as a top school for cyber defense


Orlando Sentinel © May 6, 2016

By Paul Brinkmann

The National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security have recognized Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University’s Daytona Beach Campus as a top school nationally for cyber defense education. The school has been added to a short list of schools -- only five are on it so far -- that are designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in cyber defense education, with a focus on secure software development. The designation for secure software development should allow students and research teams to see "immediate benefits in access to prospective research grant awards, scholarships, and job opportunities" said Remzi Seker, professor of computer science in the college of engineering, and director of the school's Cybersecurity and Assured Systems Engineering Center……. 
Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

Senate Panel Blocks Administration’s BRAC Request

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/senate-panel-blocks-administrations-brac-request/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=2cb7b166de-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-2cb7b166de-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © May 12, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Senate Armed Services’ Readiness and Management Subcommittee moved to block the Pentagon’s request to hold a new round of base closures in 2019 as it marked up its section of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill on Tuesday. “I do not want to give the department the open-ended authority to pursue another BRAC round that will incur significant upfront costs when we do not have the room in our budget over the next years to afford many fundamental readiness investments,” said Subcommittee Chair Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.). While the readiness panel marked up its section in a session that was open to the public, the full committee began marking up the annual defense policy bill on Wednesday in a closed session. The committee isn’t expected to finish the process until late Thursday or Friday………..

DOD Budget–

House Spending Bill Includes Stunted War Fund

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/budget/2016/05/10/house-spending-bill-includes-stunted-war-funding/84206266/

Defense News © May 11, 206

By Joe Gould
Defying opposition from Democratic leadership, the White House and the Pentagon, House appropriators will consider a defense spending bill that boosts base budget needs by shorting war funding. The House Appropriations Committee on Tuesday evening released its draft 2017 Pentagon-funding bill, which proposes $517.1 billion in discretionary funding for DoD’s base budget needs, an amount $3 billion above the fiscal 2016 enacted spending level and $587 million below President Barack Obama's request, according to an accompanying fact sheet. Taking the same approach as the House Armed Services Committee, it also includes a plan to shift $16 billion toward base budget needs from the overseas contingency operations (OCO) account, which is left with about $59 billion………..

**House Appropriators Adopt War Funds Budget Maneuver**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/house-appropriators-adopt-war-funds-budget-maneuver/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=2cb7b166de-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-2cb7b166de-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © May 12, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The fiscal 2017 defense spending bill unveiled this week by the House Appropriations Committee follows the House Armed Services Committee’s strategy of shifting funds from DOD’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account to boost the department’s base budget, setting up a possible budget fight with Democratic lawmakers and the White House. The spending measure, approved by the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Wednesday, would dedicate $15.7 billion from the OCO account to unmet needs within the base Pentagon budget in an effort to restore readiness shortfalls, according to a committee summary. “These funds are targeted to requirements identified by the services — readiness efforts, infrastructure, and equipment recapitalization and modernization, such as additional flying and steaming hours, training time, and facilities and aircraft repairs,” according to the summary……..

**Senate Committee Spurns HASC Approach to Bolster Base Budget**


Defense Communities 360 © May 13, 2016

By Dan Cohen

In contrast to the budget maneuver employed by its House counterpart, the Senate Armed Services Committee does not rely on DOD’s wartime account to sidestep the statutory spending caps and bolster the Pentagon’s base budget, under the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill the panel approved Thursday. After the committee finished marking up its annual defense policy bill in closed session, Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.) told reporters he planned to seek additional funding when the measure goes to the Senate floor,
reported Defense News. “We went to the president’s mark, and then we will be looking to increase funding for much-needed programs on the floor,” McCain said.

Policy Bill Would Streamline Senior Leadership, Contractor Workforce


By Dan Cohen

The fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill approved Thursday by the Senate Armed Services Committee would impose a series of caps on senior military officers and civilians, and contractors performing staff functions in headquarters. The reforms are one component of a broad array of changes the annual defense policy bill would make throughout the DOD organization — the office of the secretary of Defense and the defense agencies, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the combatant commands and the military services — and follow 13 hearings the panel conducted last fall with defense experts. “This is a reform bill. The NDAA contains the most sweeping reforms of the organization of the Department of Defense in a generation,” said Committee Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.). The changes are a response to the number of strategic challenges facing the nation, most of which cut across regional geographies and span different military functions and domains, according to a committee summary of the legislation.

Eglin AFB –

F-35 Production Set to Quadruple As Massive Factory Retools


By Marcus Weisgerber

As green-skinned, half-assembled F-35 Joint Strike Fighters take shape, this massive factory that once cranked out thousands of World War II bombers is preparing to get real busy again. F-35 production is slated to hit full steam in 2019, and Lockheed Martin is reshaping its final assembly line to get ready. Not far from the nine assembly stations where the stealthy jets are coming together, wooden walls and plastic sheeting rise dozens of feet to the ceiling, blocking off large portions of the plant where new laser-leveled concrete is being poured. Lowered air pressure behind the screens helps keep dust and debris away from the sensitive airframes. Elsewhere, scaffolding is being erected for seven new assembly stations to come.
By 1st Lt Amanda Farr

The 53rd Wing activated on May 11 the F-35 Partner Support Complex, a U.S.-owned facility here that handles F-35 Lightning II testing. Robert Kraus assumed the new position as the complex’s director, making it the first civilian-led unit in the wing. Kraus, a retired lieutenant colonel, served as the 68th Electronic Warfare Squadron commander and 53rd Electronic Warfare Group deputy commander at Eglin Air Force Base prior to this new position. The F-35 PSC is charged with providing mission data, intelligence support, lab facilities and training to the eight partner countries purchasing the fifth-generation aircraft. "The growth of the PSC will relieve that pressure, as well as ensure our coalition partners are ready to participate in any future operations," Kraus said.

NS Mayport –

Mayport prepares for Atlantic hurricane season

By Blake Mathews - Meteorologist

The hurricane season begins in three weeks, and while the 2016 Atlantic hurricane season isn’t expected to be overly busy, military personnel at Naval Station Mayport are already preparing for any eventuality that might affect the stretch of coastline along Northeast Florida. Mayport personnel are currently conducting hurricane exercises, dubbed "HurrEx," over the next two weeks. "We really want to push the message of preparing now instead of waiting until the day of the storm or the days before the storm," said Amie McKague, of the Fleet and Family Support Services. McKague answers questions daily regarding what to do in the event of a hurricane emergency. Evacuating what amounts to a small city -- some 10,500 personnel and their families, along with ships and aircraft -- requires a lot of logistics and a lot planning to get it done right the first time.

USS The Sullivans Holds CoC At Sea

By Ensign Andrew Canady

USS The Sullivans (DDG 68) executed a Change of Command at sea on May 1. Cmdr. Jennifer M. Blakeslee was relieved as commanding officer by Cmdr. Gilbert E. Clark. “It was an honor to serve as the commanding officer of The Sullivans,” said Blakeslee. “It was by far the highlight of my career. The Sullivans is a great Ship, with an amazing Crew,
who are willing to put in long hours of hard work and commitment which make the Ship remarkable. My tour would not have been as successful without their dedication to excellence.” “I look forward to leading The Sullivans through the rest of this deployment and beyond,” Clark said. “I could not have wished for a better Crew then the one onboard, and I know that together we will accomplish remarkable feats. I would also like to thank Cmdr. Blakeslee for leading The Sullivans to the point it is today; I am inheriting a special Ship; and I look forward to continuing where Cmdr. Blakeslee finished.”

BAE Systems Mayport secures Navy's contract for DDG 99 repair


Port News © May 12, 2016

BAE Systems Southeast Shipyards Mayport, LLC, Jacksonville, Florida, is being awarded a $32,546,563 firm-fixed-price contract for Drydock Selected Restricted Availability (DSRA) repair work onboard USS Farragut (DDG 99), U.S. DoD contracts statement said.

The DSRA consists of structural and tank repairs, propulsion system repairs, ventilation and auxiliary systems repairs, temporary services habitability preservations, structural preservations, ship alterations, and miscellaneous. This contract includes options which, if exercised, would bring the cumulative value of this contract to $33,697,942. Work will be performed in Jacksonville, Florida, and is expected to be completed by January 2017. Fiscal 2016 operations and maintenance (Navy) and research, development, test and evaluation (Defense agencies) funding in the amount of $32,546,563 will be obligated at time of award and funds in the amount of $30,495,297 will expire at the end of the current fiscal year. This contract was competitively procured with three proposals solicited via the Federal Business Opportunities website, with two offers received…………

Navy dings company over littoral ship quality control


News4Jax© May 11, 2016

The company whose Littoral Combat Ships are expected to be brought to Naval Station Mayport is under orders from the U.S. Navy to correct quality control failures in building its version of the LCS, according to a Bloomberg report. The issues with Lockheed Martin Corp. have delayed deliveries and resulted in three citations from the service's shipbuilding inspectors, Bloomberg said. "Corrective Action Requests" were issued in May, June and July of 2015 from the Navy's supervisor of shipbuilding. The $29 billion program that Defense Secretary Ash Carter has reduced to 40 vessels from 52, is under close scrutiny by the federal government. The Littoral Combat Ship, intended for missions such as mine-clearing in shallow coastal waters, has been criticized as too vulnerable to attack in combat, according to the Bloomberg report……..
Air Force F-22s wrap up European deployment

http://www.airforcetimes.com/story/military/2016/05/09/air-force-f-22s-wrap-up-european-deployment/84145358/

Air Force Times © May 9, 2016
By Oriana Pawlyk

A dozen F-22s from Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, have returned stateside after almost a month of exercises throughout Europe, according to a base spokesman. The 12 Raptors, one of the largest contingents of F-22 fighters to deploy to the region, arrived at RAF Lakenheath, England, in early April, two of the jets and about 20 airmen then made their way east to Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base, Romania, as well as Šiauliai Air Base, Lithuania. European leaders touted the presence of the Air Force's most sophisticated aircraft in the region. "The United States is honoring its commitments and is ready to protect our region with all the most modern measures," Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė said on April 27…….

NAS Whiting Field –

NAS Whiting Field resumes flight operations at NOLF Choctaw


Crestview Bulletin © May 9, 2016
By Jay Cope, NAS Whiting Field Public Affairs

Naval Air Station Whiting Field added a chapter to its history of supporting Naval aviation training May 9, when the Joint Strike Fighter began operations at the installation’s Navy Outlying Landing Field, or NOLF, Choctaw. NOLF Choctaw had been closed to flight operations the past nine months to enable runway improvements to the airfield. The construction project placed arresting gear at the facility to provide the safety features required for fleet carrier landing practices. Pilots who will be attached to carrier-based squadrons must practice such landings on shore before deploying on the ship. This makes NOLF Choctaw one of three East Coast outlying fields with such a capability — and the closest to the F-35 Navy variant aircraft-based at Eglin Air Force Base. NOLF Choctaw’s increased safety capability now supports requirements of the F-35 aircraft from Strike Fighter Squadron 101 (VFA-101) and Training Air Wing FIVE T-6B Texan II training aircraft. NOLF Choctaw is one of 12 outlying landing fields managed by NAS Whiting Field, and one of five outlying landing fields that support the T-6B aircraft. Others are NOLFs Barin, Evergreen, Brewton and Summerdale…….

Patrick AFB –
Welsh visits Patrick AFB, focuses on people, pride


Patrick AFB

By Heidi Hunt, 45th Space Wing Public Affairs / Published May 11, 2016

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III speaks during an all call at the base theater on Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., May 9, 2016. Following the all call, the general and his wife, Betty, spent the day meeting with 45th Space Wing personnel, mission partners and their families, addressed their concerns and provided them with an Air Force-level perspective. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III told Airman Keegan Atherton, "I would die for you and you would die for me too," during his closing remarks at an all call here May 9, driving home his point about what makes the Air Force unique and different to him. To emphasize his point, he reminded Atherton, assigned to the 45th Medical Support Squadron medical logistics, and the audience, that at some point in time, "You will be the most critical person in your unit and you deserve to be treated that way," which he said is the key to this Air Force being successful………..

Patrick AFB unveils new dog training yard


Florida Today © May 11, 2016

By R. Norman Moody

Law enforcement officers from across Brevard County lined up with dogs by their sides Wednesday as the 45th Security Forces Squadron unveiled a new canine training yard that will service not only Patrick Air Force base, but also local police departments. The Security Forces Squadron Canine Obedience Yard will allow both military and civilian law enforcement officers to train their dogs for longer periods in a sunshade-covered facility with outdoor carpeting and less fear of the animals getting too hot or injured. "It takes us out of the sunlight," said Tech. Sgt. Brandon Serena, the squadron's kennel master. "We don't have to worry about the dogs getting exhausted in the heat."……………….

Other Items of Interest –

Jacksonville nonprofit helps veterans tailor military experience for marketplace


Florida Times-Union © May 9, 2016
By Beth Reese Cravey

James Stuckey served in the Army for almost 17 years and was deployed to combat zones three times. Retired in 2013, he is six months away from obtaining a bachelor’s degree in business management. Still, in January, after he was laid off from his first post-military job as a purchasing manager in Jacksonville, he could not find another place to work. “I was always told that everyone wants to hire veterans because of our backgrounds,” said Stuckey, who is still working toward his degree, “but I have found in my experiences that is just not true.” Veteran Michael Johnson was struggling on the career front as well. After a 20-year career in the Marine Corps, he returned to school, obtaining a bachelor’s degree in management in 2013 and beginning work on a master’s in business administration in 2014 that he hopes to complete in August. He planned to pursue a doctorate as well. But he had dreams, rather than goals, and did not know how to translate his military experience to the Jacksonville workplace……

Maryland Creates Advisory Group to Preserve Military’s Role

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/maryland-creates-advisory-group-to-preserve-militarys-role/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=2cb7b166de-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-2cb7b166de-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

By Dan Cohen

In an attempt to prepare for further cutbacks in defense spending and the likelihood of a new round of base closures, the Maryland Military Installation Council formed a BRAC Advisory Group to support the state’s defense communities, officials announced Wednesday. “Community partnerships played key roles in supporting and protecting our military installations in the 2005 BRAC initiative and other actions that brought new responsibilities and more than 100,000 jobs to Maryland,” Maryland Commerce Secretary Mike Gill said in a written statement. “The new BRAC Advisory Group will interact with the communities surrounding our bases, working toward the common goal of ensuring that the defense organizations — and the more than 400,000 Marylanders working for and associated with the DOD — remain here in Maryland,” Gill said………
House adds BRAC Ban to FY’17 Milcon Spending Bill


Defense Communities 360 © May 20, 2016

By Dan Cohen

House lawmakers on Wednesday approved language barring DOD from spending funds to propose, plan for or carry out a new round of base closures during the chamber’s debate of the fiscal 2017 military construction-veterans affairs spending bill. John Ratcliffe (R-Texas), who offered the amendment, said his aim was to protect more than 5,000 jobs associated with the Red River Army Depot in northeast Texas that “provide critical readiness capabilities to the Army,” according to a news release. Language prohibiting the Obama administration from moving ahead with its request to hold a BRAC round in 2019 already was included in the FY 2017 defense authorization bill, which also passed on the House floor Wednesday……

DOD Budget–

White House Veto Threat Cites Use of OCO Funds, Failure to Approve BRAC


Defense Communities 360 © May 17, 2016
The White House on Monday threatened to veto the House version of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill over its reliance on $18 billion in overseas contingency operations account (OCO) funds for base budget items not requested by the department. Using the funds allocated to the OCO account — which is not subject to the statutory budget caps — in an effort to restore shortfalls in military readiness would result in funding for overseas operations to run out at the end of April, according to the Statement of Administration Policy released by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). “By gambling with warfighting funds, the bill risks the safety of our men and women fighting to keep America safe, undercuts stable planning and efficient use of taxpayer dollars, dispirits troops and their families, baffles our allies and emboldens our enemies,” it says………….

Pentagon secretary 'pleased' with Senate's approach to funding bill


The Hill © May 16, 2016

By Kristina Wong

The Pentagon on Monday took sides with the Senate in a looming fight with the House Armed Services Committees over how to increase defense spending in 2017. The House Armed Services Committee has put forward a 2017 defense spending proposal that would authorize taking $18 billion from a war account and using it to pay for things in the Pentagon's base budget. Congress would then work with the next administration to approve more war funding next April. The Senate committee, led by Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), is taking a different tack. They want to authorize spending according to the administration's request but then request more defense funding on the Senate floor instead of using the war funding, known as the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) fund, for base budget items. Defense Secretary Ash Carter has said he opposes the House plan but has not yet weighed in on the Senate's plan, though he is giving it early praise……..

House and Senate heading for a showdown over war funding


Washington Post © May 17, 2016

By Karoun Demirjian

House and Senate Republicans are at odds over how to allocate war spending, all but guaranteeing a showdown later this year over how to fund defense programs and keep military campaigns going in Afghanistan and Iraq and against the Islamic State. House Republicans want to dip into the war account to help pay for Pentagon programs they feel would otherwise get squeezed. But their approach will make it necessary for Congress to approve an emergency war funding bill next spring, effectively blowing budget caps — a politically testy issue and a risk Senate Republicans decided not to take. Instead, the Senate
Armed Services Committee produced a policy bill that hews closely to the broader budget deal struck by Democrats and GOP leaders last year, rationalizing that “the agreement is the agreement,” despite leading Republicans’ concerns that they may be shortchanging certain priorities in the process. At issue is an extra $18 billion worth of war funds that the House Armed Services Committee shifted to Defense Department programs in its annual policy bill, which the House is expected to pass this week.

**House Panel OKs Spending Bill That Shorts OCO**


Defense News © May 17, 2016

By Joe Gould

Bucking objections from the White House, the Pentagon and leading Democrats in Congress, the House Appropriations Committee on Tuesday approved its 2017 Pentagon-funding bill, which would shift billions from the war account to pay for base budget needs. The bill proposes $517.1 billion in discretionary funding for the Defense Department’s base budget needs, an amount $3 billion above the fiscal 2016 enacted spending level and $587 million below President Barack Obama's request. The bill also provides $59 billion in wartime overseas contingency operations funding, $16 billion of which would go to base budget items. Mirroring an approach taken by the House Armed Services Committee and endorsed by House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis. — just with different numbers — the shorting of OCO is a gambit to force the next president to ask Congress for supplemental defense spending. In the House defense policy bill, OCO would expire April 30, 2017.

**Ash Carter Says House Defense Bill ‘Gambling With Warfighting Money,’ Path to Hollow Force**


USNI © May 17, 2016

By John Grady

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter says the House version of the Defense Authorization bill to shift money from emergency war spending to the base budget is gimmickry that is “gambling with warfighting money at a time of war.” Speaking Tuesday at the Navy League’s Sea-Air-Space 2016 Exposition, he said, “It would spend money taken from the war account on things that are not DOD’s highest priorities across the joint force.” The move would also threaten last year’s budget agreement and was “another road to nowhere.” Carter said that “leaves us facing the Department’s greatest strategic threat—a return to sequestration and $100 billion dollars in looming automatic cuts beginning next year.” “Buying force structure in this fiscal year without the resources to sustain it in future years is not a path to increased readiness, it’s a path to a hollow force. It exacerbates the readiness challenges we currently have. Our readiness recovery plans are centered on
synchronized and sustainable manning, training and equipping pipelines that are rigorously shaped based on the size of the force.”

McCain to Propose Loosening Cap on Defense Spending

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/mccain-to-propose-loosening-cap-on-defense-spending/

Defense Communities 360 © May 20, 2016

By Dan Cohen

John McCain (R-Ariz.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, next week plans to offer an amendment on the floor to the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill raising the statutory cap on defense spending by at least $17 billion. McCain’s approach attacks head-on the two-year bipartisan budget agreement reached last year to lift the caps on both defense and non-defense spending, reported CQ Roll Call. It almost certainly will cause a split along partisan lines as well as between defense hawks and fiscal conservatives. “I don’t know whether or not this amendment will succeed, but the Senate must have this debate and the Senate must choose a side,” he said Thursday at the Brookings Institution. McCain later added that he may seek $18 billion, rather than $17 billion. The extra funds would pay for weapons modernization and also halt planned cuts in Army end strength.

House Clears Defense Bill with Mostly Republican Support

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/house-clears-defense-bill-with-mostly-republican-support/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=7a7fa5b6d0-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-7a7fa5b6d0-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © May 19, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The House on Wednesday passed a fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill that despite two days of debate over dozens of amendments was little changed from the version passed in committee. Most significantly, the defense policy bill retains a budget maneuver that would allocate $18 billion in overseas contingency operations account (OCO) funds for base budget items not requested by the administration. The funds are designated for training, new weapons and facilities improvements desired by the service chiefs but left out of the Pentagon’s budget request. That gambit, which would result in funding for overseas operations to run out at the end of April, was one reason only 40 Democrats supported the bill, which passed 277-147. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), the ranking member on the Armed Services Committee, opposed the legislation after criticizing the bill’s approach as “a fiscal path to nowhere,” reported CQ Roll Call.

Eglin AFB –

Eglin announces solar career training program
Eglin military members seeking careers in solar-related fields may have a bright future thanks to a recently announced program, aimed at offering training to active-duty members departing the service. The Solar Ready Vets program is a Department of Energy-sponsored national program that will offer free training to separating members to ready them for jobs within the burgeoning solar energy industry. Eglin is one of just four Air Force bases out of a total of 10 military installations selected for the program. The training prepares them for careers as solar photovoltaic system installers, sales representatives, system inspectors, and other solar-related occupations. Solar Ready Vets is enabled by the U.S. Department of Defense's SkillBridge initiative, which allows exiting military personnel to pursue civilian job training, employment skills training, apprenticeships, and internships up to six months prior to their separation.

NAS Jacksonville –

**Williamson is new commanding officer at VP-45**


Jax Air News © May 18, 2016

By Lt. j.g. Keith Estes, Public Affairs Officer

The VP-45 “Pelicans” held a change of command ceremony April 21 in Hangar 117 on board Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville where Cmdr. Jason Williamson relieved Cmdr. John Weidner Jr. as commanding officer and Cmdr. Ryan Lilley assumed the duties of executive officer. Retired Capt. Daniel S cheese served as the guest speaker for the event and Capt. Anthony Corapi, commodore, Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 11 (CPRW-11), presented the awards. Cmdr. Jason Williamson, who was commissioned through the Navy Reserve Officers Training Corps program, graduated from Boston University in May 1998 with a degree in Bio-Medical Engineering. After aviation preflight indoctrination, he reported to NAS Corpus Christi for primary and advanced flight training and was designated a naval aviator in June 2000.

NS Mayport –

**USS Stark and the 37 killed in the 1987 Iraqi attack to be remembered at Mayport today**


Florida Times-Union © May 17, 2016
By Dan Scanlan

Tuesday the U.S. Navy is remembering the 29th anniversary of the Iraqi attack on the guided-missile frigate USS Stark at the base where the 3,900-ton ship was berthed — Mayport Naval Station. While the ship was decommissioned in 1999, the Naval Order of the United States, North Florida Commander and Mayport’s Second Class Petty Officer Association is hosting a service to honor the 37 sailors killed aboard the USS Stark during the attack May 17, 1987. The USS Stark was in the middle of a six-month patrol in the Persian Gulf when it was hit by two missiles fired from an Iraqi fighter plane. The ship received basic repairs to mend the 10- by 15-foot hole in its port side, then returned home before an extended renovation in a Mississippi shipyard………

BAE Mayport wins $29 million LSD 43 award


Marine Log © May 17, 2016

BAE Systems Southeast Shipyards Mayport LLC, Jacksonville, FL, is being awarded a $29,258,886 firm-fixed-price contract for phased maintenance availability repair work onboard USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43). This is a highly complex waterborne ship repair contract that includes hull, machinery, electrical, electronics, piping and ship alteration work, and miscellaneous repairs in descending order as percentages of dollar value of the work package. The work package contained 154 work items of which 105 form the base work package, and 49 work items designated as options. The contract includes options which, if exercised, would bring the cumulative value of this contract to $34,924,452. Work will be performed in Jacksonville, FL, and is expected to be completed by May 2017………

Tyndall AFB –

F-22 Raptor stealth fighter sports low-visibility bomb markings


The Aviationist © May 16, 2016

By David Cenciotti

The bomb silhouettes (on the airframe serialled AF05-086) represent GBU-32 1,000-lb JDAMs (Joint Direct Attack Munitions), one of the two types of bombs the 5th generation aircraft is able to carry: indeed, for air-to-surface missions, the multirole stealth jet can carry either 2x GBU-32s or 8x GBU-39 small diameter bombs in the internal weapons bay. Bomb and kill markings are very well-known tradition in military aviation. In Syria, Russian Su-34s sported red star silhouettes to mark 10 air strikes, whilst EA-18G Growlers of VAQ-137 aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt got unique kill markings, showing Electronic Attack support as well as cellular jamming missions…………..
NSA Panama City –

**Land purchase deal near Navy base could cost Bay County $785,000**


News Herald © May 16, 2016

By JOHN HENDERSON

Taxpayers would lose about $785,000 on a land purchase deal under the latest offer from the state to buy county property by the Navy base. That figure is less than the $1.57 million the county would have lost if it took an offer from the state last year, as the state increased the value of the land in a recent appraisal. The Navy also agreed to donate to the county a parcel of Gulf-front property on Surf Drive valued by the property appraiser at $445,000. The Bay County Commission is scheduled to discuss the latest offer at its 9 a.m. meeting Tuesday at the Bay County Government Center, 840 W. 11th St. In May 2010, the county spent $2.9 million to purchase 8.44 acres adjacent to Naval Support Activity Panama City from the developers of Barefoot Palms. The military considers civilian encroachment when deciding base cuts, and Navy documents from 2009 and 2010 showed the military strongly supported purchasing the land itself. The Navy asked for funding for the purchase, but the money never arrived…….

Florida National Guard –

**Florida’s 50th Regional Support Group changes commanders**

[https://www.dvidshub.net/news/198368/floridas-50th-regional-support-group-changes-commanders#.VzzMvQ03Vs](https://www.dvidshub.net/news/198368/floridas-50th-regional-support-group-changes-commanders#.VzzMvQ03Vs)

DVIDS© May 17, 2016

The Florida Army National Guard’s 50th Regional Support Group bid farewell to brigade commander, Col. Peter Kaye yesterday during the 50th RSG’s change of command ceremony held at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center. Kaye has held command of the 50th RSG for just over two years and will be relinquishing his duties to Col. Richard Elam. The Florida Army National Guard has at its disposal a vast assortment of capabilities from Soldiers and the various types of commands that are spread throughout the state, an eclectic array of expertise that ranges from infantry and artillery to finance and quartermasters. Few commands represent such a diverse versatility like the 50th Regional Support Group, which has developed a reputation of top tier readiness and performance,
and will continue to do so as they bid farewell to Kaye and continue to build on their legacy under the guidance of Col. Elam……….

**Florida State Students Pilot Drones For Emergency Management At Camp Blanding**


WJCT © May 17, 2016

By Ryan Benk

Florida emergency officials are in the midst of planning for the upcoming hurricane season — and they’re getting some help from an unexpected source. A group of college students are learning how to use drones to aid in disaster recovery efforts. Florida State University professor of Emergency Management Robert McDaniel showed footage of his students piloting drones Tuesday to a packed room of emergency managers at Camp Blanding in Starke. Drones can be used to help scour hard-to-reach disaster areas for survivors, he said. Case-in-point: Just yesterday, while enroute to Camp Blanding for a hurricane exercise, McDaniel and students used drones to help rescuers track down a missing person. "We were able to help exclude the areas that the dogs weren't going to have to hunt — about a square mile in one afternoon," he said………. 

Patrick AFB –

**DoD recognizes Patrick AFB airman's writing**


Florida Today © May 18, 2016

By R. Norman Moody

Maj. Cathleen Snow, chief of public affairs for the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, was recently recognized for her news writing ability after placing first in an Air Force media contest. The same news story recently went on to place second in the Department of Defense. Her winning news story was about a hero in her unit, Senior Master Sgt. Steph Schwarz, who saved the life of two teens who crashed into his backyard dock on their jet ski in January 2015. Schwarz attributed his combat rescue training to saving the teens’ lives. Since she was a child, Snow dreamed of being a writer. At one point during her 30-year Air Force career, Snow was offered the opportunity to cross train as an Air Force navigator. She said she turned it down because she loved writing so much that she couldn’t imagine leaving her chosen field as a public affairs officer……….
NAS KW to change command

http://keysnews.com/node/75057

Keys News © May 17, 2016

Capt. Bobby J. Baker will relieve Capt. Steven P. McAlearney as Commanding Officer of Naval Air Station Key West in a ceremony next month, NAS KW public affairs officer Trice Denny announced Tuesday in a news release. The ceremony will be held June 17 at 1 p.m. in Hangar A-936 on Boca Chica Field……….

Other Items of Interest –

Florida Frontiers; World War II military bases transformed Florida


Florida Today © May 16, 2016
By Ben Brotemarkle

As World War II began in 1939, the population of Florida was less than two million people. The population of the state grew exponentially each decade after World War II, and military installations constructed during that conflict were a major factor in that growth. Daniel Hutchinson is Assistant Professor of History at Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina. His doctoral dissertation at Florida State University was “Military Bases and the Transformation of the Rural South During World War II.” “During the Great Depression, tourism to Florida really took a very big hit, and with the coming of World War II, many Florida communities that relied on tourism saw military bases as a way to recover,” said Hutchinson. “Hotels, resorts, tourist destinations of all kinds sent letters to the War Department saying ‘turn our hotel into a troop training facility, or a troop recreational facility, or a convalescent hospital,’ and the War Department took up these offers.”……….
May 30, 2016

Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

NDAA Hits Senate as McCain Seeks Additional $17B

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2016/05/23/ndaa-senate-mccain-seeksmore/84801722/

Defense News © May 23, 2016

By Joe Gould

The Senate is taking up the massive 2017 defense policy this week, as Senate Armed Services Chairman John McCain is expected to ask Congress to authorize $17 billion above spending caps. When the $602 billion 2017 National Defense Authorization Act hits the Senate floor this week, McCain plans introduce the added funding through an amendment. Pass or fail, this stand-alone vote on defense spending would be a tough one for Democratic lawmakers who have demanded that each defense dollar be matched in domestic spending. “I don't know whether or not this amendment will succeed, but the Senate must have this debate and senators must choose a side,” McCain, R-Ariz., said at a May 19 event at Brookings' Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence……..

McCain Pleads Case for Raising Defense Spending

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/mccain-pleads-case-for-raising-defense-spending/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=9cd8cb4b79-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-9cd8cb4b79-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities 360 © May 24, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The combination of stringent spending caps and growing worldwide challenges “have left each of our military services underfunded, undersized, and unready to meet current and future threats,” Senate Armed Services Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.) stated in a “dear colleague” letter intended to build support this week for action to lift the statutory cap on defense spending. McCain sent the letter on Friday, one day after he telling a Brookings Institution audience he plans to offer an amendment on the Senate floor to the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill to raise the spending cap by at least $17 billion. McCain’s plan for increasing Pentagon funding to restore shortfalls in readiness and capability contrasts with the approach House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) adopted in crafting his chamber’s version of the annual defense policy bill. The House measure calls for allocating $18 billion from the uncapped overseas contingency operations account (OCO) to base budget items not requested by the administration…….
Senators tout $574.5B defense spending bill that sticks to budget


The Hill © May 24, 2016

By Rebecca Kheel

A Senate defense spending bill would stick to a bipartisan budget agreement reached last year and set defense spending at $574.5 billion for fiscal year 2017. The Senate Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Defense unveiled details of its defense appropriations bill during a Tuesday morning markup where senators made clear they were not employing the tactics of their House counterparts. “We built our appropriations bill around the $574 billion that is consistent with the budget agreement,” said Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), the ranking member of the subcommittee. “It’s remarkable that we have achieved as much as we have without resorting to gimmicks that arbitrarily cut off military operations before the next president takes office.” The bill, which passed the subcommittee by voice vote, would provide $515.9 billion in base spending and $58.6 billion for a war fund known as the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) account.

Senate Subcommittee Approves Base, Wartime Funds Below Obama's Request


Defense News © May 24, 2016

By Joe Gould

The Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee approved a 2017 defense spending bill Tuesday that includes $515.9 billion for the Pentagon’s base budget funding and $58.6 billion in the war budget. The bill’s funding levels are consistent with the 2015 Bipartisan Budget Act, falls below the president’s budget request by about $1.7 billion and rejects the House approach of reallocating wartime funds for base budget needs. “This is a bipartisan bill that responsibly funds national defense and shows strong commitment to those who serve in the Armed Forces,” said Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran, R-Miss., who also leads the subcommittee. Dick Durbin of Illinois, the chamber's No. 2 Democrat and ranking member of the subcommittee, jabbed the House’s approach as well as Senate Armed Services Chairman John McCain’s plans to seek an added $17 billion for defense, possibly in wartime overseas contingency operations (OCO) funding.

Democrats to Block Move to Boost DOD Budget, Reid Says

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/democrats-to-block-move-to-boost-dod-budget-reid-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=e0e69e6e58-
By Dan Cohen

Senate Democrats will oppose a planned amendment from Senate Armed Services Chair John McCain (R-Ariz.) to increase defense spending by at least $17 billion as it would upend the two-year bipartisan budget agreement reached last year to lift the caps on both defense and non-defense accounts, Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) said Wednesday. “Democrats are going to proceed deliberately. We’re going to hold Republicans to their word on the budget agreement,” Reid said, reported the Hill. “We’re going to do our job as we want them to do theirs.” McCain is crafting an amendment to the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill to bolster the Pentagon’s budget to restore shortfalls in readiness and capability. Last week he said the amendment would call for raising the defense cap so the money could be allocated directly to the department’s base budget. More recently, though, he indicated he could adopt the approach of his House counterpart and take the funds out of the overseas contingency operations account…..

Senator Appropriations Committee OKs DoD Spending Bill

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2016/05/26/senate-appropriations-committee-oks-dod-spending/84976260/

By Joe Gould

A proposed 2017 Pentagon budget easily vaulted another congressional hurdle on Thursday as the Senate Appropriations Committee voted 30-0 to send its defense spending bill to the full Senate. Hewing to the 2015 Bipartisan Budget Act, the spending bill includes $515.9 billion for the Pentagon’s base budget funding and $58.6 billion in the war budget. It falls below the president’s budget request by about $1.7 billion and rejects the House approach of reallocating wartime funds for base budget needs. “US national security interests receive necessary support within this bill, which has broad bipartisan support,” said Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran, R-Miss., who also leads the defense subcommittee. “The bill sustains a strong US force structure, and it makes significant investments in readiness, shipbuilding programs, aircraft procurement and missile defense.”

MacDill AFB –

SOCOM Looking For Technology From Foreign Firms

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=2193

By Dan Cohen

Defense Communities 360 © May 26, 2016

By Joe Gould

A proposed 2017 Pentagon budget easily vaulted another congressional hurdle on Thursday as the Senate Appropriations Committee voted 30-0 to send its defense spending bill to the full Senate. Hewing to the 2015 Bipartisan Budget Act, the spending bill includes $515.9 billion for the Pentagon’s base budget funding and $58.6 billion in the war budget. It falls below the president’s budget request by about $1.7 billion and rejects the House approach of reallocating wartime funds for base budget needs. “US national security interests receive necessary support within this bill, which has broad bipartisan support,” said Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran, R-Miss., who also leads the defense subcommittee. “The bill sustains a strong US force structure, and it makes significant investments in readiness, shipbuilding programs, aircraft procurement and missile defense.”

MacDill AFB –

SOCOM Looking For Technology From Foreign Firms

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=2193

National Defense Magazine © May 24, 2016
By Jon Harper

U.S. Special Operations Command is looking overseas for technology solutions, a top acquisition official said May 24. “We look for the best product wherever it is around the world,” said James Geurts, SOCOM’s acquisition executive, at the 2016 Special Operations Forces Industry Conference. The meeting, hosted by the National Defense Industrial Association, brought together more than 11,000 members of the industry and the special operations community from the United States and other countries. SOCOM has a number of different tools that it can use to buy equipment such as the forward area test program and the coalition partner program, Geurts noted. “We are a global [acquisitions, technology and logistics] network,” he said. “If you’re an international partner or an international industry partner and you’ve got a piece of kit, our goal is to get that into our system, test it, and if we like it, immediately go to procurement of that equipment.” The command has a range of technology needs. “Literally everything from submarines to satellites and everything in between,” Geurts said……..

SOCOM Commander: Special Operations Forces Must Adapt as Threats Increase

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=7c996cd7-cbb4-4018-baf8-8825eada7aa2&ID=2192&RootFolder=%2Fblog%2FLists%2FPosts

National Defense Magazine © May 24, 2016

By Yasmin Tadjdeh

As the United States faces threats around the globe — from the Islamic State to Russia to China — special operators must adapt, said the commander of Special Operations Command May 24. “The word complex fails to describe the current security environment,” said Gen. Raymond A. Thomas III. “The younger generation — specifically my two sons who are both West Point graduates — have a tendency to tell me that we had it so good in the Cold War, when the world appeared to be more stable based upon reassuring concepts like mutually assured destruction and the threat of nuclear war. It is hard to fathom how much has changed since the Cold War and the velocity of that change.” The only constant in today’s environment is change, he said during a keynote speech at the annual Special Operations Forces Industry Conference, hosted by the National Defense Industrial Association, the publisher of National Defense. “We can describe the situation as predictably unpredictable. In just the past few years we have experienced an evolving threat environment which entails a variable witch’s brew of challenges,” he said……..

Eglin AFB –
Final F-35 Testing Slips To 2018


By Lara Seligman

The military’s top weapons tester has been warning for months that the F-35 will not be ready for its final test phase until 2018 at the earliest. On Tuesday, the Pentagon officially acknowledged the schedule slip. “We reviewed the status of operational test planning, and there is consensus that that is likely to occur in calendar year 2018 given the realities of the schedule at this time,” said Frank Kendall, the Pentagon’s top acquisition official, during a Tuesday conference call. “The target was the middle of 2017, but it’s clear we’re not going to make that.”

This slip reflects a six-month delay for initial operational test and evaluation, or IOT&E, the last major period of testing before full-rate production. IOT&E will test the F-35’s full combat capability, verifying the jets can fly real, operational missions as intended.

Hurlburt Field –

Hurlburt reviewing privately owned guns on base


Northwest Florida Daily News © May 23, 2016

By Kelly Humphrey

In response to the mass shootings that have taken place at military installations across the country in recent years, many commentators have called for changes to current policies that prohibit service members from possessing personal firearms on bases. Currently, Hurlburt personnel are prohibited from having their personal guns with them on base property. A change to policies regarding guns on base may be on the horizon, however. According to Col. Tom Palenske, vice commander of the 1st Special Operations Wing, the base has been conducting a comprehensive review of its privately owned firearms policy. “The installation commander takes the safety of the members on our installation very seriously, and for that reason is currently in the process of updating his current policy,” Palenske said. “The new policy has not yet been finalized, but more information will be made available to base personnel once it has been.”

AFSOC Moves Forward on Plans to Equip AC-130J with Laser Weapon by 2020

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=2198

Air Force Special Operations Command is on track to equip an AC-130J Ghostrider gunship with a laser weapon by the end of the decade, officials said May 25. Working alongside Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren in Virginia, the service has wrapped up the first phase of a two-part study that will give the command greater clarity on the maturity of commercially available systems and potential design concepts, said Lt. Col. John DiSebastian, director of fixed-wing tech insertion at Special Operations Command. “We have identified our partners that have responded to our [request for] information [and] we are in the process of evaluating that,” he said at Special Operations Forces International Conference, sponsored by the National Defense Industrial Association. “We have not downselected away from any, or chosen any. We are still, as part of this architecture, looking at what is the best operational capability and determining which vendors can support that.”

NS Mayport –

**New thinking for port-owned land in Mayport eyes development without a cruise ship terminal**


Florida Times-Union © May 26, 2016

By David Bauerlein

When angry words and lawsuits were flying in Mayport, Mikki Baldwin and her daughter took a walk on the waterfront and recalled how tightly their lives were tied to the long history of the little village. Back then, residents like Baldwin felt powerless to stop the Jacksonville Port Authority from building a cruise terminal in Mayport. As the pair strolled that night, they came to a flagpole with the port authority banner on it. Baldwin decided something could be done, if only symbolically. The next morning, that flag — that “slap in the face” — was hanging upside down………..

**Study shows more military spouses are unemployed**

http://www.news4jax.com/news/study-shows-more-military-spouses-are-unemployed

News4Jax © May 27, 2016

By Ashley Harding

A new study spearheaded by Blue Star Families finds an alarming number of military spouses are having a hard time finding jobs. The findings show up to 42% of military spouses are unemployed compared to 25% of civilian spouses. The study shows there are a number of reasons. Most of it has to do with moving frequently and hectic schedules. The
folks at Mayport heard the results of this study. They were disappointed, but at the same time, encouraged knowing there are programs available just for military families. Marlene Alfaro is hard at work. She takes care of budget and works in I.T. for Fleet and Family Support Center at Naval Station Mayport. She's made the transition from military to military spouse. Alfaro knows the challenges well. "You’re always moving around with your spouse. You never have an actual place where you can set up a career and just have a career path," said Alfaro………..

Patrick AFB –

60 years ago, Patrick AFB had its only missile launch

http://www.floridatoday.com/story/tech/science/space/2016/05/22/60-years-ago-patrick-afb-had-its-only-missile-launch/8461516/

Florida Today © May 23, 2016

By James Dean

Armed Forces Day attracted little notice Saturday, but 60 years ago the occasion drew throngs to Patrick Air Force Base. Cars lined State Road A1A before it was closed to traffic at 3:30 p.m. on May 20, 1956, as an estimated 25,000 people gathered to see something few ever had up close: a missile launch. John Hilliard, then 18, bicycled down from his home on the base’s north end to a roped-off softball field where a winged TM-61 Matador missile nicknamed “Florida Ranger” sat perched on a mobile launcher, just a few hundred yards away. Officials briefed the crowd on the 29-foot-long surface-to-surface cruise missile before a late-afternoon countdown that culminated at “X minus zero,” when an officer pushed a button from a nearby control station shielded by sand bags………..

Defense Industry –

Defense Contract Spending declines $66 Billion from Fiscal Year 2009 to 2015


Chmura © May 25, 2016

The map below shows defense contract spending by MSA from FY 2000 to 2015. The circles are proportional (i.e., they are scaled to the value of defense contracts in that MSA). Beginning in FY 2001, the color of each circle indicates whether defense contract spending in the MSA declined (red) or increased (green) from a year earlier. The map can be manually advanced or will advance automatically when you click on “Play.”

The table below the map shows DoD contract spending in the top 100 MSAs and updates each time a new fiscal year is selected. The map informs the following question categories:
• Which MSAs are the largest recipients of DoD contract spending?
• In which regions is DoD contract spending concentrated?
• In which MSAs is DoD contract spending increasing/decreasing from the prior year?

For example, the map shows DoD contract spending surges in the Washington, D.C. MSA from FY 2000 to FY 2010 when spending climbed from $8.0 billion to $39.5 billion before declining beginning in FY 2011………..

DOD Issues –

**Senators call for abolishing service medical commands**

[Link to article](http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/benefits/health-care/2016/05/23/senators-call-abolishing-service-medical-commands/84796694/)

Military Times © May 23, 2016

By Patricia Klime

Calling the military health system slow and inefficient, the Senate Armed Services Committee has proposed eliminating the Army, Navy and Air Force medical commands and folding them into the Defense Health Agency. Under the committee’s draft of the National Defense Authorization Act, the military medical commands would be absorbed into the DHA. The service surgeons general would become advisers to the service chiefs and secretaries as well as the Defense Health Agency, while DHA, led by a three-star, would oversee four two-star organizations: military treatment facilities, personnel and training; current DHA duties; and medical force readiness…………

**Senate Committee Directs DOD to Develop Plan to Sustain Training Ranges**

[Link to article](http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/senate-committee-directs-dod-to-develop-plan-to-sustain-training-ranges/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=9cd8cb4b79-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8f45e8-9cd8cb4b79-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29)

Defense Communities 360 © May 24, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Defense Department should develop a strategic plan to provide the necessary resources for infrastructure improvements at national test and training ranges and tackle encroachment issues, according to the report accompanying the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill passed by the Senate Armed Services Committee earlier this month. The committee cited the critical role training ranges play in providing “full-spectrum readiness” for all services, including large live fire training exercises. “National test and training ranges such as the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC), Pacific Missile Range
Facility, Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR), Utah Test and Training Range (UTTR), China Lake Complex, White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), the National Training Center (NTC), Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range (EGTTR), as well as other United States-based ranges, are critical to hosting realistic service, joint, and coalition large force training exercises such as RED FLAG, RED FLAG–Alaska, Northern Edge, Army Network Integration Evaluation, and other large force training exercises,” according to the report.

Other Items of Interest –

**Coordination key to state cyber responses**

[https://gcn.com/articles/2016/05/26/states-cyber-response.aspx](https://gcn.com/articles/2016/05/26/states-cyber-response.aspx)

GCN © May 25, 2016

By Mark Pomerleau

Several state officials came to Capitol Hill on May 24 to discuss their cybersecurity challenges and provide Congress with insights into their practices and successes. Like their federal counterparts, state cybersecurity teams are challenged by the velocity and variety of threats, which are growing in sophistication, Connecticut CIO Mark Raymond told a joint House Homeland Security subcommittee panel. “The top three are malicious code, hacktivism and zero-day attacks.” One way to address those threats is through automated cybersecurity solutions, which can help in two ways, said Raymond, who also serves as the vice president of the National Association of State CIOs. They can act on threat data at machine speed, and they can help reduce demands on government security staff, which are already in short supply. Uneven software quality also puts strain on cybersecurity teams, according to retired Brig. Gen. Steven Spano, who now runs the Center for Internet Security. Acknowledging that for software vendors “to get the speed and agility” they need to compete, beta releases are inevitable. Yet “many of the software products are coming out of the box with inherent vulnerabilities… and require a lot of lift” to sustain them, he said.
BRAC –

DOD Needs a BRAC Focused on Slashing Costs, Berteau Says

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/general/dod-needs-a-brac-focused-on-slashing-costs-berteau-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=5873ec7ec7-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-5873ec7ec7-55784537&ct=t%28RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN%29

Defense Communities © June 6, 2016

By Dan Cohen

A new round of base closures is urgently needed for the Pentagon to handle its growing responsibilities in the face of tight fiscal constraints, David Berteau, CEO of the Professional Services Council, a trade group that represents nearly 400 federal services contractors, said last week. “We desperately need another round of base closures,” said Berteau, who served as assistant secretary of defense for logistics and materiel readiness until joining the council in March, reported Politico. “And that round of base closures has to be done in such a way that is focuses on reductions that produce early and real savings, not on realignments that may make sense from a business point of view but won’t make sense from a budgetary point of view.”

Constituents to Congress: Let’s Get BRAC Over With

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/commentary/2016/06/06/constituents-congress-lets-get-brac-over/85479424/

Defense News © June 6, 2016

By James Durso

Deputy Secretary of Defense Bob Work has his work cut out for him. He recently delivered to Rep. Mac Thornberry, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, a report that says the Defense Department has 22 percent excess base capacity. His recommendation: “…the Department of Defense (DoD) must stop wasting money on unnecessary infrastructure. We must right-size our infrastructure, capture the savings, and devote these savings to readiness, modernization, and other more pressing national security requirements.” Thornberry, R-Texas, immediately replied that the report was late and the troop baseline it used was in the future (2019, when the force will be smaller) and not the past (2012) as Congress requested, so it “simply doesn’t tell us what we need to know.”

DOD Budget–

McCain Amendment to Reignite Debate over Use of War Funds

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/mccain-amendment-to-reignite-debate-over-use-of-war-funds/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=f24da93607-
When Senate debate on the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill begins next week, one of the most high-profile amendments lawmakers consider will be Armed Services Chairman John McCain’s proposal to provide an additional $18 billion in war spending to pay for new weapons and higher Army force levels that the Obama administration did not request. The Arizona Republican’s amendment would “reverse short-sighted cuts” and “halt dangerous reductions to the end strength of the military services” by adding the funds to the department’s uncapped overseas contingency operations account, according to a written statement. Earlier, McCain had said he would provide the extra funds by seeking to raise the statutory cap on defense spending……..

The Senate Appropriations Committee is mandating that the $59 billion it allocated for DOD’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account only be spent on purposes directly or indirectly related to operations overseas, a stance that places the panel at odds with the other defense committees. The House-passed defense authorization bill and the House Appropriations defense spending bill both divert at least $15 billion to base budget needs not requested by the Obama administration. The fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill the Senate began debating on Monday does not rely on the OCO account to restore base budget shortfalls in readiness and modernization. Senate Armed Services Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.), however, plans to offer an amendment adding $18 billion to the war fund to pay for increased end strength and training, and new weapons left out of the Pentagon’s budget request……..

MacDill AFB –

**USSOCOM continues to advance TALOS development**

Janes © June 1, 2016
By Andrew White
US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) officials have revealed a list of requirements for its secretive Tactical Assault Light Operator Suit (TALOS) programme at the 2016 Special Operations Forces Industry Conference (SOFIC). According to head of the Joint Acquisition Task Force (JATF)-TALOS, US Navy commander Anthony Baker, USSOCOM commander General Tony Thomas was briefed on the latest developments at the event, subsequently granting continued "top level support" for the programme. First established by Admiral Bill McRaven in 2014 with the intention of developing an advanced combat suit prototype by August 2018, the TALOS concept aims to improve the "comprehensive ballistic protection, situational awareness, and surgical precision and lethality" of operators, particularly relevant to Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT)…….

**Traffic backups a concern at MacDill AFB**


Fox 13 News © June 2, 2016

By Shayla Reaves

Lawmakers, military, and transportation officials met to discuss traffic congestion at MacDill Air Force Base Thursday. Nearly 6,000 vehicles arrive through the base’s four main entrances every morning, with the highest traffic volume between 6:45 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. The wait can sometimes last more than half an hour. “There seems to be a remarkable differentiation between the Dale Mabry gate and some of the other gates. Some of that is simply a result of where people choose to live. That then becomes a factor in a traffic study,” said Congressman David Jolly. “Obviously people are not going to move because of wait times at certain gates, but how can you begin to create redirection given where people originate?” Congressman Jolly, Senator Jack Latvala, and FDOT Director of Transportation Operations Brian McKishnie participated in a meeting with MacDill officials and brainstormed solutions. “The real initiative this morning is to validate the wait times that they have seen,” said Congressman Jolly of conversations with MacDill leaders…….

**Lawmakers present ways to cut traffic backups at MacDill Air Force Base**


WFLA © June 2, 2016

By Ryan Hughes

State and government leaders met Thursday morning to discuss ways to ease traffic congestion around the entrances to MacDill Air Force Base in South Tampa. For years, traffic has backed up at the base’s four entrances, mainly the entrance at the Dale Mabry gate. “It’s kind of crazy because it takes an extra hour for us to get up and come from Temple Terrace,” said Eddie Anderson, who drops off his wife every day at the base. Military leaders, U.S. Rep. David Jolly, R-Florida, and state Sen. Jack Latvala want things to change. They just asked the Florida Department of Transportation to begin a year-long study that’ll look at ways to fix the mess…….
MacDill expected to weather delay in Air Force tanker delivery


Tampa Bay Times © June 4, 2016

There is a new delay in the launch of new KC-46 Pegasus aerial refueling tankers but it should not affect MacDill Air Force Base, said U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor, who has been leading the charge to bring the new planes to the base and obtain additional older ones. MacDill wasn't selected for the first round of the new tankers, but it is line to get more of the older KC-135 tanker planes they're replacing. This is despite Boeing's new issues with refueling booms on the KC-46 tanker planes now in development, Castor said in a statement to the *Tampa Bay Times*. "Over the next decade, MacDill is well-positioned to attract additional KC-135s, related missions and even the KC-46 as they are developed through 2027," Castor said. Adding more KC-135s to MacDill's existing fleet of the tankers required the eviction of another unit now stationed at the base — the Aircraft Operations Center of the National Oceanic Administration and its hurricane hunting fleet. Moving eight KC-135s to MacDill will bring its total number of the tankers to 24, shared between the 6th Air Mobility Wing and the 927th Air Refueling Wing.

US  Southern Command –

Southcom Commander: Illicit Networks Are Region’s Greatest Security Challenge


Defense.gov © June 2, 2016

By Cheryl Pellerin

In Latin America and the Caribbean the biggest security challenge confronting the United States comes from illicit networks used by criminals and terrorists, U.S. Southern Command commander Navy Adm. Kurt W. Tidd said yesterday during a media roundtable at the Pentagon. Southcom is responsible for Defense Department security cooperation in the 45 nations and territories of Central and South America and the Caribbean Sea, an area of 16 million square miles. During any given week there are up to 7,000 service members in the region, Tidd said. Army Sgt. King David, a CH-47 Chinook crew chief with the 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment, observes the San Cristobal volcano, one of at least six active volcanoes in Nicaragua, while transporting the Joint Task Force-Bravo U.S. Southern Command Situational Assessment Team, May 19, 2016.

NS Mayport –
Naval Station Mayport: always taking hurricane prep seriously


WOKV © May 31, 2016

By Gene Wexler

It’s safe to say that some people will disregard warnings to prepare for Hurricane Season every year. At Naval Station Mayport, this is never the case. This year’s annual hurricane exercise (HURREX) began May 9 and ran two weeks through May 20. Known as “Citadel Gate,” the exercise consisted of two simulated hurricanes threatening the East Coast, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean coastal regions. “We make it as real as possible and really make everybody think through everything they’re gonna do, and that’s where a lot of questions are asked and answered. And that’s how you get prepared,” says Al Iannacone, director of personnel support detachment at Mayport.

Armstrong Relieves Hancock As DESRON 40 Commodore

http://mayportmirror.jacksonville.com/military-mayport-mirror/2016-06-01/story/armstrong-relieves-hancock-desron-40-commodore#.V1AwN-Q03Vs

Mayport Mirror © June 1, 2016

Capt. Errin Armstrong relieved Capt. Sam Hancock as Commodore of Destroyer Squadron 40 (COMDESRON 40) during a Change of Command ceremony on May 25 at Ocean Breeze Conference Center. Rear Adm. Ronald Boxall was the guest speaker at the event. Armstrong is a graduate of the University of Illinois with a BA in Political Science and was commissioned in 1991 via the NROTC Program. Armstrong’s sea duty assignments include Deputy Commander of COMDESRON 40, commanding officer of USS Pinckney (DDG 91), and executive officer of USS Rodney M. Davis (FFG 60). He served his Department Head tours in Destroyer Squadron One and USS Rodney M. Davis (FFG 60) and his Division Officer tours in USS Ouellet (FF 1077) and USS Leftwich (DD 984). While ashore as a Full Time Support (FTS) Officer, Armstrong served as the senior FTS detailer for Surface Warfare, SEAL, Submarine, and EOD Officers. His assignments also included: Branch Head, Strategic Planning Division, Surface Force Operational Support Officer on the Staff of the Chief of Navy Reserve (OPNAV N095); Deputy N1 at Naval Surface Forces Pacific, Commanding Officer of Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Center Peoria, IL, Assistant Professor of Naval Science and Recruiting Officer at the University of Arizona.

BAE Systems contracted to maintain and modernise two US Navy ships


Naval-technology.com © June 1, 2016

BAE Systems has received two contracts, worth $61.7m, from the US Navy to repair and maintain two vessels based in Jacksonville, Florida. The two contracts include options that
if exercised will bring the total value of the project to $68.6m. Under the first $32.5m contract, BAE will assume the responsibility of supporting the docking selected restricted availability of the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Farragut (DDG 99). "Work under the contract will be performed at the Mayport Naval Station, and is expected to be completed by May next year." The 509.5ft-long destroyer is scheduled to be dry-docked this summer and will undergo a series of repair works including structural and tank repairs, propulsion system repairs, ventilation, and auxiliary systems repairs, as well as preservation of crew habitability systems and spaces……..

USS Lassen makes Mayport her new home


By Stephanie Brown

Another boost for Naval Station Mayport. The USS Lassen (DDG 82) will arrive in Jacksonville Monday, formally making Mayport her new home. The USS Lassen and her more than 300 Sailors have spent the past ten years on forward deployment in Japan. “The Lassen crew, they’re tried and tested,” says Naval Station Mayport Public Affairs Officer Bill Austin. The ship left Japan in January and served a final patrol with the US 7th Fleet. Once in Mayport, she will upgrade combat systems as part of a greater modernization……

Tyndall AFB –

Tyndall updates visitor regulations for government-owned property


WJHG © June 2, 2016

By Samantha Read

Tyndall Air Force Base has updated regulations for people planning to visit the eastern part of Shell Island, Red Fish Point, and Crooked Island. Officials said for as long as they can remember two things have been required for those traveling to the areas, a recreational permit and what's known as a Defense Biometric Identification, or DBIDS, Card. That won't be necessary this year. "So essentially we eliminated the requirement to have a DBIDS card and went to only having the recreational permit specifically for Shell and Crooked Island," said Lieutenant Colonel Richard Martin of the 325th Civil Engineer Squadron Commander at Tyndall Air Force Base……

NSA Panama City –

Military and Education come together


WJHG © June 3, 2016
By Kayla Gaskins

NSA Panama City highlighted the importance of its relationship with Bay District Schools Friday at the 6th annual Education Partnership Awards Ceremony. More than 70 volunteers from the Navy Base and 13 educators from Bay District Schools were recognized. This year alone volunteers from NSA-PC spent 3500 hours impacting the lives of more than 10,000 students. Volunteers do everything from mentoring and tutoring, to helping with field days and coaching youth baseball. "Every time I go to the school there's at least 10 kids who will run up and say 'Mr. Navy Man' and they'll hug me," said CS2 Ross Goodrich who volunteers at Hiland Park Elementary. NSA-PC also honored educators who go above and beyond to help military children feel safe and welcome in Bay County. Military families move on average every 2-3 years. Between kindergarten and high school graduation kids will normally attend six to nine different schools........

NAS Pensacola –

**NAS Pensacola limits access to base for Blue Angels return**


Naval Air Station Pensacola has limited access to the base because of the anticipated return of the Blue Angels demonstration team following yesterday's crash at a Tennessee air show. In an news release, the base said access to the Naval Air Station Pensacola is limited to Department of Defense card holders. The release said the National Aviation Museum, Pensacola Lighthouse and Fort Barrancas have temporarily closed for the team's return........

Florida National Guard –

**Are Florida Residents Prepared For A Major Hurricane?**

[http://news.wjct.org/post/are-florida-residents-prepared-major-hurricane](http://news.wjct.org/post/are-florida-residents-prepared-major-hurricane)

WJCT © May 31, 2016

By Ryan Benk

The state of Florida hasn't been hit with a hurricane in more than a decade, and that has state emergency managers concerned residents might not be prepared for the worst. At the Camp Blanding National Guard base southwest of Jacksonville, a group of large, high-tech RVs are huddled in a parking lot amid pouring rain. State Emergency Response Team spokesman Aaron Gallagher pulls open one of the vehicle’s heavy, metal doors. “This is the mobile command vehicle. Inside here it gives us the capability to bring our operations in the field,” he said. Computer monitors displaying storm tracks and weather forecasts line the walls. Otherwise, it looks like a typical office trailer: A meeting area at one end and a copy machine sitting at the other end..........
Florida Guardsmen Air Assault into History

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/200032/florida-guardsmen-air-assault-into-history#.V1bP4uQ03V5

DVIDS © May 25, 2016

Just two months after becoming the first FANG Airmen to graduate from the Army’s Air Assault Course, five 290 JCSS members incorporated their new skill set into their training exercise at Fleming Key, Florida. The mission allowed the 290 JCSS to demonstrate the capability to forward deploy tactical communications Airmen and their equipment by helicopter to an otherwise unreachable destination. “This capability is a force multiplier for the Florida National Guard and the State of Florida because these skills could be used not only in their overseas mission tasks, but also responding to domestic emergencies within our state helping Florida’s citizens,” said Brig. Gen. James Eifert, Florida Air National Guard commander. “The Airmen at the 290th have always been high speed, and the fact they are the first Air unit to lead this effort comes as no surprise.”

NAS Whiting Field –

Navy-county land swap will benefit both


Pensacola News-Journal © June 4, 2016

By Will Isern

Escambia County and the U.S. Navy will swap land that could spur job growth in the private sector and enable Navy helicopter pilots to train in the seclusion of central Santa Rosa County, safely away from the encroaching growth in Escambia County. Escambia will swap a 640-acre site it owns in Santa Rosa County off Ard Field Road in exchange for a Navy helicopter training field, known as Outlying Landing Field 8, located next to the Navy Federal Credit Union campus on Nine Mile Road in Escambia County. Whiting Field Naval Air Station will use the field in Santa Rosa County to replace the OLF-8 training site, use of which is being hindered by nearby development. Escambia County hopes to turn OLF-8 into a commerce park in the hope it will generate thousands of jobs.

NAS Key West –

910th launches valley civic leaders to tour South Florida military installations
The 910th Airlift Wing, based here, launched a Civic Leader Tour (CLT) consisting of 35 civic leaders and their military escorts to Naval Air Station (NAS) Key West and Homestead Air Reserve Base (ARB), Florida, April 28-29, 2016. The tour departed Youngstown Air Reserve Station (YARS) in the early morning of April 28, heading south aboard a 910th C-130H Hercules aircraft for a two-day, one-night event designed to give attendees a better understanding of the Air Force Reserve and Joint Operation missions and how they differ from base to base around the country. During the flight to the Florida Keys, attendees were able to visit the aircraft flight deck and interact with aircrew and loadmasters as mission requirements allowed…….
DOD Budget–

Senate Democrats to Counter McCain’s Proposal to Boost Defense Spending


Defense Communities 360 © June 8, 2016

By Dan Cohen

In response to Senate Armed Services Chair John McCain’s (R-Ariz.) proposal to add $18 billion to DOD’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account in an effort to skirt the statutory cap on defense spending, Senate Democrats are planning to offer an amendment to the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill calling for a similar increase in the OCO account that would be allocated to a range of domestic programs. The Democratic proposal — which is being led by Jack Reed (R.I.), the top Democrat on Armed Services, and Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), the top Democrat on the Appropriations Committee — is aimed at restoring the parity between defense and non-defense spending that last October’s budget deal followed, reported CQ Roll Call. Democrats indicated the outcome of votes on the two amendments likely would play a role in appropriations as well. “If the Republicans pass the defense amendment but then block a similar increase to middle class programs, they will have broken the budget agreement, and the appropriations process will come to a grinding halt. They know that,” Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) told reporters……

McConnell aims to wrap up defense bill


The Hill © June 8, 2016

By Jordain Carney

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (Ky.) is inching the Senate toward the finish line on an annual wide-ranging defense policy bill. The Senate Republican leader moved to end debate on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on Wednesday night. The $602 billion defense authorization broadly outlines policy for the Pentagon and military branches. Unless senators can get a deal to speed things up, McConnell's move sets up an initial vote as soon as Friday. Senators will need 60 votes to move forward with the defense legislation. Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) said Wednesday evening that he hopes senators will be able to avoid a rare Friday session. "We are negotiating several contentious issues, which if those negotiations are successful, I would anticipate a number of votes tomorrow morning. If we are unable to, then it's going to stretch out into the afternoon or even the next day for final passage," said McCain, who chairs the Armed Services Committee……
NAS Jacksonville –

**HSM-60 Jaguars**

[Link to Article](http://jaxairnews.jacksonville.com/military-mayport-mirror-jax-air-news/2016-06-08/story/hsm-60-jaguars#.V1lsOaI03Vs)

Jax Air News © June 8, 2016

By Julie M. Lucas

Naval Air Station Jacksonville became the home of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 60 in February when the reserve squadron moved from Naval Station Mayport, its home of 15 years. The Commanding Officer of HSM 60 is Cmdr. Steven Smith. The command triad is completed by Command Master Chief CMDCM Sal Lisitsin and Executive Officer Cmdr. James Grieco. The squadron is assigned seven MH-60R Seahawks. “The space here at NAS Jax is great—everyone is spread out and can have their own computer and desk,” said Lt. Cmdr. Tracy Parsons, training officer. The “Jaguars” were formerly known as Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light (HSL) 60. The command of nearly 200 deploys a small group of people at a time and is comprised of full time support, Selected Reserve personnel who drill one weekend per month and Individual Ready Reserve. This can lead to unique challenges, having personnel who fly in monthly, some from as far as Montana…….

NS Mayport –

**Lassen Arrives In New Homeport**

[Link to Article](http://mayportmirror.jacksonville.com/military-mayport-mirror/2016-06-08/story/lassen-arrives-new-homeport#.V1lrQqI03Vs)

Mayport Mirror © June 8, 2016

After being forward deployed to Japan for nearly 10 years, USS Lassen (DDG 82) arrived in her new homeport of Mayport, June 6. A decade ago, Lassen participated in her first 7th Fleet Annual Exercise, in 2006; she completed her most recent deployment there late last year. Upon completion of her decade-long assignment with the Forward Deployed Naval Forces (FDFN), the crew and their ship was lauded by Capt. Christopher J. Sweeney, commander, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15. “Her ability to support the mission improved our relationships with key allies and became an integral part of the DESRON’s presence in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region,” Sweeney said. “Lassen’s performance in the 7th Fleet was beyond expectations.” “It was a bitter-sweet moment leaving Yokosuka after being forward deployed there for the past 10 years,” said Cmdr. Robert Francis, Lassen’s commanding officer. “It was an honor to serve as part of the Forward Deployed Naval Forces during such a pivotal time in our history.”…….

**USS Zephyr Returns from 4th Fleet Patrol**
The Cyclone-class Patrol Coastal USS Zephyr (PC 8) returned today from her first 45-day patrol in the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations. Zephyr patrolled the 4th Fleet Area of Responsibility (AOR) since Apr. 22, 2016, conducting counter illicit trafficking (CIT) operations in support of Operation MARTILLO. Operation MARTILLO, a joint, international law enforcement and military operation involving U.S., European and Western Hemisphere partner nations, targets illicit trafficking routes in the waters off Central America. U.S. Navy forces support the Joint Interagency Task Force-South-led operation in the Western Caribbean and Eastern Pacific through available air and surface assets. The 45-day patrol was Zephyr’s first deployment since she transferred service from the Coast Guard to the Navy to help fill the gap left by the decommissioning of the remaining Oliver Hazard Perry Frigates last year. Three PCs, homeported in Mayport, Florida, have been outfitted with advanced capabilities including a U.S. Coast Guard Over the Horizon Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (OTH-RHIB), which allows small teams of U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement personnel to travel a greater distance from the ship utilizing their own radar.

Tyndall AFB –

**Tyndall officials clarify Shell Island permit questions**


News Herald © June 7, 2016

By Katie Landeck

With the summer season heating up, confusion still lingers over recreation permit requirements to access parts of Shell Island owned by the Air Force. Tyndall Air Force Base in May updated its Hunting, Fishing and General Recreation guidelines. Officials removed a previous requirement that all recreational visitors to the base — anyone hunting, fishing or using Tyndall beaches, for example — carry a Defense Biometric Identification Data Systems (DBIDS) card but kept in place a requirement that visitors have a base recreational permit.

NAS Pensacola –

**Blue Angels jet, Fat Albert fly fallen aviator home**

A single Blue Angel jet and the team’s C-130 Fat Albert transport plane flew over downtown Pensacola, Pensacola Beach and Perdido Key early Tuesday evening as the team transported the body of pilot Jeff Kuss to Pensacola Naval Air Station. Blue Angels Lead Solo Ryan Chamberlain escorted Fat Albert in the flyover to honor Kuss, a 32-year-old Marine captain who died Thursday when his jet crashed at an airshow in Smyrna, Tenn. Blue Angels Commanding Officer Cmdr. Ryan Bernacchi released the following statement……..

NAS Whiting Field –

**Land Swap on Florida Panhandle to Overcome Encroachment, Spur Economic Development**


Defense Communities 360 © June 9, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Navy and Escambia County, Fla., have agreed on a land swap that will allow Naval Air Station Whiting Field to replace an outlying landing field (OLF) threatened by encroachment and the county to turn the airfield into a commerce park. Escambia County commissioners approved the exchange last week, but the deal won’t become official until the county finishes improving the 640-acre site it purchased in neighboring Santa Rosa County, where the installation is located. To get the new OLF ready for Navy helicopter training, the county will plant grass, and install eight landing strips, two fuel pits, 16 gravel landing spots and 12 nighttime landing spots, reported the Pensacola News Journal…….

DOD Issues –

**McCain disavows Northern Command plan as he takes more fire**

http://gazette.com/mccain-disavows-northern-command-plan-as-he-takes-more-fire/article/1577744

Colorado Springs Gazette © June 7, 2016

By Tom Roeder

Arizona U.S. Sen. John McCain is taking fire from a Republican rival over an idea he's now renounced, for at least this year, to combine U.S. Northern Command in Colorado Springs with U.S. Southern Command in Florida. Alex Melusky, who is facing McCain in the Aug. 30 primary for the Senate seat, accused McCain of weakening America's defenses and called on the memory of Ronald Reagan and "peace through strength." "Our country is facing many international threats which harm our way of life and having a strong military is crucial in dealing with these problems," Melusky wrote in an email to the Gazette. "While we should be increasing our military’s budget and arsenal, Senator McCain’s
proposal would only hurt our country, our families, and jeopardize national security." Melusky is a back-bencher in the crowded primary that has McCain facing a strong challenge from former Arizona state Sen. Kelli Ward. McCain staffers on Tuesday said that while McCain has talked about merging the command he wouldn't push it this year……

Defense bill sparks ISIS war fight


By Jordain Carney

An annual defense policy bill is sparking a fight over authorizing the war against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) and Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) filed legislation on Tuesday that would give the administration authority for three years to fight ISIS. Their measure is being offered as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). “Nearly two years into an executive war against ISIL, the unwillingness of this Congress to authorize the war not only shows a lack of resolve, it sets a dangerous precedent,” Kaine said in a statement. “It’s not hard to imagine a future president using this inaction to justify the hasty and unpredictable initiation of military action against new enemies on new fronts without the permission of Congress. The bipartisan proposal would limit the president's ability to use "significant U.S. ground troops" to fight ISIS unless they are protecting the lives of U.S. citizens from an "imminent threat," according to a breakdown of the amendment from Kaine's office…….

The F-22 Raptor: Back From the Grave?


By Justin Bachman

The Pentagon collected its final F-22 Raptor from Lockheed Martin Corp. four years ago. Amid the Cold War’s end and shrinking defense budgets, the most advanced fighter jet ever built was deemed both unnecessary and unaffordable. Now, Congress has ignited a flicker of hope for fans of the pricey plane. A House subcommittee asked the U.S. Air Force to investigate what it would cost to put the tactical fighter back into production. By many accounts, no other aircraft can match the F-22’s range of capabilities—many of which remain classified—for speed, agility, stealth, and battlefield sensor power. With 183 in service, a reboot could mean, theoretically, the delivery of 194 additional planes that were planned before the program was canceled. But at roughly $67 billion, the F-22 was ferociously expensive even by military contracting standards. The per-hour cost to fly it is higher than that of most of the Pentagon’s air fleet, including the newer, equally costly F-35 Lightning II……..
June 24, 2016

BRAC –

House Democrats’ Bill Would Reform BRAC Process, Authorize New Round in 2019


Defense Communities 360 © June 22, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The next round of base closures would be held in 2019 and incorporate a series of reforms aimed at increasing congressional oversight and emphasizing savings, under legislation introduced Tuesday by Rep. Adam Smith (Wash.), Rep. Sam Farr (Calif.) and five other House Democrats. The measure’s reforms are intended to address lawmakers’ complaints about the escalating cost of implementing the 2005 round and the prolonged wait for the recommendations to generate net savings. The 2016 Military Infrastructure Consolidation Efficiency Act would authorize the Defense Department to consolidate, close and realign its infrastructure while maintaining sufficient capacity to support contingencies and potential force structure growth in the future, according to a press release. “This bill would create a better version of the BRAC process, introducing reforms that address the complaints from the 2005 base closure round and allowing DOD to make these kinds of targeted, smart reductions,” said Smith, ranking member on the House Armed Services Committee........

DOD Budget–

Negotiations over Defense Bill Likely to Last into the Fall


Defense Communities 360 © June 21, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Negotiations between the House and Senate Armed Services committees to reconcile competing versions of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill likely will last into the fall despite leaders’ hopes to reach a deal on a conference agreement before Congress leaves for a lengthy recess in July. The Senate approved its annual defense policy bill last week, months earlier than in recent years, but a number of substantive differences between the two versions can be expected to prevent conference discussions from wrapping up quickly,
reported CQ Roll Call. One of the biggest differences is the House bill’s reliance on the overseas contingency operations (OCO) account to make up for shortfalls in readiness and modernization. That version uses the uncapped OCO account to pay for $18 billion of base budget needs not funded in the Obama administration’s request, including more weapons systems and higher force levels. The maneuver means the next administration would need to request supplementary war funds before the end of April………

Democrats Looking for Short CR, Omnibus to Fund Government Next Year


Defense Communities 360 © June 22, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Given the strong likelihood that Congress needs to pass a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government running past Sept. 30, House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (Md.) told reporters that Democrats would favor a brief stopgap followed by an omnibus spending bill to fund the government through the remainder of fiscal 2017. “I do not expect the appropriations process to be done,” Hoyer said Tuesday. “I think there will be very, very few, if any, bills that get to the president and the president, so far, has indicated he is going to veto the bills that have passed the House, if they get through the Senate.”

Democrats’ preference would be for the CR to run from Oct. 1 through early December, with the expectation that lawmakers would pass an omnibus during a lame duck session, reported CQ Roll Call. “I think we ought to do what we did last year, at worst,” Hoyer said, referring to last December’s $1.15 trillion omnibus agreement………

Conference Agreement Reached on Milcon Spending Bill

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/conference-agreement-reached-on-milcon-spending-bill/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=85c1c13738-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-85c1c13738-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)

Defense Communities 360 © June 23, 2016

By Dan Cohen

House and Senate Republicans reached an agreement Wednesday night on a conference report for a $7.9 billion military construction-Veterans Affairs spending bill and a $1.1 billion response to the Zika virus, before House lawmakers approved the report in a vote early Thursday morning. The mostly party-line vote overcame both Democratic opposition to the spending package over the level of funding to fight Zika, as well as a sit-in by Democrats demanding a vote on gun control legislation on Wednesday. The vote on the conference report came after the House convened for a new legislative day, reported CQ Roll Call. The chamber recessed until July 5 following the vote, a change forced upon GOP leaders by the sit-in. The conference report now will go to the Senate, where it also will face Democratic opposition. If the Senate clears the legislation, there’s a possibility President Obama, who had requested $1.9 billion to address Zika, would veto it. The
conference report was the result of an agreement between Republican conferees, with Democrats complaining they were left out of the negotiations.

Space Coast –

**Missile test launch site completed on Florida's Space Coast**


Orlando Sentinel © June 17, 2016

By Marco Santana

A new testing facility for submarine missile systems has been completed on Florida’s Space Coast. Military, space industry and economic officials on Thursday announced that they had finished work on the Strategic Weapons Systems Ashore, roughly four years after the groundbreaking. The site has redeveloped what had been a test launch site in the 1970s. Space Florida, U.S. Navy, United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense and the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast issued the joint press release.

MacDill AFB –

**MacDill to suspend flights two months for runway resurfacing**


Tampa Bay Times © June 20, 2016

MacDill Air Force Base and the skies above it will be a much quieter place this fall. The 75-year-old installation, normally boisterous and booming with the sounds of planes taking off and landing, is having its runways resurfaced. And that means flying operations will cease for two months beginning around the middle of October. MacDill is home to 16 KC-135 Stratotanker aerial refueling jets, which are flown by the 6th Air Mobility Wing and the 927th Air Refueling Wing. They are helping refuel the fight against the so-called Islamic State jihadi group, among other missions. The work also will displace three C-37 twin-engine jets belonging to the 6th Air Mobility Wing. Military versions of the civilian Gulfstream V, they transport high-ranking government and Defense Department officials. Also displaced will be fighter planes and other visiting aircraft taking part in training missions around the region.

NAS Jacksonville –

**Aviation Authority prepares as Navy leaves Cecil – again**


Jacksonville Business Journal © June 17, 2016

By Jensen Werley
Over the next week, Navy personnel and aircraft will be departing Cecil Airport and return to Naval Air Station Jacksonville. In May of last year, about 4,500 Navy personnel, over 150 vehicles and more than 60 aircraft transitioned to Cecil Airport while the NAS Jax runways were renovated. To accommodate the Navy, the Jacksonville Aviation Authority leased out five buildings and over 1 million square feet of ramp and apron area for aircraft parking. The Navy installed two fabric hangars and many portable buildings, and existing Cecil tenants leased out some of their hangar and ramp space. The control tower also operated nearly 24/7, marking the first time in history Navy controllers were certified at a U.S. civilian airport, wrote Cecil Executive Director Rusty Chandler in a debriefing he shared with the Business Journal.

Navy planes, personnel ready to return to NAS Jax


News4Jax © June 17, 2016

By Crystal Moyer

Thousands of Navy personnel and the aircraft they work with will soon return to NAS Jacksonville. For the past year, they have worked out of Cecil Airport while a $50 million runway renovation project was completed. Cecil Airport hosted a farewell luncheon Friday for sailors and Navy aviators before the sendoff. The civilian general aviation facility had to add staff, make extra room and add security to accommodate the more than 2,000 Navy personnel and about 50 aircraft. "It's been very busy, very hectic, and that's something Cecil wasn't used to," Jacksonville Aviation Authority CEO Steven Grossman said. Navy Capt. Howard Wanamaker said it took a lot of planning to move seven squadrons to their temporary airfield.

NS Mayport –

Navy littoral combat warship to trade some speed for firepower, armor


Florida Times-Union © June 19, 2016

The Navy spent hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to fulfill its need for speed with a new class of fast and agile warships capable of zipping along at highway speeds. It turns out speed is overrated. The Navy has learned lessons from the light-and-speedy littoral combat ships: Upcoming ships will trade some speed in favor of more weapons and heavier armor. Rear Adm. Peter Fanta, director of surface warfare, said the goal is to increase the offensive punch of all warships from the biggest to the smallest. For the littoral combat ship, that'll begin with the installation of over-the-horizon missiles this summer. "Each ship that I now have — I have to make more lethal because I cannot build ships fast enough, or enough of them," Fanta told The Associated Press. Two versions of the warships were sped into production to meet the Navy's goal of an affordable, fast ship to operate in shallow coastal — or littoral — waters. The ships, which are capable of topping 50 mph, utilize steerable waterjets instead of propellers and rudders to operate in shallow water. The Navy plans to bring eight ships to Mayport Naval Station by 2020.
 NAS Pensacola –

**Blue Angels Training Ramping Up**


WKRG © June 20, 2016

By Debbie Williams

Not ready to go public yet, the Blue Angels practiced twice on Monday. Once in the morning and again in the afternoon. Linda Kichler heard the roar of the jets and had to stop and watch. “Every time we hear ’em, we come here cause we know they are around here practicing.” After resuming training flights last week the team seems to be ramping up their practices. “It’s pretty cool,” said Kathy Kluvsner from Indiana. “I know they are around home some. We just never got around to going to see them. We might have to try that.” Still, it’s not clear when they will get back to a normal schedule including the open practice and autograph sessions at the Naval Aviation Museum onboard NAS Pensacola. So for now, fans will have to settle for a glimpse above the tree line, a loop seen in the distance or an abbreviated fly-by. “I think they were pretty cool,” said Cade Kichler. “They were close enough where I could see the numbers.”

 Florida National Guard –

**927th CSSB unites units for simulated combat training**


DVIDS © June 14, 2016

By SSG Karen Kozub

For the first time in 15 years, all of the companies that make up one of the most diverse battalions in the Florida Army National Guard, came together for a culminating, realistic training exercise at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, Florida’s premier training site. The units assigned to the 927th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, is comprised of the 153rd Financial Management Support Unit, the 631st Support Maintenance Company, the 256th Area Support Medical Company and the 144th Transportation Company, which joined forces to execute training missions while operating under stressful conditions that simulated real-world combat environments over a four-day annual training period last week. After taking command of the 927th last spring, Lt. Col. Geri Swarts immediately began preparing her multi-purposed units for this consolidated battalion-level annual training. Her intent was to conduct a training exercise that required all of the 927th’s subordinate companies to work collectively within their leadership channels and across the many units that comprise her battalion.

NAS Whiting Field –

**Naval Air Station Whiting Field sailor credits family for recovery after explosion**
Master-at-arms 1 E3 Daniel Devine, stationed at Naval Air Station Whiting Field, said his experiences overseas made him realize how much he wanted to be a father. “The reason I kept going back to Afghanistan was because of the kids over there … (to) see how little people have around the world; kids running around the desert in bare feet, no pants,” he said. “There’s innocence in war; kids over there being raised in it. It’s all they know. They’re told by the hierarchy to stay away from the Americans.” Devine wanted to change children’s perception of Americans, so he would bring them gifts. “If I went there, I gave them (candy) and art supplies; pens,” he said. “I love the Navy, and deploying and fighting for freedom, and showing we’re not big, mean people. I like showing kids we can play soccer in the middle of the road … little things, with strangers you don’t know (can affect) little ones growing up, (like) not becoming a bomb maker. That could save a life. It’s the circle of motivation.”

**Final T-6B training plane arrives at Whiting Field**

Whiting Field Naval Air Station celebrated a milestone on Tuesday with delivery of its final T-6B Texan II training aircraft. Hundreds of Navy, Marine and other military aviation students have learned the fundamentals of flight in the T-6B since the Navy transitioned from the aging T-34C Turbo Mentor as its primary training aircraft in 2009. Tuesday’s delivery of the 148th and final T-6B included a special salute by two fire trucks that sprayed plumes of water in front of the newest plane as it taxied down the flight line. "The T-6B gives students the skills they need when they leave here. It does a very good job of introducing them to things like more-advanced avionics and the all-glass cockpit," said Navy Lt. Scott Urbashich, Whiting Field's primary instructor of the year. Urbashich took official delivery of the aircraft from representatives of the Wichita, Kan.-based Beechcraft Defense Company during a brief ceremony at the training wing hangar.

**DOD Issues –**

Defense Secretary Ash Carter wants to open the door for more “lateral entry” into the military's upper ranks, clearing the way for lifelong civilians with vital skills and strong
résumés to enter the officer corps as high as the O-6 paygrade. The idea is controversial, to say the very least. For many in the rank-and-file military, it seems absurd, a bewildering cultural change that threatens to upend many assumptions about military life and traditional career paths. But while it's not universally embraced, there is interest in Congress and among some of the military's uniformed leaders — even, they say, in exploring how the services could apply this concept to the enlisted force………….

Air Force Still Can Perform Its Missions without Substantial Growth in End Strength


Defense Communities 360 © June 21, 2016

By Dan Cohen

It may take between 40,000 and 60,000 additional airmen to fill gaps in some mission areas and expand capabilities in others, but the Air Force still can be expected to successfully execute its duties without such a dramatic increase in personnel, Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh said last week. “It will still be a highly stressed air force, it will still be busy, but we can get the job done,” Welsh, who is slated to retire on July 1, told Military Times. He noted that the service’s end strength is set to jump from 311,000 active-duty airmen to 317,000 by the end of this year, with plans to expand to 321,000 by the end of 2019. Welsh had been asked to explain why the Air Force needs up to 60,000 additional personnel, an estimate he had introduced in a speech last month…….

Other Items of Interest –

Pay, housing, healthcare, retirement: Congress faces thorny military decisions


Military Times © June 20, 2016

By Leo Shane III

Washington lawmakers will spend the next few months merging the separate House and Senate drafts of the annual defense authorization bill, including a host of thorny issues that could impact military personnel and their families for years to come. Among them are the size of next year's pay raise and long-term plans for housing stipends, issues that directly affect how much money service members will see in their bank accounts. And that’s just the start. The two bills contain dozens of pay and bonus re-authorizations, and outlines the Defense Department's overall spending plans for fiscal 2017…….
Graham Urges ADC Members to Go Toe to Toe with Lawmakers over Sequestration


Defense Communities 360 © June 22, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Pledging to go on a “political jihad” if Congress fails to undo the statutory spending caps that are hampering the nation’s military from meeting current and future threats, Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) urged attendees at the Defense Communities 2016 National Summit to make it their highest priority as well. “If you want to do something, don’t advocate for your base. Come up here and advocate for Congress not to decimate the military as a whole,” Graham said Tuesday during the Defense Community Awards Luncheon. “Over the last seven or eight years, we’ve cut $1 trillion out of the military. We’re on track to have the smallest Army since 1940, the smallest Navy since 1915 and the smallest Air Force in modern times. Normally we spend about 4.5 percent of GDP to defend this nation. We’re on track to spend 2.3 percent,” he said………. 
BRAC –

Base Closures Needed to Generate True Savings, Army Officials Say


Defense Communities 360 © June 27, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Senior Army officials on Thursday made the case that shedding some of the service’s inventory of unneeded facilities by closing installations and consolidating the Army’s activities is the only way to produce significant savings and improve installation support. “If we try to spread declining resources across all 155 installations the Army owns and operates, you are going to get mediocre services everywhere,” Andy Napoli, assistant for BRAC in the office of the assistant secretary for installations, energy and environment, told representatives from veterans service organizations, military service organizations and other nonprofits at a Pentagon summit. “If you can concentrate the resources at a smaller number of installations, you can get better service,” Napoli said…….

Air Force to Grade Installations on Military Value

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/air-force-to-grade-installations-on-military-value/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=57206e13a7-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-57206e13a7-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)

Defense Communities 360 © June 28, 2016

By Dan Cohen

With the timing of a new BRAC round uncertain, the Air Force has decided to conduct its own evaluations of its installations that possibly could be used to assign missions or prioritize investments in facilities. “We need a better understanding of the military value of our installations and to do some more strategic thinking about where to invest our limited resources,” Richard Hartley, principal deputy assistant secretary for installations, environment and energy, told the Defense Communities 2016 National Summit last week. “We don’t know exactly how we’re going to use this analysis yet. We don’t like this approach because it won’t get us the kind of savings a BRAC would, it’s not as transparent and it doesn’t give us the objectivity an independent commission does. But we can’t assume we’re going to be successful in getting a BRAC, so we’ve got to start a deeper look at our infrastructure,” Hartley said, reported Federal News Radio…….
More states supporting military base infrastructure as cuts loom


The Day (c) June 27, 2016

By Julia Bergman

More states are supporting the military installations within their borders as the Pentagon targets reducing excess capacity as a way to free up funds that could better be used on readiness and weapons modernization, a recent report by the Association of Defense Communities found. The report highlights several emerging trends involving state support of these installations, including an increase in the number of state military affairs organizations and more states spending taxpayer money on infrastructure projects at their military installations. Connecticut is a leader in this effort, according to Bob Ross, executive director of the state’s Office of Military Affairs and a member of the association’s board. "We have taken a holistic, comprehensive approach to this," Ross said, noting the "enduring support" of the governor, state agencies, the legislature, local governments and civic organizations. “While we continue to lead, other states are following our model and learning from our best practices,” he said. ……

DOD Budget–

Senate Blocks Milcon Conference Report from Advancing


Defense Communities 360 © June 29, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Senate on Tuesday blocked the conference agreement on the military construction-veterans affairs spending bill from advancing over Democratic opposition to the portion of the compromise legislation providing emergency funding to address the Zika virus. The 52-48 vote fell short of the 60 votes needed to cut off debate of the measure, leaving the bill’s ultimate fate uncertain. Senators from both parties predicted lawmakers would return to the negotiating table following the July Fourth recess, as Democrats have urged since House and Senate Republicans reached agreement on the conference report last week. Following Tuesday’s vote, however, Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn (R-Texas) said he did not expect Republicans to reopen negotiations on Zika funding, reported CQ Roll Call. “No,” he said. “We’re done.”……

MacDill AFB –

MacDill defenders hit the road to tout gains in education, traffic

Knowing the Pentagon aims to consolidate bases some day, local leaders are touting gains from their partnerships with MacDill Air Force Base in two diverse areas — educating children in military families and easing gridlock at MacDill gates. The subjects topped the agenda during a June 14 visit by the Tampa Bay Defense Alliance to Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, home of the headquarters command overseeing MacDill. The alliance, made up of civic leaders who work to help solve problems in the local defense community, hopes to showcase the value MacDill delivers here as home of U.S. Central Command, U.S. Special Operations Command, two Air Force refueling wings and dozens of other mission partners. Last week, the alliance sent a delegation to Washington, D.C., for the annual Association of Defense Committees summit, which organizers call a key event for defense communities, base leaders, Congress and industry.

NAS Jacksonville –

Evoqua to Provide Wastewater Treatment at NAS Jacksonville

Evoqua Water Technologies will provide wastewater treatment services to Naval Air Station Jacksonville under a five-year contract the Navy awarded the firm earlier this month. The firm will provide system design, installation and custom services that will treat inorganic and metal compounds in the installation’s industrial wastewater using its wastewater ion exchange technology, according to a press release. Under the contract, Evoqua will help the air station meet requirements for federal agencies to reduce potable and industrial water usage mandated by an executive order. The firm’s wastewater ion exchange technology is designed to reduce hexavalent chromium and remove cyanide from wastewater streams. The final stage of the wastewater treatment project will rely on an advanced oxidation process to recycle and reuse process water in the facility’s paint stripping area.

NAS Jacksonville runway reopens

Monday was a big day for Naval Air Station Jacksonville. After being closed for a year for renovations, the runway is now officially back open. It was the first major renovation for NAS Jacksonville’s runway in half a century, and a special ceremony was held for the occasion. Aircraft after aircraft took to the sky afterward from NAS Jacksonville once
again. For Navy officials overseeing the progress of the project, this has been a long-time coming. "It's hard to imagine and hard to believe that we are here today," said Lt. Jamie Wallace. Wallace spearheaded the $50 million construction project. "Every construction project, every experience is unique," Wallace said. According to Navy officials, the original runway had bad cracks and there were problems with water pooling during rainstorms. Several aircrafts were damaged as a result. The closure of the runway for the past year meant nearly 1,800 military personnel and nearly 40 aircraft were relocated to Cecil Airport……..

New leadership at Jax Naval Facilities Engineering Command


Action News Jax © June 26, 2016
by Kaitlyn Chana

Dozens of military personnel on Thursday celebrated a change of command at Naval Air Station Jacksonville. Capt. Patrick Garin relieved Capt. Steve Hamer as NAVFAC Southeast commanding officer and Navy Region Southeast regional engineer. Harmer said NAVFAC provides infrastructure and acquisitions to Navy and Marine Corps commanders who lead service members. NAVFAC Southeast is home to about 1,800 civilian and 120 military personnel who provide military construction oversight. Garin told Action News Jax that his goal is to strengthen Navy and Marine Corps combat readiness worldwide. “We always need to be ready to do whatever the president and the CNO would like us to do in order for us to respond,” said Garin. NAVFAC is comprised of 16 commands and annually delivers more than $11 billion in products……..

NS Mayport –

Coast Guard Cutter Valiant retnurs to Mayport after mission


Florida Times-Union © June 24, 2016
by Dan Scanlan

Coast Guard Cutter Valiant is back home in Mayport after a six-week deployment in support of Operation Southeast Watch and its repatriation of Cuban and Haitian migrants found floating in the Florida Straits. But as the 210-foot Medium Endurance Cutter docked, its 75-member crew said bon voyage to their commanding officer, who relinquishes command in a July ceremony at Naval Station Mayport. Cmdr. Adam A. Chamie says farewell after his ship handled search and rescue, law enforcement, environmental protection and national defense operations in the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, most recently with the Haitian Coast Guard to repatriate 12 migrants. “It has been a true honor to serve alongside the dedicated men and women on Valiant,” he said. “I’ve never served with a harder working and more devoted group of shipmates. Over the past
two years, their accomplishments and contributions to the Coast Guard and our nation have been, stellar, nothing short of spectacular.”

3 governors, 1 mission: Bring drones to Wallops


In a rare show of solidarity, all three Delmarva governors have signed on to support bringing a Navy drone surveillance program to Wallops Flight Facility. Their letters provide a political boost to a campaign led by area business and aerospace industry leaders to persuade the Navy's top brass to select Wallops as the program's East Coast home base. The head of the trade group pushing for the drones cheered the governors' lobbying efforts. "The Wallops Island Regional Alliance is deeply honored to have been involved in these steps to attain 3 very important Letters of Support," Peter Bale, the group's chairman, said in a statement. The MQ-4C Triton drone program is expected to bring 400 personnel along with their families to where it's based.

Navy littoral combat warship to trade some speed for firepower, armor


Florida Times-Union © June 19, 2016

The Navy spent hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to fulfill its need for speed with a new class of fast and agile warships capable of zipping along at highway speeds. It turns out speed is overrated. The Navy has learned lessons from the light-and-speedy littoral combat ships: Upcoming ships will trade some speed in favor of more weapons and heavier armor. Rear Adm. Peter Fanta, director of surface warfare, said the goal is to increase the offensive punch of all warships from the biggest to the smallest. For the littoral combat ship, that'll begin with the installation of over-the-horizon missiles this summer.

Homestead ARB –

Working To Protect Our National Security And Our Veterans, Ros-Lehtinen, Diaz-Balart, and Graham Visit Homestead Air Reserve Base And The Homestead VA Outpatient Clinic


Realestaterama© June 21, 2016

Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), along with Reps. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) and Gwen Graham (D-FL) visited Homestead Air Reserve Base (HARB) to discuss its importance to our national security and South Florida’s economy, as well as efforts to bring fighter jets to HARB. The bipartisan Congressional delegation then received a briefing on HARB’s operations and toured the facilities. Reps. Ros-Lehtinen and Graham
also attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new physical medicine and rehabilitation space at the Homestead VA Outpatient Clinic. Alongside remodeling and expansion of the facilities, the Homestead VA clinic has added physical rehabilitation and optometry services, and has increased the mental health services it already provides………..

NAS Pensacola –

Navy: Blue Angels will resume flight demonstrations July 2


Navy Times © June 26, 2016

Navy officials say its Blue Angels will resume performances a month after one of their pilots was killed in a crash while practicing for an air show. In a statement Saturday, Cmdr. Ryan Bernacchi said the elite flight demonstration squadron was grateful for its fans' patience as it "navigated through this very difficult loss of our teammate." The Blue Angels canceled performances after the death of Marine Capt. Jeff Kuss. Kuss died June 2 when his F/A-18 jet crashed just after takeoff while practicing for a Tennessee air show………
July 8, 2016

Attachments/Announcements:

1. TPG monthly report
2. Mil friendly guide
3. TF agenda

Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**BRAC Reform Bill Is ‘Different,’ Smith Says**

[http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/brac-reform-bill-is-different-smith-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=bee8583c0f-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-bee8583c0f-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)]

Defense Communities 360 © July 6, 2016

By Dan Cohen

While the legislation he introduced last month to authorize a round of base closures includes a number of reforms to the process, Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.) acknowledges the decision to approve a new BRAC remains a difficult decision for many lawmakers. “The only way we get a BRAC is if we push political arguments hard enough to make people change their minds,” Smith told Defense News last month. “I think the country sees the common sense, if the military is coming out and says it has 22 percent excess capacity. Given the national security threat we face and given the finite resources we have, if there is money to be saved, we have to do it.”

FDSTF –

**Florida Counties Receive $1.8M to Strengthen Local Installations ahead of Next BRAC**

[http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/florida-counties-receive-1-8m-to-strengthen-local-installations-ahead-of-next-brac/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=bee8583c0f-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-bee8583c0f-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)]

Defense Communities 360 © July 6, 2016

Florida defense communities will receive $1.8 million in grants from the Florida Defense Support Task Force to support seven defense projects across 13 counties, Gov. Rick Scott (R) announced last week. Several of the awards are aimed at helping the academic performance of military children. The task force awarded $225,000 to the Military Child
Education Coalition to support military kids across 12 counties and assist more than 322,400 military and veteran-connected students, parents, school personnel, community members and installation representatives. Two separate awards were made to the National Math Science Initiative (NMSI). “Working in collaboration with education, community and installation partners, the Military Child Education Coalition will offer student and parent support services, professional development, and a military student transition consultant embedded at the school level to meet needs as they arise,” said Todd Buchs, vice president of programs and business development for the coalition………

DOD Budget–

Congress must tackle key defense bills before summer break


Military Times © July 5, 2016
By Leo Shane III

Lawmakers return to Capitol Hill on Tuesday with a list of critical defense bills to advance before their extended summer break begins July 15, even if none of them has a chance to become law before this fall. Most of that work requires Senate action, with the annual defense appropriations bill awaiting floor debate this week and the annual defense authorization bill needing procedural approval from senators to move ahead to conference work. In the next nine days of session (fewer if congressional leaders break early because of unbreakable deadlocks), lawmakers will also need to decide whether to advance key reforms for the Department of Veterans Affairs, including an omnibus bill that supporters had hoped would be approved before the Memorial Day break in May…..

Congress' Shrinking Calendar Suggests Omnibus, CR Ahead


Defense News © July 5, 2016
By Joe Gould

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy vowed the House will work against the clock to pass appropriations bills as Congress' waning calendar suggests a continuing resolution (CR) to fund the government past Sept. 30 and an omnibus spending resolution grows ever more likely. Both loom over Congress’s election-year schedule, which has eight working days ahead, then a seven-week recess for party conventions and campaigning, and then four working weeks in September. McCarthy, R-Calif., all but acknowledged his caucus would not complete all 12 appropriations bills before the end of the fiscal year. “I think we will work through to get as many [appropriations bills] done as we can do before Sept. 30,” McCarthy told reporters Tuesday……..


Breaking Defense © July 6, 2016

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

As the House and Senate head to conference with an $18 billion gap between their drafts of the defense bill, the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee is taking pains to align himself with the Senate. Speaking to the Defense Writers’ Group this morning, Rep. Adam Smith drew clear battle lines between himself and the Republican HASC chairman, Rep. Mac Thornberry, author of the $18 billion increase. At the same time, Smith praised Senate Armed Services Committee chairman John McCain and downplayed their very real differences on issues like Pentagon procurement. But here’s the catch for Smith: He may be happy that McCain’s version of the National Defense Authorization Act lacks the $18 billion, but McCain is not. To the contrary, McCain pushed an amendment to add the money — albeit from different sources than Thornberry’s, which has drawn a veto threat — but McCain was defeated by bipartisan (but mainly Democratic) opposition. McCain’s staff director, Chris Bose, has used his rare public appearances to call for more funding: Within weeks of Congress passing the Balanced Budget Act that set the current spending levels, the normally reserved Bose was publicly calling it too little........

Congress Likely to Continue Streak of Passing Defense Policy Bill, Smith Says


Defense Communities 360 © July 7, 2016

By Dan Cohen

The Defense Department and Congress will need to work more collaboratively to agree on cost-cutting reforms if the nation is going to be able to sustain an adequate military into the future, Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), ranking member on the House Armed Services Committee, told reporters Wednesday. “Six hundred and 10 billion dollars is not a small amount of money,” Smith said, reported CQ Roll Call. “If we can’t spend $610 billion to provide for the national security of the United States, then we just aren’t any good at spending money.” Smith’s remarks came as the House and Senate are about to form a conference committee to hash out differences between the two chambers’ versions of the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill. One of the key disputes lawmakers will need to settle is funding. “It would have been nice if the agreement that we reached eight, nine months ago now, we just stuck to,” Smith said in reference to last October’s budget deal which extended the caps on defense and non-defense spending........
GOP Ponders Length of FY’17 Continuing Resolution

Defense Communities 360 © July 7, 2016

Republican leaders to date have not made any decision as to how long a fiscal 2017 continuing resolution (CR) would extend, but House conservatives are making clear their preference for a stopgap spending measure that lasts until March 2017. A CR almost certainly will be needed for most, if not all, spending bills to avoid a government shutdown when the new fiscal year begins in October, as the regular appropriations process appears to be coming to an end. Conservatives are pushing for a CR that lasts about six months to avoid the last-minute negotiations on an omnibus spending measure that typically take place behind closed doors as the December holidays approach. “The last thing we want to see is some kind of a shutdown scenario in December, and then basically giving the president everything that he asks for,” Rep. Matt Salmon (R-Ariz.) told CQ. Other Republicans, especially appropriators, favor a shorter stopgap, including Harold Rogers (R-Ky.), chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. “I would, yeah,” Rogers told reporters. But he added, “It’s just beginning to be talked about.”………

Hurlburt Field –

Small team ensures special tactics career fields grow with the best

Air Force © June 30, 2016

By Senior Airman Ryan Conroy

On the shores of the Emerald Coast, candidates from all walks of Air Force life approach the sand, covered in salt and grit, their uniforms soaked with seawater as the warm Florida sun beats down on their red faces. A team of cadre shouts commands at the candidates to confuse them, stress them out and push their bodies to the limit. Before the group has a chance to evaluate their situation, the instructors push them through more assessments, continuously asking each candidate one important question: Do they have what it takes? Special tactics career field training pipelines are some of the most physically and psychologically challenging in the Air Force. To ensure the correct individuals are on the battlefield, a group of special tactics Airmen weed out the cross-training candidates who don’t meet the high standards, putting them through a weeklong selection process to select only the best-qualified individuals………

Hurlburt airmen take part in ocean rescue
A team of special operations and Special Tactics professionals recently came to the rescue of 19 fishermen whose vessel had caught fire in the Atlantic Ocean. The operation began on June 21, when the U.S. Coast Guard asked the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center at Tyndall Air Force Base for help in rescuing the men, who had been picked up by a Panamanian cargo vessel about 500 miles off the coast of Bermuda. The crew of the K. Corral discovered the Taiwanese fishermen clinging to the remains of their fishing boat after it had been destroyed by fire. Two men had been critically burned and needed immediate medical attention. While the victims of the fire were not military personnel, Lt. Col. Pedro Oriz, deputy commander of the 347th Rescue Group, said the group continually trains to be remain proficient in both peacetime and combat situations.

U.S. Southern Command –

SOUTHCOM commander conducts first visit to South America's Southern Cone

U.S. Navy Adm. Kurt W. Tidd completed his first visit as commander of U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) to South America’s Southern Cone region June 30 after a two-day visit to Santiago, Chile. Tidd’s stay in Santiago was the final leg of his trip to the region, which also included visits to Argentina and Uruguay, where he met with U.S. embassy and host-nation leaders for talks on military cooperation with the region’s armed forces, and a dialogue on the interests, goals and concerns the U.S. shares with those countries. Specific areas of defense cooperation Tidd discussed with Southern Cone leaders included support for peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance missions, disaster preparedness, and capacity-building exercises and engagements. As he has during prior initial visits to partner nations as SOUTHCOM commander, Tidd listened closely to the ideas and perspectives of his hosts and shared his thoughts on ways to further strengthen U.S. military collaboration and friendly ties with their armed forces.

NS Mayport –

Close-in weapons systems work to be done at Mayport

A company working on installing close-in weapons systems on Navy, Army and Coast Guard vessels has received a $9.9 million addition to an existing contract, with some of the work being done at Mayport Naval Station. Serco Inc. of Reston, Virginia, was awarded the contract modification to provide support installing ship alterations and ship change documents. Most of the work will be split between Norfolk, Virginia and San Diego, California. The work is expected to be complete by June.

Port turns to city to develop Mayport property


The Jacksonville Port Authority has turned to the city to help find a developer for a long-vacant piece of property in the village of Mayport. Jaxport picked up the property between Safe Harbor Seafood and Singleton’s Restaurant in 2008, when the authority was looking at building a cruise terminal at the site. But after pushback from the community, those plans were abandoned and the land was left vacant. "There is not anything we need to do that is in the business of owning vacant property," said Jaxport Communications Director Nancy Rubin. Now, the port has given the city a five-year, non-exclusive option to find someone to lease or purchase the property. The Jaxport board would have to sign off on any deal. "We are not economic development folks," Rubin said. "We develop seaport terminals. We don't develop whatever that property would be." As to what it will be is still in its very early stages, said Tia Ford, city spokesperson. The city's Office of Economic Development is looking to see what business opportunities might fit the property, which is a combination of plots adding up to about six acres along Ocean Street. “It’s still very preliminary,” Ford said.

Avon Park Air Force Range –

County continues to buy easements


Since 1995, Highlands County has collected more than $1.1 million in fees to buy easements around the Avon Park Air Force Range. A map shown at last week’s county commission meeting marks dozens of easements around the base, about 40 percent of which is inside Highlands County. The same map also shows easements purchased in Polk County. That Conservation Trust Fund money is matched with grants the county planning department is writing and administrating. In June, the county won a $500,000 Florida Defense Support Task Force grant. The county, sometimes through the Nature Conservancy, seeks easements in the Military Airport Zone. Zone 1 surrounds the base, Zone 2 surrounds Zone 1, and Zone 3 extends into Avon Park, Frostproof and Sebring.
cities. Landowners who accept conservation trust fund monies agree not to develop housing. The agreement extends after the death of the landowner and into perpetuity.

Tyndall AFB –

Tyndall Report: Col. France takes his final flight


WJHG © July 6, 2016

All pilots have certain flights that carry more meaning than others. Recently, Tyndall's top airman scheduled a special flight that was almost derailed by mother nature. These conditions just won't fly, but there is still one pilot who plans to get his jet airborne today. Col. Derek C. France, the 325th Fighter Wing Commander, proceeds as he normally would. As the rain let's up, he heads out to the jet to meet his crew chief. But as he lifts off, France knows this is no ordinary flight and everything will be different when he lands. His family, his friends, and the firetrucks ceremoniously spraying his jet with water indicate one thing. "In all likelihood, it will be my last flight in a Tyndall F-22," Col. France said. It's a tradition to do a fini-flight, or end of tour flight, when a pilot finishes up his time at a certain assignment. He does a last flight in the airspace and it's usually a great way to cap off two years of great flying.

NAS Pensacola –

NAS Pensacola Hospital graduates last group of family medicine residents

http://wkrg.com/2016/06/30/nas-pensacola-hospital-graduates-last-group-of-family-medicine-residents/

WKRG © June 30, 2016

By Hayley Minogue

The NAS Pensacola Hospital graduated six residents from their family medicine program Thursday, the last class the program will ever have. After the ceremony, graduates and teachers discussed their future plans, and what they want to do next. Past the propellers and underneath the Blue Angels, six men and women close a chapter in their lives, and begin another. “I love this specialty,” Lt. Maya Payne said. “I think it’s going to be a part of the future of medicine in this country, and I’m so happy and proud to be a family physician.” For 42 years, the program has graduated residents focused on family medicine, but Thursday, the last degree will be handed out.

Super fans go to extremes for Blue Angels
Some fans support their team with T-shirts. Others wear baseball caps, paint their faces or fly flags. Then there is Adam Canevari, a U.S. Navy Blue Angels fan who takes his love for the elite aviators to an entirely different level. Canevari has painted the outside of his West Pensacola home in Blue Angels' bright blue and gold. His 2004 Hyundai Tiburon is painted to match. He even shaved the No. 6 into the side of his head to show support for the team after the recent death of Blue Angel pilot and Marine Capt. Jeff Kuss, who flew the No. 6 F/A 18 jet in the team's six-jet formation. Kuss died in a June crash at an airshow in Smyrna, Tenn. "Before I painted my house, all of the houses in this neighborhood were so plain. A lot of people have told me that they like what I've done," Canevari said during a tour of the house Wednesday…….

DOD Issues –

**Goldfein sworn in as 21st Air Force chief of staff**

Air Force Times © July 1, 2016
By Stephen Losey

Gen. David Goldfein officially took the reins of the Air Force Friday morning as he was sworn in as the service's 21st chief of staff. Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James administered the oath of office to Goldfein as his wife, Dawn, stood by his side. In her introductory remarks at the short ceremony at the Pentagon, James lauded him a "battle-tested pilot" who will take the Air Force to new heights. "The Air Force is going to be relying on your determination to improve our readiness, to improve our modernization, and most importantly, always at the top of the list, taking care of our airmen," James said. "Gen. Goldfein's proven performance, experience and leadership qualities make him the right man at the right time for our Air Force." In his remarks, Goldfein joked that his friend, retired Lt. Gen. Darrell Jones, told him that, as the service's 21st chief of staff in the 21st Century, he should adopt the call sign "Blackjack."…….

**Military aviation readiness is in 'a deep hole,' top brass says**

Air Force Times © July 6, 2016
By Melissa Nelson Gabriel

Some fans support their team with T-shirts. Others wear baseball caps, paint their faces or fly flags. Then there is Adam Canevari, a U.S. Navy Blue Angels fan who takes his love for the elite aviators to an entirely different level. Canevari has painted the outside of his West Pensacola home in Blue Angels' bright blue and gold. His 2004 Hyundai Tiburon is painted to match. He even shaved the No. 6 into the side of his head to show support for the team after the recent death of Blue Angel pilot and Marine Capt. Jeff Kuss, who flew the No. 6 F/A 18 jet in the team's six-jet formation. Kuss died in a June crash at an airshow in Smyrna, Tenn. "Before I painted my house, all of the houses in this neighborhood were so plain. A lot of people have told me that they like what I've done," Canevari said during a tour of the house Wednesday…….
A high operational tempo and uncertain budgets have damaged aviation readiness across all four services and have leaders concerned about pilot safety, top brass told Congress Wednesday. “I think we’ve all used the word ‘fragile,’” said Army Lt. Gen. Kevin Mangum, the deputy commanding general for Army Training and Doctrine Command. “We are about at the tipping point.” Appearing before the House Armed Services readiness subcommittee, leaders from all four services told lawmakers the critical focus on overseas operations has hamstrung efforts to improve readiness and training back home...........

Other Items of Interest –

Transition Issues Continue to Plague Military Kids Transferring Schools


Defense Communities 360 © July 5, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Military children transferring to new school districts when their families move continue to encounter problems associated with their transition even after all 50 states and the District of Columbia last year adopted an interstate agreement designed to eliminate such issues. Problems include eligibility for sports teams, acceptance of credits from previous schools, and placement in programs such as gifted and talented, Military Times reported following a discussion at the National Training Seminar of the Military Child Education Coalition. The majority of attendees at the session were school liaison officers, who serve as liaisons between parents, local schools and the military commands. At this point, states and school districts are in different stages of implementing the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, which establishes common guidelines for handling issues such as enrollment, class placement, records transfer, immunization requirements, graduation requirements, attendance, exit testing and extracurricular opportunities. Military children typically attend from six to nine different school systems from K-12........

States Move to Ease Transition for Military Spouses

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/military-families/states-move-to-ease-transitions-for-military-spouses/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=bee8583c0f-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-bee8583c0f-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)

Defense Communities 360 © July 6, 2016

By Dan Cohen
All 50 states have taken action to ease the requirements for military spouses to gain professional licenses or credentials needed to continue their careers after moving, Michelle Obama and Jill Biden, the vice president’s wife, announced on Saturday. The achievement comes five years after the first lady and Biden urged the nation’s governors to streamline state licensing requirements for the military community as part of the Joining Forces initiative the two launched. At the time, just three states accepted licenses from other states, according to a White House fact sheet. By 2012, nearly half of all states had begun to address the barriers facing military spouses seeking employment. On average, military spouses seek new employment every one to three years; 35 percent of military spouses work in an occupation that requires a professional license such as nursing or teaching. States still need to do more to support military spouses, including offering expedited licenses, Obama said in an interview with Military Times included in the fact sheet……..
July 15, 2016

Attachments/Announcements:

1. TF agenda

Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

New White House Could Advance BRAC, Analyst Says


Defense Communities 360 © July 12, 2016

By Dan Cohen

While the Obama administration’s fifth consecutive request to approve one or more BRAC rounds was soundly rejected in the defense authorization bills passed this year in the House and Senate, the next administration that moves into the White House could finally persuade lawmakers that a new round of base closures is justified. “Members are more open to BRAC than they have been at any point in the last five years in both parties. It’s still not a majority, not enough to pass Congress yet, but it means the wheels are in motion,” Mackenzie Eaglen, a resident fellow in the Marilyn Ware Center for Security Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, told the Washington Examiner. But the new president and the Cabinet would need to make it a priority……..

FDSTF –

General Diehl: Tampa Bay Has Become Complacent, Takes MacDill AFB for Granted

http://www.newstalkflorida.com/general-diehl-tampa-bay-has-become-complacent-takes-macdill-afb-for-granted

News Talk Florida © July 11, 2016

Brigadier General Chip Diehl discusses MacDill Air Force base and its influence on the Tampa Bay area. He also mentions Washington is going through the budget and once again MacDill funding is on the table. "Everyone talks about the military value of the base. Before you go anywhere and get more airplanes. We are here for the military national security of the country." Diehl cites as an important factor to having and attracting more airplanes at the base. "This base is a diamond in a rough." "Its a little humbling. We had a lot of bases. The silent BRAC is going on right now. We have to be proactive. We need everybody to go out there and talk about the importance of the base." General Diehl says…….
DOD Budget–

Some House Republicans to Oppose Push for Six-Month CR


Defense Communities 360 © July 11, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Several senior Republicans in the House say they oppose a campaign by conservatives to immediately pass a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government running through March 2017, the first half of the new fiscal year. In recent weeks, conservative Republicans have been pushing for a stopgap spending bill that lasts about six months to avoid last-minute negotiations over FY 2017 spending with a lame-duck president in December. But on Friday, Harold Rogers (R-Ky.), chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, and House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) criticized that approach. “We need to do our work,” Rogers said, rather than extending FY 2016 spending allocations past the Sept. 30 end of the fiscal year……..

Senate Democrats Block DoD Spending Bill, Seeking Omnibus


Defense News © July 13, 2016

By Joe Gould

With their blockage of defense appropriations, Democrats are signaling that they are done with the process for passing individual appropriations bills and want to negotiate an omnibus. Republicans at a press briefing Tuesday blasted Democratic obstruction on defense as a bad faith move against the troops and a losing position on the campaign trail. But Democrats at their briefing said Republicans are maneuvering to get military appropriations passed so they can punt on domestic spending. Asked whether he was sensitive to Republican accusations, Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., lit up. “Am I sensitive? Let me tell you: They are so obvious that even me with one blind eye can see it pretty easy,” Reid said. “All they want to do is they want to get defense appropriations bills passed and then walk away. And then all the other bills would be at their mercy.” ……..

Team Orlando –

Tom Baptiste: Team Orlando military group needs another 116K sq. ft.
Orlando Business Journal © July 11, 2016

By Matthew Richardson

The National Center for Simulation is on the hunt for more space to house its growing local military entity. The center bought the Partnership IV building in February for about $15 million, which will give Team Orlando — the military entity comprised of the U.S. Army, Marines, Navy and Air Force that works to help improve human performance through simulation — 84,000 square feet of space. However, Team Orlando still needs another 116,000 square feet…….

MacDill AFB –

**Air guard Col. April Vogel makes history by taking MacDill command**


Tampa Bay Times © July 8, 2016

By Tony Marrero

The city-sized MacDill Air Force Base has a new mayor, and she's making history. Col. April D. Vogel took over as base commander during a ceremony Friday. She is the first commander from the Air National Guard, a reserve military force. As leader of MacDill's 6th Air Mobility Wing, Vogel will be on active duty, overseeing operations on a base that is home to U.S. Central Command, U.S. Special Operations Command, the 927th Air Refueling Wing and dozens of other mission partners. Her predecessor, Col. Daniel H. Tulley, passed her the wing's blue and gold-starred pennant or guidon during a ceremony held under the soaring arched ceiling of Hangar 3. A KC-135 tanker, the base's signature plane, loomed behind the stage……..

Eglin AFB –

**AFRL develops portable tool for aircraft inspections**


Defense Systems © July 7, 2016

By Kevin McCaney

The Air Force is speeding up its ability to repair structural damage to aircraft with a portable system that can inspect aircraft in the field, identifying problems before the aircraft is brought into a depot for repairs. The Air Force Research Laboratory has developed a tool called the Surgical Nondestructive Evaluation, or SuNDE, which allows for inspection in the field and can provide advanced notice to maintenance depots of what
work will be needed what the aircraft arrives, AFRL said. SuNDE was developed as part of a collaborative effort with Mercer Engineering Research Center, Southwest Research Institute, and United Western Technologies Corp., and represents another effort to extend structural inspections into the field.

**Air Force May Declare F-35A 'Ready for Combat' Next Month: General**


Military.com © July 11, 2016
by Hope Hodge Seck

The commander of Air Combat Command was bullish about the upcoming declaration of initial operational capability for the F-35A, telling reporters on the first day of the Farnborough International Airshow that it could happen as early as August or as late as December. "IOC, we always use that term," Air Force Gen. Herbert "Hawk" Carlisle said. "It really means those airplanes are ready for combat. They are ready to be in combat and ready to move forward." The Air Force remains committed to its target of buying 1,763 of the conventional takeoff and landing variant of the 5th-generation fighter, Carlisle said. A June "deployment" of seven aircraft to Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, was declared a success by the Air Force after the planes completed all 88 planned sorties. Carlisle said the deployment involved about 180 personnel and gave the service the chance to test out the ability of the F-35's Autonomous Logistics Information System, or ALIS, to function in a deployed environment.

**American States Water Company Announces Privatization Contract Award for Eglin Air Force Base, Florida**


Business Wire © July 13, 2016

American States Water Company (AWR: NYSE) announced today that its contracted services subsidiary, American States Utility Services, Inc. ("ASUS"), has been awarded a 50-year contract by the U.S. government to operate, maintain, and provide construction management services for the water and wastewater systems at Eglin Air Force Base ("AFB") located in Florida. The value of the contract is estimated at approximately $510 million over a 50-year period and is subject to annual economic price adjustment. Under the contract, there is a 10-month transition period to ensure seamless operations are established and inventory assets are fully accounted for in the contract.

Hurlburt Field –

**New commander talks plans for Hurlburt Field**

WEAR TV © July 12, 2016
By David Gonzalez

It has been a month since Air Force Colonel Thomas Palenske took over as commander of the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field. Col. Palenske is no stranger to Hurlburt. He served as Vice Commander for the 1SOW from January 2015 until June 2016. He hopes to continue the work his predecessor, Colonel Sean Farrell, has done and improve the lives of airmen and their families……

NS Mayport –

Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technicians at Mayport diffuse potentially dangerous explosives


Action News Jax © July 8, 2016
by Bridgette Matter

Terrorists using explosives to injure and kill: It’s a danger, we’re seeing more of. But some of the people trained to protect us are right here at home, including a team of 6 men at Naval Station Mayport. The job of the Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technicians is critical not only in the war on terror, but here at home. Just this year, this team diffused 23 potentially dangerous military explosives found in Jacksonville. Their tools: $3 million worth of bomb disposal equipment, including an F6 Bravo robot. The team relies on devices like this to help disarm explosives. Some of this team’s gear is classified, off limits to our cameras, but we were given access to their bomb suit The big question: Why would anyone want to do this?........

JMSDF Training Squadron Visits Naval Station Mayport


US Navy © July 8, 2016

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet (USNAVSO/FOURTHFLT) is hosting the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) Training Squadron during a three-day port visit to Mayport as part of an around-the-world deployment designed to train newly-commissioned Japanese naval officers. Three ships, including two training vessels, Hatsuki-class destroyers JDS Seto Yuki (TV 3518) and JDS Kashima (TV 3508), as well as Asagiri-class destroyer JS Asagiri (DD 151), will conduct 16 port visits in 13 different countries. The squadron is crewed by over 750 Japanese sailors and 190 newly-commissioned ensigns, and is commanded by Rear Adm. Hidetoshi Iwasaki. Since departing Tokyo May 20, the JMSDF Training Squadron has visited Pearl Harbor, San Diego, and Panama City, Panama prior to their arrival in Mayport………
Avon Park Air Force Range –

**Training Sites in Florida, Minnesota, North Carolina Added to Federal Conservation Initiative**


Defense Communities 360 © July 13, 2016

By Dan Cohen

A federal conservation effort launched in 2013 to preserve working or natural lands that are critical to the nation’s defense mission on Tuesday added three military training sites to the program — Avon Park Air Force Range, Fla., Camp Ripley, Minn., and Eastern North Carolina. The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership — a collaboration among the departments of Defense, Agriculture and the Interior — is designed to improve military readiness, protect at-risk and endangered species, enhance critical wildlife habitat, and restore working agricultural and natural lands. The program focuses on places where preserving the working and rural character of key landscapes strengthens the economies of farms, ranches and forests; conserves habitat and natural resources; and protects vital test and training missions conducted on those military installations that anchor such landscapes………

**Avon Park Air Force Range named Sentinel Landscape**


Polk Outdoors © July 12, 2016

By Tom Palmer

The Avon Park Air Force Range, which covers 105,000 acres in southeastern Polk and northeastern Highlands counties, has been named one of three new Sentinel Landscapes in the United States to “benefit working lands, wildlife conservation and military readiness.” The announcement was made by the U.S. Department of Interior, but also involves the departments of agriculture and defense. The facility east of Frostproof and Avon Park is the primary training range east of the Mississippi and has been the focus of efforts in recent years to buffer it from incompatible uses by working with major landowners to protect working ranches with conservation easements………

NAS Pensacola –

**Viewpoint: Blue Angels much more than entertainment**

Last year, I had the distinct honor of watching the Blue Angels fly their dress rehearsal while hosting an infantry Marine who had recently returned from a tour in the Middle East. He had never seen them fly before and was more than a little excited to see our elite aerobatics team do their thing. While I had seen them perform countless times, it was fun watching his excitement. I didn’t realize that this experience would change the way I viewed the Blue Angels for the rest of my life. As the show began and Fat Albert made her pass, the sheer pride on his face was something to behold. Those were “his” guys. Those were his brothers, and like any little brother watching his older siblings show off their talents, he was ready to absolutely burst with pride. But, then the show took a different turn……..

Blue Angels 70th celebrations resume with Solos in the City


Pensacola News Journal © July 12, 2016
By Melissa Nelson Gabriel

The U.S. Navy Blue Angels kicked off a week of events surrounding the Pensacola Beach Air Show on Monday evening with a special forum featuring current and former Blue Angels’ solo pilots. Dozens of fans braved the early evening heat for the event at Plaza de Luna in downtown Pensacola. The forum, part of a series of special appearances and events planned for the team’s 70th anniversary season, was originally scheduled for June but was canceled following the air show death of Marine Capt. Jeff Kuss, who was the 2016 team’s No. 6 solo pilot. Kuss died in a crash during a routine practice for the Smyrna, Tenn., show……..

Other Items of Interest –

RAND Report Offers Insight into the Wealth of Installation-Community Partnerships


Defense Communities 360 © July 13, 2016

Partnerships between military installations and neighboring communities can produce a variety of benefits for both parties, including cost savings or revenue, as well as a range of
non-monetary benefits such as an enhanced military mission, and improved installation and community operations and services, according to a new report by the RAND Corp. Other benefits include access to additional expertise and resources; enhanced outreach to military personnel and their families; and energy and environmental advantages. But beyond cost savings and other concrete benefits, installation partnerships “are often more about long-term, mutually beneficial relationships and strategic issues than saving money. Such partnerships are strategically important to the long-term function and mission of installations,” the report concludes……

For example, installation partnerships can improve strategic regional collaboration. Some of the benefits of partnerships accrue to installations, while others help the community.

“Communities and installations definitely both benefit in most installation and community partnerships. Often there are multiple benefits for both the communities and installations,” Beth Lachman, a RAND policy analyst and one of the report’s three authors, told 360.

Judge Hears Lawsuit against Basing F-35s at Vermont Guard Base


Defense Communities 360 © July 11, 2016

By Dan Cohen

A federal judge heard arguments last week in a lawsuit seeking to hamper the Air Force’s plan to base 18 F-35A fighter jets at Burlington Air Guard Station, Vt. The plaintiffs, six citizens and the city of Winooski, claim the federal government’s environmental impact statement (EIS) was flawed as it underestimated the level of noise caused by the fifth-generation aircraft as well as its impact on health and local property values. The suit seeks to force the Air Force to reopen the EIS, reported WPTZ. The F-35 is significantly louder than the F-16 it would replace, according to the EIS. The Air Force announced its selection of the Air Guard station at Burlington International Airport in South Burlington to host a squadron of F-35s in 2013. Officials have said they expect Vermont’s first F-35 will arrive at the Air National Guard base in 2019. Last month, the judge granted South Burlington’s request to support the lawsuit. Rather than joining the lawsuit as a plaintiff, though, the city submitted an amicus brief.

XVIII ABN Corps commander to take over the U.S. fight against ISIS


Army Times © July 12, 2016

By Michelle Tan

The commanding general of the XVIII Airborne Corps will take the lead in the U.S. fight against the Islamic State group later this summer, Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced during his recent trip to Iraq. Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend will succeed Lt. Gen. Sean
MacFarland, commander of III Corps, who has led what Carter called “this vitally important campaign” since September. During those same remarks Monday in Baghdad, Carter announced the U.S. would be deploying an additional 560 troops to support Iraqi Security Forces at the Qayyarah West airfield, also known to U.S. troops who previously served in Iraq as Q-West. The troops will “bolster the Iraqi efforts to isolate and pressure Mosul,” Carter said. They also will help the Iraqis establish a “logistical springboard for their offensive on Mosul,” he said…….
Team Orlando –

**Industry Groups, Florida Lawmakers Working to Keep Defense Jobs in Orlando**


By Sandra I. Erwin

The simulation technology industry in Central Florida generates $6 billion a year in economic activity and employs 75,000 workers. The steady growth of military-focused simulation, training and gaming industries over the past five decades has been a good-news story for the state of Florida. The sector is fueled by Defense Department contracts overseen by 3,000 military officials and government employees based in the Orlando area. That success, though, has made the area the target of Pentagon budget cutters who want to move government workers from expensive commercial office space onto military bases elsewhere in the United States that are currently underused. Fears of losing those government jobs propelled an advocacy group called the Central Florida Partnership to work behind the scenes with state officials to secure funding to build an office park for defense workers………

US Southern Command –

**Southcom Commander Outlines Latin America Strategy**

http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/838592/southcom-commander-outlines-latin-america-strategy

Defense.gov © July 14, 2016

By Karen Parrish

“Uncertainty, unpredictability, and transregional linkages are the defining characteristics of the world today,” according to Navy Adm. Kurt W. Tidd, commander of U.S. Southern Command, who spoke at the Atlantic Council here yesterday about Southcom’s strategy for Latin America. Southcom’s strategic approach to Latin America and the Caribbean, he said, is “not taking place in isolation.” Tidd said that as Defense Secretary Ash Carter and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Marine Corps Gen. Joe Dunford have noted, “We’re in the middle of a strategic transition that touches every corner of the globe………

NSA Panama City –
New VA and Naval Health Clinics set to open soon


WJHG © July 14, 2016

By Tyler Allender

The Department of Veterans Affairs Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System are getting ready to open a new Veterans Affairs (VA) Outpatient Clinic and Naval Branch Health Clinic (NBHC). “It's going to stand out because it's a very new facility, which I think our staff as well as our patients are going to enjoy. I think when you're enthusiastic about the work environment you bring even better care,” Acting Associate Director or Outpatient Operations Andrew Roberts said. The VA clinic is 30,000 square feet and the project costs $10 million. The Naval Health Clinic next door to the VA clinic is more than 5,000 square feet, and the project costs $2 million. With intentions to make it more convenient for patients, the clinics are located off base on Magnolia Beach Rd. in Panama City Beach. That's a little more than two miles from Naval Support Activity Panama City. “It's easier to get in here,” Roberts explained. "The road is not as busy. You can get inside the gate. It's off the base. You don't have to go through security. "It's better service I think in terms of the technology that's going to be offered here, and you're typical provider services are going to be enhanced as a result of us being here.”

Patrick AFB –

Patrick Air Force Officers Cut Ribbon On Newly Renovated Tiki Deck At Base Marina


Space Coast Daily © July 15, 2016

On hand to spotlight the opening were Lt. Col. Paul Somers, 45th Force Support Squadron commander; Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, 45th Space Wing commander; Leiane Roche, 45th FSS Marina manager; and Chief Master Sgt. Jason Lamoureux, 45th SW command chief. The group cut the ribbon to the renovated Tiki Deck on Wednesday at the Marina at Patrick Air Force Base. During the six-month renovation several improvements took place, which improved the quality of life here for Airmen and their families.

MCSF Blount Island –

NAVFAC Southeast Awards Energy Project for Marine Corps Support Facility Blount Island


US Navy © July 14, 2016
By Sue Brink

Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Southeast awarded a nearly $4.7 million Utility Energy Services Contract (UESC) for energy saving upgrades aboard Marine Corps Support Facility (MCSF) Blount Island located in Jacksonville, Florida, July 6 to TECO Peoples Gas of Tampa, Florida. A UESC is a limited-source contract between a federal agency and its serving utility for energy- and water-efficiency improvements and demand-reduction services. This award is tied to the existing purchase contract for natural gas for the Jacksonville area.

The project supports President Barack Obama's announcement, December 2011, of a $4 billion investment in energy upgrades to combined federal and private sector buildings. When announced, the investments were intended to save billions in energy costs, promote energy independence and, according to independent estimates, create tens of thousands of jobs in the hard-hit construction sector…….
BRAC –

Outgoing Navy secretary still urging a base-closing round


The Day © August 9, 2016

By Ana Radelat, The Connecticut Mirror

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus said submarines have become more important to the national defense and the Navy has less excess capacity than the other armed services, but he also said all Navy facilities would be on the table — even sub bases — if there is a new base-closing round. “It’s very clear (the Defense Department) as a whole has excess capacity, you need something to shrink that,” Mabus said in an interview with the Connecticut Mirror. “I’m sure we’d have something (on the base-closure list), but I don’t know what that would be.” Once hot in military communities like Groton, the base-closing issue has subsided because of a years-long standoff between the Pentagon and Congress. But attempts to hold another base-shuttering round are expected to continue, even as President Barack Obama leaves office and a new president takes his place. The Pentagon, projecting escalating costs for national defense because of the price and sophistication of new weapon systems, the rise of new threats such as cybersecurity attacks, and growing retiree expenses, is anxious to cut costs wherever it can. For these reasons, Mabus says he supports another Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round………..

DOD Budget–

5 years on, military spending caps haven't brought the total disaster so many predicted


Military Times © August 8, 2016

By Leo Shane III

When Congress passed the Budget Control Act in 2011, defense leaders warned the spending caps could have disastrous consequences for military programs and planning. Five years later, many of those fears have not materialized. But Pentagon leaders and presidential hopefuls are still condemning the law as a danger to national security, and searching for a solution to the problem known as sequestration. “I think [this issue] is probably the biggest challenge that the next administration faces,” said Todd Harrison, director of defense budget analysis at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “We’ve got four more years of budget caps left in effect, and you know whoever the next
administration is, they are likely going to want to exceed those caps.” The budget caps, originally proposed as a poison pill to force lawmakers into a more comprehensive fiscal plan for federal spending, place strict limits on how much defense and nondefense money can be allocated through fiscal 2021. Mandatory federal spending and some agencies like the Department of Veterans Affairs are exempt.

MacDill AFB –

Altman: Water level around base could rise 1.7 feet by 2050, scientists group says


By Howard Altman

Base officials say they are prepared for the projected sea level rise. Since 1990, they have required all new buildings to be 11.5 feet above sea level, and they’ve installed anti-erosion measures. Officials at MacDill Air Force Base, which has more than seven miles of shoreline, say they are prepared to cope with storm surges and, in the near-term, rising sea levels. A report issued last month by the Union of Concerned Scientists warns that rising sea levels will inundate many U.S. military installations. While the study did not include MacDill, the scientists’ group ran projections for the base at the request of the Tampa Bay Times.

Tankers enable long-range bomber capability during Polar Roar


By Air Mobility Command Public Affairs

Mobility Airmen play a vital role in deterrence and stand ready to operate in support of global operations at a moment’s notice. Air Mobility Command Airmen, 15 KC-135 Stratotankers and 10 KC-10 Extenders enabled Air Force Global Strike Command B-52 Stratofortresses and B-2 Spirits to sustain air operations for more than 20 hours during Polar Roar July 31. Through multiple air refuelings, strategic bombers conducted intercept training using three different flight paths that encompassed more than 55,500 miles with North American Aerospace Defense Command-assigned fighters. Additionally, they conducted inert weapon drops training at the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex. “The 618th Air Operations Center here supports bomber assurance and deterrence missions throughout the year but not to this level of synchronization, nor simultaneously,” said Maj. Matthew Wilcoxen, the 618th AOC new requirements branch chief.

MacDill moving planes to Tampa Airport during runway work
In the sky, the KC-135 aerial refueling tankers based at MacDill Air Force Base have smooth sailing, but when they land, things can get a little rough. FOX 13 News got an exclusive, up-close look at the runway where parts of the pavement is crumbling. There are chunks and ruts. Workers at the base have to sweep it every day to keep it safe for take-offs and landings. They've decided to shut down the 13-year-old runway this fall for an $8-million overhaul. "We're going to mill and overlay the entire length of the runway," explained Robert Moore, a civil engineer at MacDill. "We're going to mill it 4 inches deep and then re-pave the entire runway." .......

US Southern Command –

Admiral Kurt Tidd: US Southern Command leader stresses close partnerships

Since beginning his new position as Commander of the US Southern Command six months ago, Admiral Kurt Tidd has been traveling for four of them. He’s met a number of key civic and political leaders in the last two, and said he’ll be reaching out even more now that he’s settling into the job. With a mission to protect the southern approaches of the country, Admiral Tidd said the most important security challenges he’s focused on are the illicit networks that pose a threat to US safety. They range from purely economically-motivated criminal networks to purely ideologically-motivated terrorist networks, he said, but stressed the reality is there’s a real blurring of the lines between them. Admiral Tidd, whose career has been focused on diplomacy and counter-terrorism, comes from a military family and now his youngest daughter just joined the Coast Guard. He said he probably had alternate plans a few times very early on but, when he was about 8 years old he visited the destroyer his father commanded. It seemed like such a fantastic thing to do, he said, that he knew he’d also serve in the US Navy. Miami Today reporter Susan Danseyar interviewed Admiral Tidd at the US Southern Command........

NS Mayport –

Mayport changes command as 'Cowboy' rides off and friend to Jacksonville returns

Mayport changes command as 'Cowboy' rides off and friend to Jacksonville returns


Fox 13 News © August 9, 2016

By Lloyd Sowers

Admiral Kurt Tidd: US Southern Command leader stresses close partnerships

Miami Today © August 9, 2016

By  Susan Danseyar

Mayport changes command as 'Cowboy' rides off and friend to Jacksonville returns


By Dan Scanlan

The man they nicknamed “Cowboy” officially rode off to his new post within the U.S. Navy’s command structure Friday after a three-year stint that saw him lead the team that prepared Mayport Naval Station for new high-speed littoral combat ships. But as Capt. Wesley R. McCall leaves the 74-year-old base to be executive assistant to Vice Adm. Dixon Smith at Navy Installations Command in Virginia, a man whose past saw many assignments at Jacksonville’s other base replaced him during a change of command.

Mayport Village: On the River of Change brings people and history of Mayport together


By Tiffanie Reynolds

The Mayport Larry King talks about sounds more like a river village out of the world of Mark Twain than a small fishing village along the St. Johns River. There’s Chichemo, who got his name from the sound of the push scooter he rode on all around the village. Captain Leon Canova, a shrimper who King caught trying to trap sparrows with a box in his front yard and, after being chased around St. Augustine by his first wife, denied knowing her to the police when the chase ended in a minor car accident. “Most towns are peopled with citizens. Mayport, Florida, is peopled with characters,” said King. “I don’t know anyone who is a native Mayport person who doesn’t have some aspect of their personality that makes them unique.” King grew up in Mayport a few years after the Navy base was built, where everyone’s phone number was two digits and streets were unpaved and un-named. His parents owned a small grocery store, and he spent many days playing along the river or catching sharks and other fish off the docks. He left the village for college when he was 18. After spending several years in the military living around the world, Mayport called him back.

SOCSOUTH enhance command, control interoperability during Panamax 16


DVIDS © August 4, 2016

Story by Maj. Cesar H. Santiago

Special Operations Command South hosted military personnel from the partner countries of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama and Peru from July 25 – Aug.
4 during this year’s Panamax in Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla. PANAMAX is an annual U.S. Southern Command-sponsored multinational exercise focused on ensuring the security of the Panama Canal. The exercise was conducted across multiple locations to include HAR, which served as the location for the Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command. The purpose of the exercise is to improve training, readiness, and interoperability through a series of scenarios designed to integrate multiple nations into a cohesive team, demonstrating their ability to train and work with participating multinational staffs from partner nations in the region…….

Tyndall AFB –

**Florida F-22 experiences landing troubles during exercise at Hill AFB**


Standard Examiner © August 9, 2016

An F-22 pilot from Florida is safe after an undisclosed landing mishap Saturday at Hill Air Force Base. Base spokesman Micah Garbarino said an F-22 Raptor based out of Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., experienced “a ground emergency upon landing” at approximately 1:15 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 6. Garbarino said the pilot, who was visiting Hill for a large scale training exercise, exited the aircraft safely. The pilot did not have to eject from the plane, he said. Emergency crews responded immediately after the incident, which is still under investigation. The Air Force did not release the pilot’s name or disclose further details about what caused the mishap or how much damaged the aircraft suffered…….

Other Items of Interest –

**US Air Force Boss: Faster F-35 Buy Rate Might Not Be Possible**


Defense News © August 6, 2016

By Valerie Insinna

The head of Air Combat Command wants to see the US Air Force build up its inventory of F-35s quicker than planned, but its civilian head signaled Wednesday that it might not be feasible in the current fiscal climate. Speaking to the press on Tuesday, Gen. Herbert “Hawk” Carlisle said he was concerned about the service’s current F-35 buy rate, which hovers in the 40s until fiscal 2021 when that number jumps up to 60. Carlisle said he would like the Air Force to buy at least 60 aircraft per year in the near term to replace legacy aircraft that is aging out. But in an interview with Defense News and sister publication Air Force Times, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James said boosting the number of active-duty airmen is currently a bigger priority than ramping up the F-35 buy. "It's all a matter of money. I would love to increase the buy also, but I don't see that as
more urgent than staying the course to increase our end strength, for example,” she said in an interview Wednesday. “Increasing that end strength is the top thing. We think it's the top thing for all of our senior leaders.”

**Air Force Growth Should Continue beyond 2016, James Says**

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/air-force-growth-should-continue-beyond-2016-james-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=c75bfda29c-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-c75bfda29c-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)

Defense Communities 360 © August 8, 2016

By Dan Cohen

In her last six months in office, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James said she would keep both the Pentagon and Congress focused on the need to boost the service’s end strength to as many as 325,000 airmen. The Air Force’s active-duty end strength is slated to increase from its current level of 311,000 to 317,000 by October, but to relieve an overworked force and to expand capabilities in cyber and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions, additional personnel will be needed, James said. “I am absolutely certain that we need somewhere on the order of 321,000 to 325,000 active-duty airmen,” James told Air Force Times last week. “It would be fantastic to have more than that. If we could have that many, though, I think it would go an enormous way to helping with some of the strain that we are feeling.”

**U.S. Air Force laments that it’s short of pilots**


McClatchy © August 10, 2016

By Tim Johnson

The U.S. Air Force faces a shortfall of 700 fighter pilots by the end of the year and as many as 1,000 pilots within a few years, Air Force officials said Wednesday. “It is a crisis,” said Gen. David Goldfein, the Air Force chief of staff. “Air superiority is not an American birthright. It’s actually something you have to fight for and maintain.” Aggressive hiring by commercial airlines has helped thin the ranks of Air Force pilots, and lengthy deployments overseas, long separations from family and reduced flying time when back on U.S. soil have exacerbated the problem, Goldfein said. But Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James said legislators on Capitol Hill, locked in partisan gridlock, shouldered part of the blame. She said lawmakers had failed to approve military budget requests that would increase retention bonuses for fighter pilots, which have been at $25,000 a year since 1999, to $35,000 a year.
August 24, 2016

Attachments/Announcements:

1. Resignation of MG Taluto

Articles of Interest:

MacDill AFB –

Team MacDill participates in local exercises to simulate deployment readiness


By Airman 1st Class Rito Smith, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs /

Team MacDill continues to pursue the goal of maintaining mission readiness by conducting a mobility exercise (MOBEX) as well as an aircraft generation exercise (GENEX), Aug. 15-19, 2016 at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. The base-wide exercises mimicked a deployment, and allowed Airmen to experience personnel deployment lines, cargo prep for shipment and real-world crisis management. “During this exercise, I was responsible for giving medical intelligence briefings about the deployed location,” said Senior Airman Alexander Govan, a public health technician assigned to the 6th Aerospace Medicine Squadron. “I make sure everyone understands the health risks and hazards someone might encounter while deployed.” The exercises were designed to determine mission readiness and the effectiveness of nearly all of MacDill’s various squadrons……..

Eglin AFB –

Meet the new 90th Medical Group Commander, Col. Galluzzo


DVIDS © August 19, 2016

Story by Staff Sgt. Christopher Ruano, 90th Missile Wing Public Affairs

Col. Cherron Galluzzo assumed command of the 90th Medical Operations Group here, July 19. She has served in a variety of leadership and key positions at the major command, wing and squadron levels. Prior to leading the Mighty Ninety, Galluzzo was the Inpatient Operations Squadron commander for the 96th Medical Group, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. As the 90th MDG commander, Galluzzo leads a staff of more than 200 responsible
for medical care for over 4,000 military and civilian members on Warren and from the local community. The 90th MDG ensures the nuclear reliability and deployability of wing personnel; delivers cost-effective, accessible, community-based health care; promotes healthy lifestyles through preventive medical services and education; and prepares, mobilizes and deploys medical resources for contingency operations worldwide.

**Battle-Tested at Sensor Week**


Deskeng © August 1, 2016

Testing defense and military systems can pose a significant challenge. These systems have to perform under battlefield conditions that are harsh and unpredictable. Because you can’t test in an actual operating theater, simulating field conditions is the next best scenario. However, it can be difficult and expensive if you need to test a sensor solution that requires the participation of a fighter jet or a convoy of tanks and trucks. From May 16 to 27, more than 50 U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) organizations and private companies arrived at Eglin Air Force Base near Valparaiso, FL, for an event that marries product testing, research and battle simulations: Sensor Week. Participants were able to test new sensor and seeker technology on a testing range with more than 400 vehicles and aircraft, including everything from Air Force jets to Russian fuel trucks and missile launchers.

**US Southern Command –**

**SouthCom Commander Backs Military Involvement in Fighting Crime**


Insight Crime © August 18, 2016

By Mike LaSusa

The top US military officer in Latin America and the Caribbean recently praised the involvement of the region's armed forces in fighting organized crime, a controversial stance likely rooted in the politics surrounding US security assistance to foreign countries. In an August 17 speech that opened the South American Defense Conference in Uruguay, Navy Adm. Kurt Tidd, the commander of US Southern Command (SouthCom), said that armed forces in Latin America and the Caribbean are adapting to a "global security environment [that] is the most complex, volatile, and unpredictable in at least the last half-century."

**Confirmed cases of Zika emerge near Southern Command headquarters**
More than 1,000 troops, civilians and contractors assigned to Florida-based Southern Command are at ground zero for the latest Zika outbreak in the United States. The national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identified five locally transmitted instances of the virus in the areas of Miami Beach and the Wynwood neighborhood in a Friday news release. Both areas are on the coast, about 11 miles east from Southern Command headquarters in Doral, a small Miami suburb. The specific type of mosquito that commonly carries Zika is referred to as a container-breeder mosquito because it lays its eggs in and around standing water, according to the CDC. Southern Command headquarters is surrounded on all sides by open water.

Avon Park Air Force Range –

Decade long study of Avon Park Air Force Range brings results

By Tom Palmer

A decade of planning work is both improving protection of the Avon Park Air Force Range's mission and preserving environmentally important private lands surrounding it, the Central Florida Regional Planning Council was told Wednesday. The work, whose centerpiece is a joint land-use study, grew out of a 2006 meeting convened by state planners. At that meeting, local planners in Polk and Highlands counties were told their growth plans did not include provisions to protect military bases from encroachment by incompatible development, said Pat Steed, the agency's executive director.

Patrick AFB –

Patrick AFB pararescue personnel put on show at Paradise Beach

By Greg Pallone

Beach-goers in Brevard County got quite a helicopter show over the ocean Thursday as military aircraft hovered low over the ocean waters off Paradise Beach in Melbourne during a rescue. But it turns out it was a training exercise involving members of the Patrick Air Force Base's 920th Rescue Wing. Pararescue servicemembers took turns simulating water rescues from the air and also swimming 1500 meters to shore. The helicopters flew low, stirring up water while pulling up "victims" from the ocean, as many beach-goers...
watched from shore. Coincidentally, Thursday marked the 60th birthday of the special unit based on the Space Coast, which has performed thousands of combat and humanitarian rescues around the world for decades........
September 9, 2016

Task Force members --

1. **Meeting Next Week** - The next meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be held September 15, 2016 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1144 Airport Blvd., Pensacola, FL 32504 beginning at 9:00 CDT. Agenda attached. For TF Members, more detailed information on Wednesday night and Thursday tour forthcoming.

2. **Call In Numbers** –

   **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979    **Access Code:** 8784566

3. **New Staff Members** – Marcy and I are pleased to welcome two new staff members to the EFI Military and Defense Team – New Deputy Executive Task Force Director Terry McCaffrey, COL, UASF (ret) and New Administrative Assistant Michelle Griggs. You will get to meet both of them at the Task Force meeting next week.


For the Defense Reinvestment Grants (DRG), DEO intends to award grants to:

   Bay Defense Alliance, Inc.
   City of Jacksonville
   Clay County Economic Development Corporation
   Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast
   Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County FL
   Greater Pensacola Chamber
   Orlando Economic Development Commission
   Santa Rosa County Board of County Commissioners
   The Miami-Dade Beacon Council, Inc.
   Walton County Chamber of Commerce

For the Defense Infrastructure Grants (DIG), DEO intends to award grants to:

   Bay County Board of County Commissioners
   City of Jacksonville
   Clay County Development Authority
Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners
Santa Rosa County Board of County Commissioners

The links to these announcements:
DRG:
DIG:

5. Attachments:

- Agenda
- TPG Monthly Report
- Governor’s Proclamation on POW/MIA Day
- Bio for COL Terry McCaffrey

Regards, BG.

Bruce Grant
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FLORIDA DEFENSE SUPPORT TASK FORCE
PHONE (850) 298-6652
CELL (850) 443-8286
EMAIL bgrant@eflorida.com

Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

Senate Rejects Defense Bills Again, Foreshadowing CR

Defense News © September 6, 2016

By Joe Gould

US Senate Democrats voted down the 2017 Pentagon and Military Construction-Veterans Affairs spending bills on Tuesday for the third time, teeing up a stopgap funding resolution to avert a government shutdown. Each bill needed 60 'yea' votes to proceed. For Pentagon appropriations, the near-party-line vote was 55-43, with two Democrats voting yea: Sens. Joe Manchin, of West Virginia, and Joe Donnelly, of Indiana. For Military-Construction-Veterans Affairs appropriations, the vote was 52-46, with two Republicans voting nay: Sens. Mike Lee, of Utah, and James Lankford, of Oklahoma. Congress has four weeks to pass a stop-gap spending measure, called a continuing resolution (CR), before the fiscal year ends Sept. 30 or the federal government will shut down. Lawmakers are signaling serious budget talks are unlikely until after a CR is approved. With a lengthy recess in October, a budget deal appears most likely during Congress' "lame duck" session after the Nov. 8 elections……..

DOD Spending Bills Stall in Senate for Third Time


Defense Communities 360 © September 7, 2016

By Dan Cohen

Senate Democrats on Tuesday blocked the fiscal 2017 defense spending bill and the conference agreement for the military construction-veterans affairs spending bill from advancing, the latest signal that all facets of defense operations will need to rely on a continuing resolution (CR) when the new fiscal year starts Oct. 1. Each of the failed procedural votes represented the chamber’s third attempt to advance the legislation. In the case of the defense spending measure, Democratic opposition is part of a strategy to ensure any increase in DOD spending does not come at the expense of domestic programs, reported CQ. The Senate version of the defense spending bill adheres to the spending cap, but the House measure sidesteps the cap by using $15.7 billion from the overseas contingency operations account to pay for weapons and equipment, and higher end strength levels that the administration did not request……..

GAO: DOD’s recovery from war ops, budget cuts might take another 10 years


By TARA COPP
The military’s ability to fully train and equip its forces is “at risk” and the military might struggle with readiness for another 10 years, the Government Accountability Office reported Wednesday. In a declassified version of their June 2016 report on military readiness challenges, the government watchdog agency found that after almost 15 years of war, each of the services has identified rebuilding readiness — the ability of U.S. forces to fight — as a top priority. However, military planners still lack information needed to make key decisions. For example, DOD is still trying to figure out what it needs to be ready for and how much it will cost to restore readiness…..

Space Coast –

**SpaceX to shift Florida launches to new pad after explosion**


Reuters © September 6, 2016

By Irene Klotz

SpaceX said on Friday it would shift Florida flights to a nearly completed second site after damage to its launch pad on Thursday from the explosion of a rocket belonging to the space services company run by Elon Musk. The Federal Aviation Administration has sent seven people to Florida to supervise investigation of the disaster, said FAA spokesman Hank Price. The agency, which oversees U.S. commercial rocket launches, requires that SpaceX’s flights be suspended pending results of the probe. Any sign of rocket malfunction could require changes throughout the SpaceX fleet. After a SpaceX rocket exploded in June 2015, the program was paused for six months while defective brackets were replaced in Falcon 9 launch vehicles……..

MacDill AFB –

**CrowdOptic Partners With SOFWERX to Rapidly Prototype Technology for United States Special Operations Command**


CrowdOptic today announced its selection for the 1208 Rapid Prototyping Event organized by SOFWERX, a venue operated under partnership intermediary agreement between Doolittle Institute and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). Under the alliance with SOFWERX, CrowdOptic is integrating its technology with a mobile application that will enable a team of field operatives to report information about specified targets back to central command. Such information will include a live-stream of the target, as well as the target’s specific
GPS location—fixed or moving—as calculated using CrowdOptic’s proprietary algorithms.

Eglin AFB –

**Counter-Drone Exercise Black Dart Expands, Moves To Eglin AFB**


DFNS © September 2, 2016

The 2016 edition of Black Dart, the Defense Department’s formerly classified counter-drone exercise, expands to Eglin Air Force Base this year, in search of more space and more capabilities, including ships. “Eglin will allow us to deliver added uncertainty in the way of providing multiple locations for launching UAS at different distances so we can explore the….

**Sprawling Eglin seeks developers' creative land use ideas**


By Melissa Nelson Gabriel

Eglin Air Force Base is looking for developers with creative ideas for a 50-acre property in Fort Walton Beach. The project follows the successful development of a 152-room, beachfront Holiday Inn Resort by Gulf Breeze-based Innisfree Hotels on Eglin-owned property in 2014. Sprawling Eglin Air Force, with more than 460,000 acres of land, is among the largest military installations in the U.S. and the Air Force is the largest landowner in the western Florida Panhandle. Glenn Wagner, director of real estate for the base, said the military has determined that it doesn't need a small portion of the land. "Some of our land was underutilized and not necessary for our mission needs," he said.

**Eglin gets creative with land plans**


Melissa Nelson Gabriel

Eglin Air Force Base is looking for developers with creative ideas for a 50-acre property in Fort Walton Beach. The project follows the successful development of a 152-room, beachfront Holiday Inn Resort by Gulf Breeze-based Innisfree Hotels on Eglin-owned property in 2014. Sprawling Eglin Air Force, with more than 460,000 acres of land, is among the largest military installations in the U.S. and the Air Force is the largest landowner in the western
Florida Panhandle. Glenn Wagner, director of real estate for the base, said the military has determined that it doesn't need a small portion of the land.

Hurlburt Field –

**Big booms equal milestone**

By **KELLY HUMPHREY**


The 1st Special Operations Wing has been putting the Air Force Special Operations Command’s newest gunship through its paces this week. Air commandos from the wing made history on Tuesday when they took part in the first live fire testing of the AC-130J’s 105 mm gun during an exercise over the Eglin Air Force Base test range.......

NAS Jacksonville –

**Job posts show Jacksonville facility is preparing to begin maintenance work on presidential helicopters**


Florida Times-Union © September 6, 2016

By **Joe Daraskevich**

The hiring process is under way at the Fleet Readiness Center Southeast in Jacksonville to find capable employees who will eventually be working to maintain the Marine One presidential helicopter fleet after negotiations with a private company recently fell through. An official announcement to move the maintenance work to Jacksonville has not been made by the U.S. Navy, but job opportunities have been posted online in anticipation of the decision, said Terresa White, spokeswoman for Fleet Readiness Center.........

Tyndall AFB –

**AF narrows locations considered for basing new RPA units**

By Secretary of Air Force Public Affairs

The Air Force has selected candidate bases for a potential new MQ-9 Reaper wing with units at up to two locations. For the first location, the Air Force identified Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona; Moody AFB, Georgia; Mountain Home AFB, Idaho; Offutt AFB, Nebraska; and Shaw AFB, South Carolina, as candidate bases to potentially host an operations group with mission control elements. These locations currently have an active-duty flying wing or group that performs at least one core remotely piloted aircraft mission and/or is co-located with an active-duty distributed ground system. Once an installation is selected, MQ-9 crews will control the MQ-9 from that location, but no aircraft will be assigned to these units. The Air Force also selected Eglin AFB, Florida; Tyndall AFB, Florida; Vandenberg AFB, California, and Shaw AFB as candidates for the second location, which would potentially host a full MQ-9 wing, to include both a launch and recovery element and a mission control element, as well as a maintenance group and operations support personnel. That location is expected to have up to 24 MQ-9 aircraft assigned………..

NS Mayport –

Mayport under consideration for Naval drone program


The Ledger © September 5, 2016

Residents near the Mayport Naval Station have until Oct. 1 to file comments on a draft study that says there will be no significant environmental impact on the area if Mayport becomes a home base for a drone program. The Florida Times-Union reported that Mayport is one of three bases under consideration for the basing and maintenance of the MQ-4C Triton Unmanned Aircraft System. According to the Navy, a launch and recovery site for four drones on the base, as well as a maintenance hub for up to four more unmanned aircraft, would be established…….

NAS Whiting Field –

Baldwin County Commission, US Navy agree on use of airstrips

http://www.wbrc.com/story/33030770/baldwin-co-commission-us-navy-agree-on-use-of-airstrips

WBRC © September 6, 2016

By Hal Scheurich, FOX10 News Reporter

The US Navy Whiting Field has agreed to let the Baldwin County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) utilize two airstrips as staging areas in the event of a disaster. A Navy representative delivered the good news at the Baldwin County Commission meeting Tuesday morning, September 6, 2016. It's a plan that EMA Director, Reggie
Chitwood has been working on with Navy officials for months. Those plans were jeopardized with the possibility of two refugee camps for illegal immigrant children coming to one of the sites. With that resolved, the plans moved forward. It’s a big step in consolidating emergency relief efforts with multiple agencies. “Now we’ll be able to go back to those partners. We’ll be able to form up some good plans. They’ll have some solid instruction on what they can and need to do and then we’ll be able to bring it all together and incorporate it into our county emergency operations plan,” Chitwood explained……..  

Patrick AFB –

**EFSC Launches New Education Center at Patrick Air Force Base**


Eastern Florida © September 6, 2016

Eastern Florida State College is opening a new education center at Patrick Air Force Base where military members, their families and local community civilians can study toward a degree. Classes are set to start in October with courses in fields such as aerospace technology, health care, public safety and human resources. More will be added later. Air Force officials say the programs will help service members successfully accomplish their missions in an era of rapid mobilizations and deployments, and provide valuable training for civilian life. The classes will open a pathway that can eventually lead to a Bachelor Degree, Associate Degree or College Certificate. “The men and women who serve at Patrick and throughout the armed forces make enormous sacrifices to protect our nation and all of us every day,” said college President Dr. Jim Richey…….

NAS Key West –

**Navy flight schedule ramps up at Boca Chica Field**

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff

[alinhardt@keysnews.com](mailto:alinhardt@keysnews.com)

The historically quieter summer months over at Boca Chica Field are coming to a close as the busy winter season is right around the corner and that means more jets coming and going. “I’m really looking forward to the busy warfighter training season here at Naval Air Station Key West,” said NAS Key West commanding officer Capt. Bobby Baker. “It’s...
16 September 2016

Task Force members --

6. **Next Meeting:** The next Task Force meeting will be by Conference Call/Webex on October 20, 2016 – beginning at 9:00 AM.

7. **Call In Numbers –**
   
   **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979     **Access Code:** 8784566

8. **Mtg #47 Follow-up:**
   a. Michelle and I would like to say we are thrilled to join the team, thanks for the warm welcome.
   b. Chairman Ingram requested all Task Force members to forward ideas for inclusion in a possible Florida “GI Bill 2” to the staff – please forward any ideas to me.

9. **Attachments:**
   ■ Eastern Shipbuilding Press Release – News clip included below

V/R

*Terry McCaffrey*
Deputy Executive Director
Florida Defense Support Task Force

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Clips:
CHELCO to Manage Eglin Air Base’s Electric Distribution System Under $360M DLA Contract

Ramona Adams September 15, 2016 Contract Awards

Choctawhatchee Electric Cooperative has won a 50-year, $360.4 million contract from the Defense Logistics Agency to operate and maintain an electric distribution system at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida.

The Defense Department said Wednesday CHELCO will perform work through July 31, 2067, in support of the U.S. Air Force.

DLA’s energy organization received two offers for the contract and will obligate funds from the service branch’s fiscal year 2016 through fiscal 2067 operations and maintenance funds.

DeFuniak Springs, Florida-based CHELCO is a nonprofit electric distribution cooperative that owns and maintains 3,956 miles of overhead and underground lines…

Okaloosa, Walton look to improve Choctawhatchee Bay watershed

12 Sept 2016

By Leah Johnson | Northwest Florida Daily News

Okaloosa County officials want to improve the Choctawhatchee Bay watershed.

Working in conjunction with the Walton County Commission, the two boards are applying for a $2 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to stand up a Florida Panhandle gulf estuary program.
Erika Zambello, the marine economic and tourist development resource coordinator for Okaloosa County’s Tourist Development Council, said the goal is to improve the water, habitats and resources from the bay because it is a vital resource to the tourism economy…Since spring, Zambello said her office has obtained support from local businesses, the school districts and the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance. Zambello said she also has obtained memorandums of understanding from Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field…

Panama City

HEADLINE: Eastern lands $10.5 billion contract

The News Herald
September 15, 2016


PANAMA CITY — Eastern Shipbuilding Group on Thursday landed a $10.5 billion contract — the largest in U.S. Coast Guard history — to build the first series of nine offshore patrol cutters, topping the biggest and best boatyards in the country in the process.

The end of the several-years-long process ended about 4 p.m. Thursday when Eastern CEO Brian D’Isernia got the news.

“How do I feel? I feel great; my phone is going crazy. We won it,” D’Isernia told The News Herald in an exclusive interview from Washington, D.C. “I told the Coast Guard this was truly a family event from beginning until now. What a legacy to leave, for the community, my family, my sons. We did it.”

Eastern, which has two shipyards in Bay County, was one of three finalists vying for the $10.5 billion contract to build 25 next-generation offshore patrol cutters — at about $484 million each — and one of eight shipyards that originally submitted proposals for the project...

Tyndal AFB

Partnership brings $2.6 million in math, science funding

Wednesday
PANAMA CITY — Five Bay District high schools — Arnold, Bay, Bozeman, Mosley and Rutherford — are about to get a big boost in their math and science education.

The schools will be a part of the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI), an academic, nationwide program funded by the Department of Defense to boost high-level course enrollment and performance, particularly in the science and math fields.

The program comes with $2.6 million in funding over three years, used to expand course offerings, sponsor weekend study sessions and provide financial incentives for students to perform well on Advanced Placement exams. The five schools were selected because of the number of military families they serve.

Superintendent Bill Husfelt said the initiative will boost the economic vitality of Bay County by producing students well-prepared for college, the military and the workforce. It also will provide more diverse academic opportunities for students.

“It means money and dollars, but to you, it means choices,” Husfelt told students during a raucous pep rally Wednesday in Bay High School’s Cobb Gymnasium to celebrate the new initiative.

Col. Ronald Pieri from Tyndall Air Force Base highlighted the overlap between STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields and the military, saying students who choose to take advantage of the NMSI incentives will be on the forefront of future technology.

Camp Blanding

Army to Recognize Outstanding Community Partnerships

In Mission Support/Community Partnerships

September 12, 2016

Dan Cohen
The Army is launching an awards program to recognize partnerships between installations and communities that enhance readiness through installation support services.

“Partnering with federal, state and local governments to find creative solutions to challenges is especially important during times of constrained resources,” according to a memo announcing the competition from Lt. Gen. Gwen Bingham, assistant chief of staff for installation management. The awards program will be incorporated into the Army Community of Excellence program in the future…

**NAS Jacksonville**

**Jacksonville company wins $25 million Army Corps of Engineers contract**

Sep 12, 2016, 2:08pm EDT


BVM-VJR JV LLC of Fleming Island was awarded a $25 million contract for multiple construction projects for the Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville district.

The contract will be for roofing projects throughout the district, including demolition, repairs, renovation and construction. The first project will be at Naval Air Station Jacksonville for roof work on Building 171.

The contract is for one year with four additional option years, bringing the estimated completion to September 2021.

**McDill AFB**

**New commander for 927th Air Refueling Wing at Tampa’s MacDill AFB**

By Howard Altman | Times Staff Writer
The 927th Air Refueling Wing, headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base, has a new commander.

Col. Randy Bright turned over command of the Air Force Reserve refueling unit to Col. Frank Amodeo during a ceremony on base Sunday morning.

“Col. Bright has done a phenomenal job executing his duties as commander of the 927 Air Refueling Wing,” 4th Air Force Reserve Commander Maj. Gen. John C. Flournoy, who presided over the ceremony, said on the wing’s website. “We’re glad to be gaining him up at Air Force Reserve Command headquarters as we know and understand that he’ll do an excellent job up there.”

**US Central Command**

**Former CENTCOM Commander John Abizaid Named Senior Defense Adviser to Ukraine**

Ramona Adams September 12, 2016 Defense & National Security

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter has appointed John Abizaid, a retired U.S. Army general and former commander of the U.S. Central Command, as senior defense adviser to Ukraine.

The Defense Department said Thursday Abizaid will give authoritative advice to Ukraine’s defense minister Stepan Poltorak and other senior Ukrainian officials.

Abizaid will seek to support Ukraine’s efforts to align its armed forces with Western principles and standards such as democratic civilian control of the military, a NATO-interoperable organizational structure and anti-corruption measures, DoD added…

**US Special Operations Command**

Top U.S. Special Forces general: 'We're hurting ourselves' with all these movies and books
Army Gen. Raymond "Tony" Thomas, head of U.S. Special Operations Command, rarely talks specifics about the troops under his command. Direct action raids in Iraq, rescue missions in Afghanistan, Special Operations forces deployed in places like Syria, Somalia and Yemen are all - if even acknowledged - described in broad platitudes.

But when asked about the propensity of some of his elite forces to write books, star in movies and help advise on the production of certain video games, Thomas is outspoken - and angry.

"It is a phenomenon that is anathema to me. It runs counter to everything that any of us whoever entered special operations know [is] the right way to do business," Thomas said during a conference hosted by the Institute for the Study of War in Washington on Wednesday. "It baffles me that people don't hold true to that standard."

"We won't tolerate it," he added…

Cape Canaveral AFS

Blue Origin to launch 'New Glenn' rockets from Cape Canaveral

Rocket named for the first American in orbit

Posted: 3:35 PM, September 12, 2016Updated: 3:35 PM, September 12, 2016

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. - The rockets Blue Origin builds and launches on the Space Coast will be some of the world's largest, the company announced Monday, while also hinting at plans for eventual moon missions.

Jeff Bezos, the billionaire Amazon.com CEO and founder of Seattle-based Blue Origin, revealed new details about the planned orbital rockets, including their name: New Glenn, paying tribute to John Glenn, the first American to orbit Earth, News 6 partner Florida Today reported…
SpaceX reaches out to public to help with investigation into rocket explosion

Updated: Sep 12, 2016 - 9:03 AM


CAPE CANAVERAL AIR FORCE STATION - A massive fireball rocked Cape Canaveral Air Force Station Sept. 1 when a SpaceX rocket exploded during a pre-flight test, and now the company is reaching out to the public for help determining what happened.

“If you have audio, photos or videos of our anomaly last week, please send to report@spacex.com,” the company said on Twitter. “Material may be useful for investigation.”

After a week of public silence, SpaceX chief executive Elon Musk called the launch pad accident the "most difficult and complex failure" in the company's 14-year history…

SpaceX Says Launch Pad Explosion Probe Won't Slow Its Space Taxi Project

by Reuters

SEPTEMBER 15, 2016, 4:41 PM EDT


SpaceX on Thursday said efforts to develop and certify a space taxi for NASA are not being slowed by an investigation into a launch pad fire that destroyed its rocket and a $200 million Israeli communications satellite.

Boeing and SpaceX, owned and operated by technology entrepreneur Elon Musk, are building spaceships to fly NASA astronauts to the International Space Station, a $100 billion laboratory that flies 250 miles (400 km) above Earth.

NASA, or the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, is looking to turn over crew transport to SpaceX and Boeing before the end of 2018, breaking a Russian monopoly…

Patrick AFB
Senior Pentagon leaders visit AFTAC’s community school

By Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs / Published September 15, 2016


PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- Senior officials from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) toured Endeavour Elementary School in Cocoa, Fla., Brevard County’s first and the State of Florida’s only elementary-level community school during their visit to the Air Force Technical Applications Center Sept. 7, 2016 for the center’s annual Women in Science and Engineering Symposium.

Dr. Jarris L. Taylor Jr., Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Strategic Diversity Integration, Col. Angela Giddings and Maj. Denisha Darcus, both with the Air Force Diversity and Inclusion office, and Ed Lee, program coordinator for historically black colleges, universities and minority-serving institutions, traveled to the school, with which AFTAC has had a community partnership since May 2015. The quartet, accompanied by AFTAC’s human resources program manager Rose Day, met with Endeavour’s principal and assistant principals, Rachad Wilson, Doreen Carlo-Coryell and Christy Meraz. Also in attendance was Michele Scott, planning director for Children’s Home Society…

Team Orlando

Military Training Happens Virtually in Florida

By NewsUSA@NewsUSA.com (NewsUSA) Posted Sep. 15, 2016 @ 3:41 pm


(NewsUSA) - Sponsored News - Florida is no stranger to the entertainment industry. After all, it's home to the most visited theme parks on Earth. What people may not know is that the Sunshine State's entertainment expertise is also used to train our nation's military.

At first glance, you wouldn't think the two industries would have much in common. But, according to Forbes magazine, Florida ranks no. 6 in the country in video-game development, and when coupled with Central Florida's High-Tech Corridor, the result is a community of defense contractors, government agencies, and universities that are loaded with engineers who understand how using entertainment components can transform military training.
The partnerships happen at a 1,000-plus-acre research park in Orlando that is home to the country's largest cluster of training and simulation companies and agencies, including Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman Corp., General Dynamics Corp. and Honeywell International, as well as a host of military organizations…

**State effort seeks more buildings to fend off base closure**

*Marco Santana - Contact Reporter* Orlando Sentinel


The state of Florida hopes to buy at least two more buildings in Orlando to help shield the region’s military cluster from expected federal base closures.

Retired U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. Tom Baptiste said he was confident that the state would secure additional buildings on top of a $13.89 million purchase in University of Central Florida’s Research Park.

In all, the state appropriated $42 million over three years in an effort to relocate 200,000 square feet of leased space at the research park. The state closed on one building with 84,000 square feet in February…

**Defense Industry:**

**Collapse in Defense R&D Spending Hits Contractors Hard**

By Sandra I. Erwin


One key source of revenue for the defense industry — research and development contracts — appears to be in free fall. Analysts see a collapse in Pentagon R&D contracts as bad news for all defense contractors but especially for the largest firms that historically have dominated this sector.
Government cutbacks imposed by the 2011 Budget Control Act and a simultaneous decline in war spending collectively have ravaged defense research-and-development programs and have resulted in a steep drop in R&D contracts awarded to private firms, says a new study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

CSIS analysts Andrew Hunter, Greg Sanders, Jesse Ellman and Kaitlyn Johnson drew their research from federal procurement data. The study sheds new light on the massive impact that the military spending drawdown is having on the defense industry. Defense R&D contract obligations peaked at $47.5 billion in 2009 and dropped to $22.4 billion in 2015. The numbers in the study are in inflation-adjusted 2015 dollars. …

**Harris CEO Bill Brown on a Very Good Year**

By: **Jill Aitoro**, September 11, 2016 *(Photo Credit: Courtesy of Harris Corp.)*


In February 2015, when Harris first announced its plans to acquire fellow defense company Exelis, CEO Bill Brown called the deal transformational. Nearly 16 months after the deal close, it’s fair to say that’s true. Harris saw its defense revenue climb 85 percent in 2015 to $4.4 billion. It jumped in our Top 100 rankings from 39 to 17.

Brown spoke to Defense News Executive Editor Jill Aitoro about the acquisition, a year and a half later, and what the future holds for a company now swimming among the far bigger fish. …

**Boeing Unveils T-X Advanced Trainer Aircraft**

By: **Valerie Insinna**, September 13, 2016 *(Photo Credit: Boeing Defense, Space & Security)*

ST. LOUIS — Boeing on Tuesday revealed its candidate for the Air Force’s next trainer: a single-engine, twin-tailed aircraft made in a partnership with Swedish firm Saab.

After a dramatic rollout ceremony punctuated with dubstep music, flashing lights and a dropcloth unveiling of the plane, company executives dropped another bombshell: Boeing has already manufactured two of the jets.

“Our T-X design features: twin tails, a modern design that allows better maneuverability than a single tailed aircraft, stadium seating that provides rear visibility to the instructor … and a maintenance friendly design,” Darryl Davis, president of Boeing Phantom Works, said during the event. “Just as impressive is what you can’t see. What you can’t see is the advanced design and manufacturing that went into this.”

Other of interest:

Israel, US Agree to 10-Year Defense Deal

By: Aaron Mehta, September 13, 2016

Washington -- Israel and the United States have agreed to a ten-year defense deal, the largest and longest such agreement between the two nations.

The agreement will be signed Wednesday at the US Department of State, according to a government news release. No other details have been made public.

The agreement is the follow-on to a $30 billion, 10-year memorandum of understanding signed in 2007…

Troops often don’t vote, cite obstacles and skepticism their ballots will be counted

By Nancy Montgomery | Stars and Stripes

http://www.stripes.com/news/troops-often-don-t-vote-cite-obstacles-and-skepticism-their-ballots-will-be-counted-
VICENZA, Italy — Military voters can vote early. They can also vote often. Yet many don’t vote at all.

A variety of factors, including age, gender, education, marital status, mobility and complexity of the voting process all influence voting behavior, experts say, and tend to make those serving their country — particularly young, enlisted men posted overseas — among the least likely to vote.

“Historically, male and younger voters participate at lower rates than female and older voters, which can drive down the overall voter participation rates of the military,” which is predominantly male and younger, according to a 2014 report to Congress by the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

**Florida Delegation's Push for Closer Military Ties to Israel Succeeds**

By KEVIN DERBY

September 14, 2016 - 6:30pm


The two congressional representatives from Florida who lead the House Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee scored a win this week as the U.S. House passed a resolution backing a longterm Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on military assistance between the U.S. and Israeli governments.

U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., who chairs the subcommittee, was joined by her colleague U.S. Rep. Ted Deutch, D-Fla., the ranking Democrat on the subcommittee, in launching the resolution back in May. Twenty other members of the Florida delegation also co-sponsored the proposal.

The House passed the resolution 405-4 on Tuesday afternoon. Four Republicans-- Justin Amash of Michigan, Jimmy Duncan of Tennessee, Walter Jones of North Carolina and Thomas Massie of Kentucky--voted against the resolution.

After the vote on Tuesday, Ros-Lehtinen made her case for the resolution. …
Task Force members --

1. **Next Meeting:** The next Task Force meeting will be by Conference Call/Webex on October 20, 2016 – beginning at 9:00 AM.

2. **Call In Numbers –**
   
   Call In Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Florida Cabinet Meeting Items of Interest (20 September 2016):**
   
   a. The Cabinet approved purchases for two base encroachment issues:
      
      i. Whiting Field: The cabinet approved purchase of 616 acres that will buffer Whiting Field operations. The land will be managed by the Florida Forest Service.
      
      ii. McDill AFB: The cabinet approved purchase of a permanent development restriction easement on a portion of the Florida Rock parcel on the departure end of Runway 04. This easement purchased a portion of a tier 1 property and partially fulfills the Task Force strategic plan on stopping encroachment that would reduce military potential of Florida bases.

   b. FDVA introduced and the cabinet approved the slate of Florida Veterans to enter the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame, Class 2016.

   **Eleven Inducted into 2016 Class of the**

   **Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame**

   **TALLAHASSEE** – Gov. Rick Scott and the Cabinet inducted eleven individuals into the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame. The unanimous vote for the Class of 2016 came during the Sept. 20 Cabinet Meeting at the Capitol.

   Inductees are:

   - Reubin O. Askew, U.S. Air Force veteran (deceased)
   - LeRoy Collins, U.S. Navy veteran (deceased)
   - Jordon J. “J.J.” Corbett, U.S. Army veteran
The Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame recognizes and honors those military veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the state of Florida through civic, business, public service or other pursuits. It is not a traditional military hall of fame, as it focuses on post-military contributions to the State of Florida.

An induction ceremony to honor the eleven inductees is scheduled for Nov. 9, 2016 at 2:30 p.m. in the Cabinet Room of the Florida Capitol. For more information, visit [http://www.floridaveteranshalloffame.org/index.asp](http://www.floridaveteranshalloffame.org/index.asp)

4. **Florida GI Bill II Overview**: Attached is Brig Gen Diehl’s overview document for review. Please look at it with an eye toward developing legislative action. The Task Force will ultimately be looking for input and specific legislative proposals that can facilitate grouping these and other ideas and proposals into a potential omnibus GI Bill II for Florida.

5. **Florida Defense Support Task Force FY 17-18 Grants**: The Task Force will be accepting grant applications from 28 September - 27 October 2016 for consideration for funding during FY 17-18. The grant application/RFP will be officially released next week. No final decisions on the grant applications will be made until May 2017. To account for emerging projects, the Task Force will accept additional applications during February/March of 2017. **Task Force members should expect to be contacted as sponsors for project applications over the next several weeks.**

6. **Florida Legislative Committee Weeks Announced** – The Florida Legislature announced its schedule of interim committee meetings for the 2017 regular session. Please note that the House and Senate plan to meet during separate weeks in December:
Monday, December 5th - Friday, December 9th (House of Representatives)
Monday, December 12th - Friday, December 16th (Senate)
Monday, January 9th - Friday, January 13th
Monday, January 23rd - Friday, January 27th
Monday, February 6th - Friday, February 10th
Monday, February 13th - Friday, February 17th
Monday, February 20th - Friday, February 24th

The regular session will convene on Tuesday, March 7th, 2017.

7. Attachments:
   - FL GI Bill II Overview

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EnterpriseFlorida.com
NEW JERSEY ENLISTS CASSIDY BRAC TEAM

The Burlington County Times reports this afternoon that “New Jersey has rehired (Cassidy & Associates) to assist with efforts to protect Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst and the state’s other military installations from cutbacks and closures, and to develop strategies to attract new missions.”

Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno, chair of the state’s Military Installation Growth and Development Task Force, made the announcement, “I am pleased to announce the well-respected firm Cassidy & Associates has been selected as the advocate for our state’s military installations.”

NAS Pensacola

L-3 Gets $166M Option on T-45 Maintenance Support Contract With Navy

Dominique Stump September 20, 2016 Contract Awards

http://www.govconwire.com/2016/09/l-3-gets-166m-option-on-t-45-maintenance-support-contract-with-navy/
The U.S. Navy has exercised a $166.3 million contract option for L-3 Communications (NYSE: LLL) to perform maintenance and logistics work on approximately 200 T-45 Goshawk training jets.

L-3’s Vertex Aerospace subsidiary will continue to provide sustaining engineering, supply and government property management and related parts and materials procurement services to support an estimated 320 aircraft launches a day at various naval air stations, the Defense Department said Monday.

Work will occur at Naval Air Station Meridian in Mississippi, NAS Kingsville in Texas and NAS Pensacola in Florida and NAS Patuxent River in Maryland through September 2017…

Hurlburt Field

Air Force to Consolidate Battlefield Training Locations to '3 or 4'

Military.com | Sep 20, 2016 | by Oriana Pawlyk

http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/09/20/air-force-consolidate-battlefield-training-locations-to-3-or-4.html

The Air Force will consolidate eight locations it uses to train its battlefield airmen into "three or four," the head of Air Education Training Command said Monday.

"This is a very important piece of our warfighting capability," Lt. Gen. Darryl Roberson told reporters during a briefing at the Air Force Association's annual Air, Space & Cyber Conference outside Washington, D.C.

"Modernization and recapitalization for our battlefield airmen is occurring across five strategic pillars" -- recruiting; manpower and leadership; equipment; infrastructure; and curriculum, he said.

The current centers are scattered around seven states, forcing airmen to move back and forth too much, Roberson said. "Every time we need to send an airman [somewhere different], we lose a week of training."
The consolidation, which could take more than a year, is designed to provide improved infrastructure with enhanced aquatic training for combat rescue and other missions.

"Right now, we do not have an adequate pool, aquatic training facility," Roberson said. "We're doing it, but when we consolidate to the three or four, we're going to be able to hopefully build a new aquatic system."

The service is conducting environmental assessment surveys for the following eight locations: Eglin Air Force Base, Patrick AFB and Hurlburt Field in Florida; Joint Base San Antonio, Texas; Keesler AFB, Mississippi; Little Rock AFB, Arkansas; Shaw AFB, South Carolina; and Vandenberg AFB, California.

EGLIN AFB

Air Force grounds 15 F-35As, none at Eglin

Saturday, Posted Sep 17, 2016 at 9:56 AM, Updated Sep 17, 2016 at 12:48 PM

By BOB HEIST | @bobheistNWFDN


The troubled F-35A Lightning II program hit another snag Friday when the Air Force announced that 15 of the aircraft were temporarily grounded after peeling and crumbling insulation in avionics cooling lines inside the fuel tanks was discovered.

In a statement from the Air Force, released by multiple media outlets, it was noted that a total 57 of the fifth generation fighter jet aircraft were affected by the insulation problem — 42 of which are still in production. F-35A Lightning II manufacturer Lockheed Martin and Air Force officials are “developing procedures to resolve or mitigate the issue” before those aircraft become operational, the Air Force said.

The Daily News has confirmed that none of the grounded F-35A aircraft are located at Eglin Air Force Base. In a statement, Lockheed Martin said “the issue is confined to one supplier source and one batch of parts.”…
Area makes list of Top 10 Defense Communities

Wednesday, Posted Sep 21, 2016 at 3:04 PM, Updated Sep 21, 2016 at 3:04 PM

By Kelly Humphrey | 315-4443 | @Kellyhnwfdn | khumphrey@nwfdailynews.com


It’s official: The Association of Defense Communities has named the area surrounding Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field one of the country’s Top 10 Great American Defense Communities.

That probably came as no surprise to the hundreds of military, business and community leaders who gathered for the annual Economic Development Council Defense Roundtable on Wednesday morning.

“Everyone in this room is aware of the importance of our military installations,” Nathan Sparks, the EDC’s executive director, told the crowd. “We also know that those installations are made up of people with families, and all of you here are working to find ways to serve them.”

Bob Ross, a member of the board of directors of the Association of Defense Communities, presented the award at the meeting. He singled out EDC Associate Director Kay Rasmussen for preparing the nomination package for the award…

Tyndal AFB

New housing development to be built near Tyndall Air Force Base

By Kelly Baumgarten | 5:42 PM, Sep 20, 2016  | 5:50 PM, Sep 20, 2016

BAY COUNTY, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) - A new housing development will soon be a reality.


Tuesday Bay County Commissioners gave the green light to developers to build 64 homes on 70 acres of land near Tyndall Air Force Base. The development will be located on the south side of Highway 98 to the west of Mexico Beach and the east of the base.
Developers have been working on the plans for more than a year and made sure to clear it with the military base.

"Tyndall was happy and satisfied with this plan, said that it wouldn't infringe upon their mission," said Commissioner Guy Tunnell, "which is very important to our country certainly and to Bay County, and we've always supported our military installations here and I'm glad we were able to work together collectively to make this project a go."

No timeline yet on when construction on the development will begin…

Camp Blanding

Air Defenders welcome new commander

STARKE, FL, UNITED STATES, 09.11.2016

Story by Sgt. Valeria Pete, Florida National Guard Public Affairs Office

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/209868/air-defenders-welcome-new-commander

Starke, Fla. -- Lt. Col. Michael E. Powers, outgoing commander of 1st Battalion (BN), 265 Air Defense Artillery (ADA) Regiment, relinquished command to Lt. Col. Luis F. Garcia, incoming commander of 1-265 ADA BN, during a ceremony at the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center (CBJTC), Fla. Parade Field, Sunday, September 11, 2016. The day also marked the 15th anniversary of 9/11, a day that the Soldiers of 1-265 ADA BN will always remember…

Camp Blanding receives environmental award

STARKE, FL, UNITED STATES

09.16.2016, Story by Sgt. Christopher Vann

Florida National Guard Public Affairs Office

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/210075/camp-blanding-receives-environmental-award
CAMP BLANDING, FL- The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health, Mr. Eugene Collins, presented the Environmental Restoration award to Camp Blanding Joint Training Center’s Environmental Program, Sep. 16, 2016. The CBJTC has received two prestigious environmental awards recently, the other being in 2014.

“This award recognizes Camp Blanding Joint Training Center as having the very best Environmental Restoration program out of all Army posts,” said Col. Daniel “Matt” Johnson, commander, Camp Blanding Joint Training Center. “This recognition of the CBJTC Environmental team shows the Florida National Guard's serious commitment to preserving and restoring the natural environment.

Mr. Collins emphasized CBJTC’s ability to work as a team during the awards presentation. He took the time to acknowledge all of those involved, from the CBJTC leadership, to the program’s director and all of the staff that played an integral part in winning the prestigious award…

**NS Mayport**

Newest littoral combat ship eventually headed for Mayport launches in Wisconsin

By Joe Daraskevich Fri, Sep 16, 2016 @ 1:26 pm | updated Sat, Sep 17, 2016 @ 4:08 pm


The nation’s 13th littoral combat ship touched water for the first time Saturday when it was launched in Wisconsin to start a journey that will end in its future home at Mayport Naval Station.

Despite several recent issues with testing on similar ships already in the water, the company that built the future USS Wichita (LCS 13) is standing by its design.

“We’ve had no issues with the structural rigidity and the strength of our hull,” said Joe North, vice president of littoral ships and systems at Lockheed Martin. “In the past on the heavy-weather trials we had one minor issue that was a workmanship issue in a very tight location, and we have looked at that and we have had to make no design changes to our hulls at all.”

The newest ship is 80 percent complete and set to be delivered to the Navy next year, North said. He said it is scheduled to be commissioned in 2018 when it will join the fleet as the USS Wichita…
LCS Montgomery Suffers Two Engine Casualties Days after Commissioning

Military.com | Sep 17, 2016 | by Hope Hodge Seck


Just three days after a glittering commissioning ceremony in Mobile, Alabama, the Navy's newest littoral combat ship suffered two unrelated engine casualties, totaling enough damage that the ship was forced to abandon its transit to its San Diego homeport and head to Florida for repairs.

The USS Montgomery is the third littoral combat ship in three weeks to suffer significant engine problems, and the fifth within a 12-month span.

The Independence-class ship's casualties, first reported by USNI News, come on the heels of sweeping changes to the LCS program and a series of reviews, most aimed at correcting the problems behind the rash of ship breakdowns.

The Montgomery will stop for fuel at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, before sailing to Naval Station Mayport, Florida, to conduct warranty repairs, officials with Naval Surface Force, Pacific, said in a statement.

The ship sustained damage Sept. 13, first with a seawater leak in its hydraulic cooling system, then later that day with a casualty to one of its gas turbine engines. It's not clear what the extent of the damage is or what caused the problems…

NAS Jacksonville

Navy Deploys P-8A Aircraft to U.S. Sixth Fleet

By RICHARD R. BURGESS, Managing Editor

Posted: September 16, 2016 1:05 PM


ARLINGTON, Va. — A Navy P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft squadron has deployed to the U.S. Sixth Fleet for the first time, expanding the aircraft’s deployed force levels to a third area of responsibility beyond the Western Pacific and the Persian Gulf.
Patrol Squadron 45 (VP-45), based at Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville, Fla., has deployed to NAS Sigonella, Sicily, Italy, in support of operations in the U.S. European Command area of responsibility. Prior to this deployment, maritime patrol coverage in the region was provided by VP squadrons flying P-3C Orions…

**McDill AFB**

**Deal aims to protect MacDill, but does it go far enough?**

Jeremy Wallace, Times/Herald Tallahassee Bureau

Wednesday, September 21, 2016 4:56pm


The state will spend $1.3 million to protect MacDill Air Force Base from residential growth encroaching on it, but the land acquisition is leaving state officials frustrated that they couldn't do more to block plans for a potential hotel that could threaten the base's future.

Gov. Rick Scott and the Florida Cabinet agreed to the land purchase Tuesday because it would bar residential development over 25.2 acres owned by Florida Rock & Tank Lines next to MacDill. But enthusiasm over that deal soured when state officials learned from MacDill officials that Florida Rock will continue to have the right to build a hotel or motel on nearly 15 acres on the property's north end, a proximity they deem too close to airfields.

That hotel or motel would be in "accident potential zone" and would be "incompatible" with the base's needs, Col. Pat Miller of the 6th Mission Support Group at MacDill told Scott and the Cabinet before the Tuesday vote.

Cabinet members expressed alarm over the state's inability to prevent a motel that could hinder base operations in the future.

"I have reticence that we were unable to negotiate away a future hotel at the end of a runway," said Florida Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam. "I'm not sure why it's such a hot idea anyway."

Florida's Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater said he worried that the Air Force's needs were being "run over" in the process.
Still, it's the best deal the state could get, said Bruce Grant, executive director of the Florida Defense Support Task Force, which is part of the state's Enterprise Florida agency.

"It is not optimum and it doesn't take care of the entire problem, but it does take care of part of the problem," Grant said.

**US Central Command**

**Investigation reveals CENTCOM general delayed intel on ISIS fight meant for the president**


On a rainy day in September 2014, President Obama paid a visit to U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida for a briefing from General Lloyd Austin.

Among the topics was the training and equipping of fragile Iraqi security forces to stop the explosive growth of ISIS. The cost of the program was to be $1.2 billion.

After the hour-long briefing, the president addressed the troops. “I just received a briefing from General Austin and met with your commanders, met with representatives from more than 40 nations,” he said. “It is a true team effort here at MacDill.”

But at the time, **CENTCOM’s intelligence operation was anything but unified.**

Critical assessments of the Iraqi security forces were regularly being altered by top intelligence brass. Words like “slow,” “stalled,” and “retreat” were changed to “deliberate” and “relocated.” This had the effect of painting a rosier picture in final reports delivered to General Austin and his staff.

But it didn’t stop there. In one instance, CENTCOM’s director of intelligence, Major General Steven R. Grove, blocked a negative assessment of Iraq’s military from the President’s Daily Brief, a top secret intelligence summary viewed only by the president and his closest advisers…. 
A commercial imaging satellite featuring a powerful Harris Corp. camera could blast off Sunday from California’s central coast atop an Atlas V rocket.

Liftoff was tentatively reset for 2:30 p.m. EDT Sunday pending a repair of ground equipment.

The rocket is expected to take less than 20 minutes to deploy the roughly $600 million satellite in a north-south orbit circling nearly 400 miles above the planet…

SpaceX has announced its plans for November rocket launch after witnessing a major setback in September when its rocket exploded while undergoing preparations for a test fire at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.
As per Elon Musk, CEO and founder of SpaceX, it was not an explosion, but a ‘fast fire’. But those who have witnessed the incident said that the blast turned the Falcon 9 rocket into a bowl of fire. The incident that took place on September 1 is considered as one of the biggest setbacks for SpaceX as well as for Facebook and Eutelsat, a French satellite provider.

The SpaceX rocket was supposed to lift off the Israeli communications satellite known as Amos 6 into space. Facebook and Eutelsat have invested around $100 million each in the project.

Investigation is on, but SpaceX does not want to sit back. Elon Musk has made it clear that the company will resume its flights in November, which means after the gap of three months, the space exploration major is ready to get back on the track.

SpaceX President Gwynne Shotwell was of the view, “We're anticipating ... being down for about three months, getting back to flight in the November time frame”...

Rocket propellant manufacturer eyes Titusville

James Dean, FLORIDA TODAY 10:29 p.m. EDT September 20, 2016
http://www.floridatoday.com/staff/10179/james-dean/

A maker of propellant for small solid rocket motors could bring 80 jobs with wages averaging $83,000 to Titusville, according to Space Florida.

At a Sept. 28 board meeting in Orlando, Space Florida plans to discuss the company referred to only by the code name “Project Swanson” in meeting materials posted online.

The company is “seeking to establish a manufacturing site in the United States,” according to the documents, and could invest up to $4 million in new facilities and equipment at “the Titusville-Cocoa Airport (TICO).”...

Patrick AFB
EFSC opens education center on Patrick Air Force Base

Caroline Glenn, FLORIDA TODAY 6:59 p.m. EDT September 16, 2016


If military personnel at Patrick Air Force base can’t get to class, then Eastern Florida State College is bringing the classes to them.

Active airmen and their families can now take the same courses offered at EFSC’s regional campuses at a new Education Center on base that will start classes in October. Already offering classes through Webster University and Columbia College, the base identified the need for more educational opportunities about two years ago.

Air Force officials say getting an education is crucial for anyone, but especially those in the military who will one day return to civilian life…

Team Orlando

Orlando Leaders Hope to Extend Effort to Relocate Simulation Workers

In Mission Support/Community Partnerships

September 19, 2016

Dan Cohen

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/orlando-leaders-hope-to-extend-effort-to-relocate-simulation-workers/

Local leaders in Central Florida are hoping to purchase at least two more buildings in Orlando as part of an effort to retain the area’s defense simulation cluster in the event of a new BRAC round.

The state so far has approved $42 million to start moving 3,000 defense workers involved in simulation, training and gaming from 200,000 square feet of leased space adjacent to Naval Support Activity
Orlando. In February, the state purchased an 84,000-square-foot building near the Central Florida Research Park.

“We will make it happen,” said Thomas Baptiste, chairman of the Metro Orlando Defense Task Force. “It’s just a matter of how long is it going to take. The writing is on the wall here for the community. The engine that drives our industry here is the military presence at the research park,” he told the Orlando Sentinel.

The state is in “early discussions” about potential buildings it could purchase. “We don’t necessarily have a clear path ahead, but it has to get done,” Baptiste said…

**Orlando airport to open USO Welcome Center**

Jason Ruiter, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel


The Orlando International Airport is officially opening a USO Welcome Center on Wednesday for the hundreds of thousands of military members, veterans and their families who visit Central Florida annually.

"Most people, when they think of USO, they think of [singer and entertainer] Bob Hope," said Charles Rogers, chairman of the board of directors of USO Central Florida. "Or, they think of welcome centers at the airport."

The welcome center, tucked away near ground transportation on Terminal A-side, is the first at the airport in 15 years. The last one closed due to a lack of donations brought on by the closing of the Orlando Naval Training Center in the mid-1990s.

But with Orlando continuing to grow as a vacation destination, and military members obtaining discounts during their stays, their presence has grown…

**Medical industry professionals flock to Florida Simulation Summit in Orlando**
ORLANDO, Fla. - Hundreds of people from the medical industry are in Orlando Thursday to learn more about how medicine can be practiced virtually.

Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs is hosting the Florida Simulation Summit to profile advancements in using simulators to teach doctors, nurses and students.

Orlando has long been a hub of using simulations in the defense industry, training soldiers and sailors for battle conditions, Channel 9 Jamie Holmes learned.

"It's no longer just the domain of the military and the Department of Defense. There are commercial applications that are just exploding," said Thomas Baptiste of the National Center for Simulation.

The industry has expanded and most medical professionals receive a large portion of their training on simulators.

Simulation is a $6 billion industry in Orlando.

Florida Hospital, Nemours and Orlando Health have extensive simulation programs.

“They can do this smarter, faster, cheaper than relying on a live patient or patient actors or a complex real world scenario,” Baptiste said….

US Southern Command

Annual UNITAS Naval Exercise Kicks Off In Panama

PANAMA09.18.2016

Story by Ensign Carol McKenzie

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command & U.S. Fourth Fleet

Participants include the United States, Panama, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Peru and the United Kingdom in the U.S. Navy’s longest-running annual multinational maritime exercise.

The ten-day exercise is hosted by the Panamanian navy and will include operations in the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) Area of Responsibility through Sept. 28. Participating units from the United States include USNS Spearhead (T-EPF 1), USCGC Mohawk (WMEC 913), JTF-Bravo with 3 H-60 Blackhawk Helicopters, VBAT UAS, Puma UAS (TBC), Destroyer Squadron 40 (DESRON 40) and U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. Fourth Fleet.

UNITAS 2016 is designed to train each navy to conduct joint naval operations, through the execution of Littoral Warfare, Anti-Piracy, Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO), Countering Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC), Anti-Surface Warfare, Electronic Warfare, Communications exercises and air operations in order to increase interoperability and capability between participating naval forces.

The 57th iteration of the exercise, this year’s UNITAS will focus on promoting tactical interoperability and friendship through advanced training and joint operations…

**NAS Key West**

**Air Force increases support of JIATF South**

BY ADAM LINHARDT, Citizen Staff
Florida Keys News
http://keysnews.com/node/77620

Key West residents may not know much about the counter drug-smuggling facility on the Truman Waterfront, but rest assured, some of this nation’s and allied nations top leaders are up to speed on Joint Interagency Task Force South.

JIATF South is an intelligence-gathering organization made up of all military branches, as well as civilian law enforcement agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Agency and Customs and Border Protection. Most of the cocaine and marijuana seized in the Caribbean Sea occurs via JIATF efforts and its partner agencies from allied nations.

And things just got a little harder on drug cartels looking to get cocaine into the U.S.

For the past month, military-focused media organizations have been noting the increased use of Air Force assets in the Caribbean Sea in support of JIATF South. Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James told
reporters that the Air Force is moving more aircraft in the Southern Command that would be “of training benefit to our forces, but also contributing to counter drug and counter transnational crime commission,” according to dodbuzz.com, an online defense and acquisition journal…

**Defense Industry**

**The bottom line steered coveted $10.5 billion Coast Guard contract to shipbuilder in Florida**

BY JOE LAWLOR, STAFF WRITER


Maine's congressional delegates promise scrutiny of the contract to build cutters, but politics don't appear to factor in the decision not to award it to BIW.

It was a matter of money, not politics, that directed a contract for up to $10.5 billion in Coast Guard cutters to a shipyard in Florida and away from Bath Iron Works.

That was the explanation by politicians and industry observers as to why a yard with no apparent military ship-building experience – but with a U.S. senator who serves on two military committees – won a contract that will supply it with years of work. During the initial phase of the contract, Eastern Shipbuilding of Panama City, Florida, will construct nine cutters, and has the potential to build 25 over the long term.

The Florida shipbuilder on Thursday beat out BIW and a Louisiana shipyard for the lucrative contract with the lowest bid, although the bids have not been made public. BIW leaders have said previously that if they didn’t win the contract, there could be 1,000 or more layoffs at the Maine shipyard that employs more than 6,000 workers building ships for the Navy…

**Defense R&D takes a turn toward smaller vendors**

BY [GEORGE LEOPOLD](http://www.pressherald.com), SEP 16, 2016
As overall Pentagon R&D spending has declined over the past decade, more research contracts are going to smaller vendors at the expense of the so-called "Big Five" military contractors, according a budget analysis released this week.

An assessment by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) of the defense industrial base found that Defense Department research spending has been declining steadily as a percentage of federal R&D contracts since its peak in fiscal 2009. Over that period, military R&D contract obligations declined from nearly half the U.S. research budget in 2009 to just 22.4 percent of last year's $49.3 billion federal R&D budget…

**DoD’s Technological Superiority Depends on Out-Innovating Adversaries**

By Cheryl Pellerin, DoD News, Defense Media Activity

http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/947041/dods-technological-superiority-depends-on-out-innovating-adversaries

WASHINGTON, Sept. 16, 2016 — Future Defense Department technological superiority hinges on the department’s ability to out-innovate its adversaries, rethink how it sources technology and perhaps rethink its models for product delivery, the assistant secretary of defense for research and engineering said here yesterday.

Stephen P. Welby addressed an audience at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, discussing research and development across the defense enterprise.

Such superiority also will require a [DoD science and technology](http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/947041/dods-technological-superiority-depends-on-out-innovating-adversaries), or S&T, enterprise that is tuned to support sustained research in fundamental technologies and quickly leverage emerging technical opportunities to address warfighter needs, he added…
Northrop Grumman – Planning to grow its campus at Melbourne International Airport by more than 700,000 square feet and 1,900 new employees to fulfill a multibillion-dollar contract with the U.S. Air Force to develop long-range bombers.

Lockheed Martin – Adding 130 workers in 2017 to support its role in the U.S. Navy’s Trident II D5 Fleet Ballistic Missile program.

Pratt & Whitney – Awarded a $1.4 billion Department of Defense contract to produce propulsion systems for F-35 Lightning II fighter-jet aircraft at its West Palm Beach plant.

Embraer – Delivering six A-29 Super Tucano turboprop aircraft built at its Jacksonville plant to the Lebanese Air Force; the package includes maintenance, training and other support.

Bring the innovation to Tampa

BY: BUSINESS OBSERVER

September 23, 2016

Some Tampa area business and civic leaders are looking far outside the United States — to Israel — to lure tech startups to town, with $1 million in seed money.

The funds, from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, will go toward build-out and company relocation incentives for the Florida-Israel Business Accelerator. The Tampa Jewish Community Centers & Federation launched the program in late August. Dr. Vicki Rabenou, trained in obstetrics and gynecology and a onetime official in Israel’s Ministry of Economy, was named president and CEO of the Florida-Israel Business Accelerator.

The goal of the program, says Rabenou, is to compliment Tampa’s burgeoning tech startup scene with some new faces and energy, and also help Israeli companies grow in Florida and the United States. “Israel is in a very unique situation,” Rabenou tells Coffee Talk. “It’s surrounded by enemies yet it has one of the best startup communities in the world.”

From the report:

**Summary**

Defense budget experts began discussing the likelihood of a continuing resolution (CR) to start FY2017 early in the second session of the 114th Congress. As the start of fiscal year 2017 (FY2017) approaches, congressional consideration of a CR to fund the federal government through the opening months of the fiscal year is widely anticipated. This report provides a basic discussion of interim CRs and highlights some specific issues for the Department of Defense (DOD) under a CR. It also provides a brief look at selected FY2017 defense programs that could be affected by a CR.

As with regular appropriations bills, Congress can draft a CR to provide funding in many different ways. Under current practice, a CR is an appropriations law that provides either interim or full-year funding by referencing a set of established funding levels for the projects and activities that it funds (or covers). Such funding may be provided for a period of days, weeks, or months, and may be extended through further continuing appropriations until regular appropriations are enacted, or until the fiscal year ends. In recent fiscal years, the referenced funding level on which interim or full-year continuing appropriations has been based was the amount of budget authority that was available under specified appropriations acts from the previous fiscal year. CRs may also include provisions that enumerate exceptions to the duration, amount, or purposes for which those funds may be used for certain appropriations accounts or activities. Such provisions are commonly referred to as anomalies. The purpose of anomalies is to preserve Congress’s constitutional prerogative to provide appropriations in the manner it sees fit, even in instances when only interim funding is provided….

**Air Force Outlook for Modernizing Fleet Likely to Prompt Showdown with Capitol Hill**
The Air Force plans to shrink its fleet by 235 planes over the next five years as it sheds legacy aircraft to make way for the F-35, its fifth-generation fighter.

The service plans to divest 232 T-38 trainers, 166 A-10 Warthogs and 160 F-16s over the next five years, while adding 185 F-35s, according to its fiscal 2017 budget request. The long-term plan is nothing new. For years, officials have talked about the need to keep the F-35, KC-46A air refueling tanker and the B-21 bomber on track, reported Defense News.

But Congress could step in to slow the Air Force’s plans to retire legacy aircraft, as it has to spare the A-10 close air support aircraft in recent years.

“The age-old question is whether Congress will allow retirement of legacy aircraft, and [we’re] not assuming that here,” said Doug Berenson of Avascent. “There is just too much history around the A-10 and the B-1 bomber and a few others. We are assuming, essentially, stability in some of the legacy fleets that the Air Force would like to slim down, simply as a matter of congressional relations,” Berenson said….

**Energy**

**Utility Completes Second Array at a Georgia Military Base**

In Energy, General

September 20, 2016
Leaders from the Navy, Georgia Power and the Georgia Public Service Commission on Monday celebrated the opening of a $75 million, 30-megawatt solar array at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Ga.

Now operational, this 254-acre solar farm contains approximately 133,000 solar photovoltaic panels and is delivering energy to the installation and the surrounding community at or below the company’s avoided cost, according to a Navy news release. Georgia Power completed the project in less than a year.

The solar generation facility is the first completed by Georgia Power in collaboration with the Navy and joins a similar 30-megawatt on-base solar facility recently completed at Fort Benning. The utility is currently developing more than 150 megawatts of solar generation to serve the state’s electric customers through projects with the Navy and Army. In addition to the new arrays at Kings Bay and Fort Benning, Georgia Power is building solar facilities at Fort Gordon, Fort Stewart and Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, according to the utility.

**Energy Security Proves to Be Elusive Benefit of Large-Scale Projects, GAO Finds**

In Energy

September 19, 2016

The military services typically cite energy security as a benefit of their large-scale renewable energy projects, but in a study of 17 projects across DOD, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that only a small fraction were designed to provide power to installations in the event of a disruption of the commercial grid without additional investments.
Only two of the 17 projects — a biomass plant at Fort Drum, N.Y., and a landfill gas facility at Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, Ga. — could provide electricity to the installation during a grid outage without additional steps, according to the GAO study.

Five others would require additional investments, such as the installation of batteries or other energy storage equipment, and the integration of those improvements to the electricity delivery and control systems. For example, a solar array at Fort Benning, Ga., would require an additional $30 million to $40 million in infrastructure for energy produced by the solar plant to be used during a grid outage. Similarly, the Navy planned to invest an additional $48 million in a solar array at Camp Lejeune, N.C., to achieve that project’s energy security goals, GAO said…

**Other of Interest**

**Florida Department of Veterans Affairs Gets New Permanent Head**


Florida Gov. Rick Scott and the Cabinet unanimously appointed Glenn Sutphin as executive director of the state Department of Veterans Affairs on August 2. His appointment is subject to Senate approval.

Sutphin’s appointment was expected as he was the top choice for the post. The retired Army lieutenant colonel was the sole candidate interviewed out of 310 applicants. Sutphin, 67, has served as the department’s interim executive director since April. Mike Prendergast, the previous head, resigned to run for Citrus County sheriff.

“The appointment of a permanent executive director will provide the department with stability so that it can move forward with improving services for veterans,” said David Magann, a Florida-based veterans attorney. “It is important for the department to have strong leadership so that it can achieve its objectives of making sure veterans’ needs are met.”…
Air Force Secretary Spells Out Damage of Long-Term Continuing Resolution

By Stew Magnuson


NATIONAL HARBOR, Maryland -- Calling a continuing resolution on the fiscal year 2017 budget "all but a certainty at this point," Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James said Sept.19 if an impasse in Congress is extended into next year, it would cause severe damage to the Air Force's campaign in the Middle East and beyond.

"If this is a short-term continuing resolution — let's say three months or so — we can manage our way through that. This will be the eighth straight year that we have done so," she said at the Air Force Association annual conference.

A long-term continuing resolution will be "very, very damaging for the Air Force," she said. For starters, it would reduce the service's overall budget by $1.3 billion from its FY2017 request, she said. It would limit training and readiness accounts across the board for the total force.

"It would reduce our stocks of precision munitions, which is not a good idea in a time when we are in a fight with a group called Daesh," also known as the Islamic State. It would cut in half the production of the new KC-46 aerial refueling tanker and "prevent us from devoting the right amount of funds for the B-21 bomber," she said. In addition, it would delay some 50 military construction projects, many of which are associated with the rollout of the F-35A joint strike fighter.

"The bottom line here is we need our bills as soon as possible. We need them certainly by the December time frame, and we need sequestration to be lifted permanently," she said, referring to the Budget Control Act. ..

U.S. military commanders are 'pissed off' about the mission creep in Syria

By: Andrew Tilghman, September 18, 2016
The deal for U.S. military cooperation with Russia would expand the current mission in Syria far beyond its exclusive focus on the Islamic State group.

And the Pentagon is not happy about it.

The agreement forged by Secretary of State John Kerry and his Russian counterpart could, for the first time, broaden the American-led air campaign’s target list to include al Nusra, the notorious al Qaida-linked group that is a major actor in the multi-sided Syrian civil war. Until now, the two-year-old U.S. air campaign in Syria has been limited to ISIS.

“This could be massive mission creep,” said Josh Landis, director of the Center for Middle East Studies at the University of Oklahoma. “The military is pissed off because they’re being asked to do two jobs now. They were asked to do one job, which is kill ISIS. Now John Kerry is asking them to do another job, which is cooperate with Russia and kill al Nusra.” …

**Rubio: Let terrorist attack survivors defer student loans**

September 19, 2016, 11:31 am

By Jordain Carney

Sen. Marco Rubio wants to allow survivors of terrorist attacks to automatically defer their student loan payments after the mass shooting at an Orlando, Fla., nightclub.
The Florida Republican is introducing legislation on Monday giving survivors of terrorist attacks a "one-year pause" on payments that wouldn't count against the three-year cap on federal student loan deferments, according to a release from Rubio's office.

Rubio, who is favored this year in his race for reelection, said the legislation comes after an individual injured in June in the Pulse nightclub shooting, where a shooter killed 49 people, contacted Rubio's office worried that his injuries would impact his ability to make his loan payments.

"Unfortunately, existing law does not automatically recognize an extraordinary situation like this, where giving survivors some time to regroup and delay their payments should be commonsense," Rubio said in a statement…

**Tuition Assistance Could Help Personnel Obtain Licenses, Family Council to Recommend**

In [Military Families](http://defensecommunities.org/blog/military-families/tuition-assistance-could-help-personnel-obtain-licenses-family-council-to-recommend/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=ad64c77522-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8f35e8-ad64c77522-55792805&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)

Service members should be able to use their tuition assistance benefit to cover the cost of obtaining professional licenses and technical certifications, members of the DOD Military Family Readiness Council said last week.

The department should consider opening up the use of tuition assistance funding for uses beyond accredited education institutions since gaining technical certifications will be one of the primary avenues “our young men and women who are leaving the service are going to find employment in the civilian sector,” Sergeant Major of the Army Dan Dailey said at the Sept. 14 meeting.
Not every soldier wants to attend college, Dailey said.

The idea will be one of five the council submits to the secretary of defense as part of its annual recommendations for supporting military families, reported Military Times. The recommendation would have to go through a number of steps before the department approves it...
September 30

Task Force members --

1. **Next Meeting:** The next Task Force meeting will be by Conference Call/Webex on **October 20, 2016** – beginning at 9:00 AM.

2. **Call In Numbers** –
   
   **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Support Task Force FY 17-18 Grants:** The Task Force initiated the FY17-18 Grant application/RFP window on 28 September 2016. We will accept applications through 27 October 2016 for funding consideration during FY 17-18. No final decisions on the grant applications will be made until May 2017. To account for emerging projects, the Task Force will accept additional applications during February/March of 2017. **Task Force members should expect to be contacted as sponsors for project applications over the next several weeks.**

4. **Governors Base Command’s Meeting:** Governor Rick Scott hosted the quarterly Base Commanders Meeting on 28 September, 2016 at Camp Blanding, FL. Bruce and Terry attended and presented information on the FDSTF and FDA. Highlights of the meeting included an opportunity to introduce the Task Force to eight new installation commanders, many of whom made positive comments about Task Force support to their installation. Of note from all the great presentation, please see the attached US Army Corps of Engineers Florida Military Construction (MILCON) project list that includes more than $600M in defense projects around the state.

5. **Avon Park Runway Certification:** Avon Park AFR request for Runway use was approved by the Air Force. Buck thanked us for our help with this. Multiple aircraft types (F-16, F-18, A-10, F-35, C-130, C-17, etc) are now authorized to operate out of APAFR under day VFR (Cloud deck 1500’ above ground, visibility 3 miles) conditions. Buck will be sending us the letter of approval. This has been a multi-year effort involving the base, especially Buck, along with Maj Gen Keye Sabol, Commissioner Barbara Stewart, and our contacts at Moody. Great news that should facilitate more Air Force training on the range.

6. **Attachments:**
   - TPG Bi-Weekly Conference Call Notes
   - US Army Corps of Eng MILCON Projects

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**Terry**

Terry McCaffrey  
Deputy Executive Director
News Clips of Interest:

BRAC

GAO Highlights Primary Challenges to Reducing Unneeded Federal Facilities

In Defense Real Estate
September 26, 2016
Dan Cohen


Since 2012 the federal government has taken steps to trim its inventory of underutilized properties but the current administration still faces a variety of challenges before it can make a significant dent in its portfolio of excess properties, a senior official from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) told lawmakers on Friday.

The five primary challenges agencies need to overcome, according to Dave Wise, GAO’s director of physical infrastructure, include:
- a lack of reliable data with which to measure the extent of the problem;
- a complex disposal process;
- costly environmental requirements;
- competing stakeholder interests; and
- limited accessibility of some federal properties.

Wise testified during a hearing on legislative solutions for handling vacant federal properties sponsored by the House Oversight and Government Reform’s Transportation and Public Assets Subcommittee. In his testimony, he highlighted several of GAO’s highest-priority recommendations related to the government’s management of excess and underutilized property.
The congressional watchdog agency has called for the General Services Administration — along with the Office of Management and Budget and federal agencies — to improve the quality and transparency of the Federal Real Property Profile (FRPP), the data used to manage the government’s real estate. Specific steps include determining how individual agencies collect and report data; analyzing differences in the collecting and reporting practices; and clarifying the limitations of using FRPP data.

**NAS Pensacola**

**Escambia, Navy Host Joint AICUZ Workshops**

Escambia County Press Release:


The Escambia County Development Services Department, along with the U.S. Navy, will hold two public Compatible Use Zone maps. Single-family homes on recorded parcels are not in jeopardy, but there workshops regarding updating the county’s Air Installation may be changes to allowed uses and densities that would impact future uses of the land.

Residents are encouraged to attend one of the workshops taking place on Monday, Oct. 10 and 17 at Pensacola State College’s Warrington Campus, 5555 W. Highway 98. The workshops will run from 5:30 to 8 p.m. in the McMillian Room (3728, 3729, 3730).

The Navy first requested Escambia County adopt the AICUZ Study for NAS Pensacola and NOLF Saufley in 2010. At the time of the study Saufley was still considered an active airfield. The Navy has since removed Saufley from air operations, and the county is removing all references to Saufley in our Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan.

Escambia County attempted to adopt these maps in 2011, however, the board of county commissioners had concerns regarding the expanded density restrictions, and the project was put on hold. The majority of new restriction areas at that time were around Saufley Field, but that is no longer a concern. Commissioner Doug Underhill has led the way in revisiting this project, as the vast majority of affected parcels are in District 2.

For questions about these meetings, contact Escambia County Development Services at (850) 595-3475…

**EGLIN AFB**

**Lockheed launches first F-35A Lightning II for JASDF**

27 September 2016

Japan will purchase 42 F-35A conventional take off and landing (CTOL) through the US government’s foreign military sales programme.

Japan State Minister of Defense Kenji Wakamiya said: “With its low-observability and network capability, the F-35 is the most advanced air system with cutting-edge capability as a multi-role fighter. “As the security environment surrounding Japan has become increasingly severe, because of its excellence, it is very significant for the defence of Japan to commit to acquiring the F-35 year by year. “Given that the United States Government has designated Japan as a regional depot in the Asia-Pacific area, introduction of F-35A to Japan is a perfect example, enhancing the Japan-US alliance.”

The first four Lockheed Martin-built aircraft were produced in Fort Worth and the remaining 38 aircraft will be built at the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Final Assembly and Check-Out facility in Nagoya, Japan, where aircraft assembly is underway.

Additionally, first JASDF F-35A technicians are undergoing maintenance training at Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) in Florida and training of the first JASDF F-35A will begin at Luke AFB, Arizona, in November this year.

Eglin briefs developers on Lewis Turner parcel

Wednesday
Posted Sep 28, 2016 at 4:30 PMUpdated Sep 28, 2016 at 4:30 PM
By Kelly Humphrey | 315-4443 | @Kellyhnwfdn | khumphrey@nwfdailynews.com


FORT WALTON BEACH — A 50-acre parcel adjacent to the Okaloosa County Courthouse Annex Extension on Lewis Turner Boulevard is one step closer to being developed.

About 75 people attended an informational meeting Wednesday to learn about lease opportunities for the property, which is owned by Eglin Air Force Base.

“Overall, we’re very pleased with the level of interest and the turnout,” said Glen Wagner, a realty specialist with the 96th Civil Engineering Group. “We had several local and regional business people attend. Based on the questions that were asked, we’re more excited than ever before.”

Eglin is offering the parcel for a long-term lease. During the meeting, representatives from the base explained the Enhanced Use Lease process and gave potential developers a tour of the property.

Inside Black Dart, the Pentagon's Annual Drone-Killing Championship

As cheap drones fill the sky, contractors flock to provide "solutions."
John Knefel
September 29, 2016
https://www.inverse.com/article/21580-black-dart-exercise
The day begins early for Jonathan Hunter at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida's panhandle. He can see other vendors in the distance, waiting for their turn to demo their drone-droppers that jam signal or override controls.

This is the scene at Black Dart, the Department of Defense’s annual two-week event to test the latest in counter-drone technology. The anti-drone bonanza finished up this past weekend and came with a $4.8 million price tag. Black Dart began in 2002, but only began allowing press to attend two years ago, and even now much of what happens there is secret. Although 15 years ago the United States maintained a near-monopoly on military drone technology, 19 countries now have or are developing armed drones, according to New America’s International Security Program.

Human rights groups and privacy advocates have repeatedly raised concerns about the U.S. government’s drone programs, as well as the potential for governments to carry out relatively cheap and sweeping surveillance using drones. Despite these critiques, drone proliferation is happening in both government and civilian sectors, with the international drone market predicted to rise to $127 billion by 2020. One particular worry for military and law enforcement officials throughout the country is the potential to weaponize cheap, commercial drones either on the battlefield or in civilian life.

**NSA Panama City**

**NSA PC cleans coast, works on artificial reefs**

Saturday, Posted Sep 24, 2016 at 7:00 AM

By COLLIN BREAUX

News Herald Reporter


NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY PANAMA CITY — Friday morning was a chance for Donald Rauscher to take a break from sitting at a desk.

Instead, the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) public works engineer scooped up and bagged oyster shells at the Naval Support Activity Panama City (NSA PC) marina. Other volunteers placed the bags several feet from the shore to create reefs that will attract marine life.

“The whole purpose is to protect the shoreline from erosion,” Rauscher said. “I do a lot of volunteer work. It makes you feel good.”

Rauscher was one of about 50 volunteers, mostly NSA PC employees, who helped with the restoration Friday. NSA PC natural resource manager Carrie Backlund said the restoration will help filter out stormwater and keep sand from washing away….
Bay officials approve 70-acre development next to Tyndall AFB

Saturday
Posted Sep 24, 2016 at 9:45 PM, Updated Sep 24, 2016 at 10:08 PM
By JOHN HENDERSON
News Herald Reporter


MEXICO BEACH — A planned development just east of Tyndall Air Force Base could add 64 homes to land now populated by sand dunes, brush and trees.

The Bay County Commission on Tuesday approved the planned unit development of up to 64 residential units on 70 acres south of U.S. 98 adjacent between Crooked Island beach and the city of Mexico Beach. According to the application, the development will take place in a single phase, and plans call for a clubhouse, pool, multipurpose trail and fitness facility, as well as conservation land.

For several months, the developer has been discussing the project with Tyndall Air Force Base and environmental permitting groups.

“We have been working on this property well over a year,” planner Ray Greer told commissioners Tuesday…..

QF-16 reaches IOC

Marina Malenic, Washington, DC - IHS Jane's Defence Weekly
28 September 2016


The Boeing QF-16 Full-Scale Aerial Target (FSAT) reached initial operational capability (IOC) on 23 September, the US Air Force (USAF) announced in a press statement.

Air Combat Command chief General Hawk Carlisle approved the milestone for all 15 QF-16s available for target operations. The fleet is assigned to Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, and flown by the 82nd Aerial Target Squadron (ATRS) under the 53rd Wing.

The QF-16 will replace the legacy QF-4 aerial target, which flew its last unmanned mission on 17 August at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico. The QF-4 fleet will retire in December.

Camp Blanding

Clay County Commissioners pass 16-17 final budget

Posted Wednesday, September 28, 2016 8:00 pm
GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Already looking to next year’s budget and with the hint of a mystery surrounding this year’s vote, Clay County commissioners Tuesday passed a final budget and millage rate for 2016-17.

Commissioners passed a budget of $312,801,311 and a millage rate of 8.1010 at Tuesday’s second and final public hearing concerning the two issues….

…The issue involved the final public hearing on a request from the owners of some 4,615 acres of property near State Road 21 and Sharon Road to rezone the area from AG (agricultural) to AR (agriculture residential). The rezoning would allow for a ratio of one dwelling unit per 10 acres, as opposed to the existing ratio of one dwelling unit per 20 acres.

The property, some of which borders Camp Blanding, has three owners: the Bear Bay Timber Co. LLC; William McArthur Trustee and Hawks Swamp LLC. The rezoning “brings the zoning up to speed with the land use,” which was changed from AG to AR about eight years ago, said Susan Fraser of SLF Consulting, who is acting as representative for the owners.

The item came before the Planning Commission at its Sept. 6 meeting and was voted down 5-1. Some members of the Planning Commission said they were worried the rezoning request would lead to more future development and even require a possible new school. They also wondered why the request was coming up now.

At that meeting Fraser said there were no current plans for any subdivision, and that the request had more to do with conveying some property to two nephews.

Although officials from Camp Blanding were notified of the rezoning request, no one from the military base attended the Sept. 6 Planning Commission meeting or Tuesday’s BCC meeting. Even so, Camp Blanding officials asked that the item be given a continuance so they could study it further.

A position is also available on the Planning Commission for a regular representative from Camp Blanding, but since the previous representative passed away a couple of years ago, the newly appointed representative has not attended, county officials said.

While expressing their support for Camp Blanding and all it does for the county as a major economic development driver, many officials made it clear they hoped the camp would be more involved in the future.

Commissioner Buck Burney, the commissioner in whose district Camp Blanding lies, said he was sure that would be the case. Burney’s motion to bring back the rezoning request to the county commission (after more discussion with those at Camp Blanding) no later than the Nov. 10 meeting was approved 5-0. That date will allow both Davis and Robinson to vote on the item before they leave office as county commissioners.
Tampa company receives contract worth about $23 million to repair stretch of pier at Mayport

By Joe Daraskevich Mon, Sep 26, 2016 @ 3:12 pm | updated Mon, Sep 26, 2016 @ 3:54 pm


A construction company based in Tampa recently received a contract worth about $23 million to repair a 1,950-foot stretch of pier at Mayport Naval Station.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast awarded the contract Thursday to Orion Marine Construction Inc., and construction is expected to be complete by September 2017.

The section of the pier in need of repair is called Wharf Bravo and was built in 1970. It is at the western end of Mayport’s turning basin.

Nonprofit Builds Lake Trail for Military Families at Naval Station Mayport

In Military Families, Mission Support/Community Partnerships
September 26, 2016
Dan Cohen


Starting next month, sailors and their families living at Naval Station Mayport will be able to enjoy the first phase of a community-led project to enhance access to a lake at the center of a housing development at the Jacksonville base.

The $1.4 million project is the brainchild of Sharon Ellis, who started True Blue: Navy Families Benefactors in 2012 to improve the quality of life for Navy families. When the project is complete, there will be a mile-long paved walkway circling the lake, a canoe and kayak launch on the dock, and a concrete path and pavilion near a newly built playground on the lake’s west side, reported the Florida Times-Union.

After the Navy approved the project in May 2013, Ellis — who did not serve in the military, but is married to a retired Navy sailor — began to raise funds. The Armed Forces Families Foundation donated the playground and pavilion, and the Herbert and Gertrude Halverstadt Foundation donated money for a new bridge that is part of the pathway.

True Blue already is looking ahead to its next effort to increase support for Navy families. “We’re at a place now where late this year or early next year we are going to go out after some major donors,” Ellis said.
New energy efficiency and water conservation program at Mayport Naval Station expected to save about $600,000 annually

Posted September 29, 2016 11:38 am - Updated September 29, 2016 11:50 am
By Joe Daraskevich, joe.daraskevich@jacksonville.com


A new program at Mayport Naval Station meant to conserve water and make the base more energy efficient is expected to save about $600,000 annually, according to base officials.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast awarded a $12.8 million contract Wednesday to Tampa-based TECO Inc., and the project is scheduled to be complete by November 2017.

The Utility Energy Service Contract will have an impact on about 50 facilities at the base. The project will upgrade interior and exterior lighting, expand the base’s energy management and control system, and replace transformers to modernize heating, ventilation and cooling systems.

The changes will also conserve about 2,900,000 gallons of water each year, said Chris Vidal, installation energy manager at Mayport.

When the project is complete, facility managers will be able to track and monitor real-time energy consumption to give an accurate idea of how and when energy is used.…

NAS Jacksonville

U.S. Navy Orders First Three Production MQ-4C Tritons
by Bill Carey
September 28, 2016, 4:14 PM


The U.S. Navy has ordered a first production lot of three MQ-4C Triton unmanned aircraft systems (UAS). The contract award followed five days after the Pentagon approved the program’s initial production phase.

The Naval Air Systems Command on September 22 announced that under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics Frank Kendall had granted the MQ-4C program “Milestone C”
approval to proceed to low-rate initial production (LRIP). On September 27, the Department of Defense announced two related awards to Northrop Grumman: a $255 million contract modification to procure three LRIP Lot 1 Tritons, plus main and forward operating control stations; and a $95 million order for interim spares in support of the aircraft’s initial deployment.

An RQ-4B Global Hawk derivative, the Triton is fitted with the AN/ZPY-3 Multi-Function Active Sensor (MFAS) 360-degree maritime radar, Raytheon’s Multi-Spectral Targeting System electro-optical/infrared sensor turret, automatic identification system, electronic support measures and a communications relay capability to provide “persistent” intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. The Navy plans to deploy the UAS in late 2017 and has expressed an overall requirement for 68 Tritons. Northrop Grumman thus far has built three system development test aircraft.

A test team of Navy personnel from Air Test and Evaluation Squadrons VX-1 and VX-20, Unmanned Patrol Squadron 19 (VUP-19), based at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida, and Northrop Grumman validated sensor imagery and performance at different altitudes and ranges before the Milestone C approval. The Triton also transferred full-motion video to a P-8A Poseidon in flight during the operational assessment.

“Triton’s critical technology is mature, and the system development and design review phases have been successful,” said Doug Shaffer, Northrop Grumman vice president of Triton programs. “Completion of the full system operational assessment testing exercised in various real-world scenarios validated the system’s ability to protect the Navy’s fleet from evolving threats. We are extremely pleased with the maritime domain awareness products and results coming from Triton.”

McDill AFB

New resource center shows Hillsborough's commitment to its many veterans

Times staff
Friday, September 23, 2016 4:40pm


More veterans call Hillsborough home than any county in Florida except Duval County, both hosts to major military installations. With 95,667 veterans, according to the latest numbers from the Veterans Administration, Hillsborough is No. 18 among all U.S. counties — just below the territory of Puerto Rico and just above Pittsburgh and surrounding Allegheny County. It is fitting then that the county has embarked on a campaign to develop a world-class tribute to its veterans — a consolidation and expansion of its war memorials and museum with the addition of a veterans resource center that gives the entire complex an enduring mission.

It is not the mere size of the local population that explains how Hillsborough has come so far in the conception and execution of this new focal point for veterans countywide. It has come only through years of work by a dedicated core of people, mainly veterans, and county leaders sympathetic to their cause.
The Veterans Resource Center at Veterans Memorial Park will consist of 8,000 square feet of office space and a multi-purpose area. It will house the new headquarters for the county's Consumer & Veterans Services Department and perhaps other veterans services operations in the future as well as an area where veterans groups can hold meetings and social events.

Potential for hotel near MacDill raises concerns over base's future

Howard Altman, Times Staff Writer
Wednesday, September 28, 2016 9:39am


TAMPA — The prospect of a new hotel near MacDill Air Force Base could leave MacDill vulnerable in any future round of base closings, says the man in charge of the most recent round.

And with the Air Force insisting it has 30 percent more bases than it needs, that's potentially bad news for a community that relies on the billions of dollars MacDill pumps into the local economy.

"The possibility of a hotel raises a red flag that would have to be considered by" the Air Force, as well as by any new Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, said Anthony Principi, chairman of the commission in 2005.

Principi was reacting to the revelation last week that a $1.3 million deal for land near MacDill would not fully protect the base from the kind of encroachment that sways the military and the commission.

Carlton: Protect MacDill Air Force Base, as Tampa as the Cuban sandwich

Sue Carlton, Times Columnist
Thursday, September 29, 2016 6:20pm


There is our uber-cool Tampa International Airport, even if construction has it looking like a war-torn country. There are those sugar-sand beaches across the bay, the sprawling University of South Florida and Ybor City, a Latin Quarter like nothing else in America. We have an emerging — is it too early to say vibrant? — downtown, wrapped in a ribbon of Riverwalk.

And — this is a big one — MacDill Air Force Base. I'm not one to throw around the word "treasure," but it's something worth bragging about.

Also, worth protecting.

Taking up the tip of the South Tampa peninsula, MacDill is home to U.S. Central Command, U.S. Special Operations Command and dozens of other military units. It employs 18,800 people and pumps billions into the local economy.
Built as MacDill Field, it is today as much an entwined and integral part of this town's legacy as the late Congressman Sam Gibbons, the yearly Gasparilla bacchanal that begins not far from its gates and the famous Cuban sandwich.

Cape Canaveral AFS

Space Florida CEO expects up to 200 launches per year

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter
Orlando Sentinel


A Space Florida official says the region could see as many as 200 launches a year as space firms like SpaceX, United Launch Alliance and OneWeb boost production and ramp up their launch manifests. President and CEO Frank DiBello said that means the region's space economy must be nimble enough to meet that demand.

"We need to move from a paradigm of large federally funded infrastructure to one that is responsive to commercial markets," he said at a Space Florida board meeting in Orlando on Wednesday. The board also approved as much as $26 million during the next two fiscal years to go toward improvements on Launch Complex 36, which is being prepared for future launches by billionaire Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin.

Last month, permit applications filed by Blue Origin with the St. Johns River Water Management District revealed that the company planned to refurbish Launch Complex 36 and the adjacent 11, which has not seen a launch since 1964....

Patrick AFB

Air Force Plans to Consolidate Battlefield Training at Three or Four Sites

In Mission Support/Community Partnerships
September 26, 2016
Dan Cohen

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/air-force-plans-to-consolidate-battlefield-training-at-three-or-four-sites/
The Air Force’s plan to consolidate battlefield airman training likely would reduce the number of training locations from eight to three or four, according to Lt. Gen. Darryl Roberson, head of Air Education Training Command.

“Every time we need to send an airman [somewhere], we lose a week of training,” Roberson told reporters last week during a briefing at the Air Force Association’s annual Air, Space & Cyber conference.

Battlefield airman training currently is conducted at eight primary training locations across seven states. Battlefield airmen make up the Air Force’s ground component and include combat controllers, pararescuemen, special operations weathermen and tactical air control party airmen. These personnel often embed with conventional and special operations forces.

The Air Force is preparing environmental assessments for eight candidate locations — Eglin AFB, Fla.; Hurlburt Field, Fla.; Joint Base San Antonio, Texas; Keesler AFB, Miss.; Little Rock AFB, Ark.; Patrick AFB, Fla.; Shaw AFB, S.C.; and Vandenberg AFB, Calif. Officials plan to select preferred and reasonable alternatives in early 2017.....

**Team Orlando**

**Military Training Happens Virtually in Florida**

Wednesday, September 21, 2016


**ORLANDO, Fla.** (NewsUSA) – Florida is no stranger to the entertainment industry. After all, it’s home to the most visited theme parks on Earth. What people may not know is that the Sunshine State’s entertainment expertise is also used to train our nation’s military.

At first glance, you wouldn’t think the two industries would have much in common. But, according to Forbes magazine, Florida ranks no. 6 in the country in video-game development, and when coupled with Central Florida’s High-Tech Corridor, the result is a community of defense contractors, government agencies, and universities that are loaded with engineers who understand how using entertainment components can transform military training.

The partnerships happen at a 1,000-plus-acre research park in Orlando that is home to the country’s largest cluster of training and simulation companies and agencies, including Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman Corp., General Dynamics Corp. and Honeywell International, as well as a host of military organizations.....

**Homestead AFB**

**Commentary -- We are MAKO proud**
HOMESTEAD AIR RESERVE BASE, Fla. -- What makes the 482nd Fighter Wing the world’s greatest?

A lot of changes have occurred in the last year that have put us on the precipice of greatness. And, for that, I wanted to share with each of you some observations I’ve had on this wing, the Airmen, and the mission that have solidified our reputation. My hope is that when you finish reading this, you will understand why we are ‘The’ World’s Greatest Fighter Wing and you will have the same pride in this wing that I do.

On Sept. 16, the base turned 74 years old. And for 74 years we have led the way in mission accomplishment and fighter aircraft flown. We are proud of that. We are consistently chosen, based on who we are, to fly the world’s greatest jets. The Makos support, maintain, and fly the plane that every Undergraduate Pilot Training student dreams of flying. They dream of coming to Homestead to fly the F-16 Fighting Falcon and be supported by you—that should make you proud!

I’ve seen Airmen in this wing accept nothing but the best from themselves and others and I stand in awe of them. They are the epitome of a Mako and the Air Force Core Values of “Excellence in all We Do” and “Service Before Self.” I really have never seen anything like it. They literally live these core values and pledge to themselves not to accept “average.” I’ve also seen others who don’t live up to mission expectations because they’ve insisted on priorities that are not conducive for a winning team. Therefore, they are encouraged to move on to find an average wing to support….

NAS Key West

School Board approves property swap

Florida Keys News
Wednesday, September 28, 2016
BY MANDY MILES Citizen Staff
mmiles@keysnews.com

http://keysnews.com/node/77813

Florida Keys education officials on Tuesday approved a three-pronged property swap with the City of Key West and the nonprofit Southernmost Boys & Girls Club.

Monroe County School Board members, during their meeting Tuesday evening in Marathon, agreed to give the City of Key West two accessory buildings on the former campus of Glynn Archer School, where the city is completing the conversion from school to City Hall. In exchange for the buildings at Glynn Archer, which the school district initially was going to retain, the city pledged to provide permanent space at Bayview Park for the Boys & Girls Club’s after-school program. The city’s accommodation of the
kids’ club will allow the school district to reclaim the Reynolds School building that has been housing the Boys & Girls Club.

According to the agreement the School Board approved on Tuesday, the school district also will receive from the city about 6,700 square feet of city-owned land next to Gerald Adams Elementary School on Stock Island. The land likely will be used for additional parking once the school is rebuilt in the coming two years.

School Board attorneys told the board that the school district and the city will likely enter a 99-year land lease for the Stock Island property, but at no cost to the district.

The uneventful School Board meeting also included the board’s unanimous approval of a resolution that supports “the operation of a Triton unmanned aircraft system at Naval Air Station Key West.”

The supportive resolution will be sent to Navy officials, who are in the process of deciding where to establish a new military system that utilizes drone technology. Whichever naval base is selected must also be able to accommodate the influx of more than 100 personnel and dependents.

“The school district can accommodate the students associated with the Triton system,” the resolution states….

**DoD Budget**

**DoD supplemental war budget coming in November**

By Scott Mauicone | @smaucione, WFED, September 27, 2016 11:04 am


Congress will have a fresh request for funds from the Defense Department in November to pay for overseas operations.

The request will come in the form of a supplemental request to the 2017 overseas contingency operations (OCO) budget DoD submitted earlier this year. Congress has yet to pass either a base or an OCO budget for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1.

“This reflects the seizing of opportunities by the President, opportunities that are good for us. So it’s a very natural thing to do and a good thing to do,” Defense Secretary Ash Carter told reporters at Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota yesterday. “There is a [monetary] range. And we’re going to continue to refine that … we [will] continue to refine those estimates while [Congress is] out of session and have a completed estimate when they come back in November hopefully to complete the budget in its entirety.”….
Other of Interest

Justice Department to Invest in Expanding Veterans Treatment Courts

In Military Families
September 26, 2016
Dan Cohen


To expand the nation’s system of veterans treatment courts, the Justice Department last week pledged to award more than $4 million to 13 states and local jurisdictions to develop their own programs.

The special courts divert veterans charged with nonviolent criminal offenses to a court-supervised process that emphasizes treatment and rehabilitation by offering support from health care professionals, veteran peer mentors and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). There are now 463 such court systems in the nation, reported Military Times.

Two-thirds of veterans who go through the system successfully complete their regimens, and 88 percent of courts see a reduction in arrests, according to Justice for Vets, an advocacy group that provides funding and training for court staff.

Recidivism rates are low, according to Judge Robert Russell, who started the first veterans treatment court in Buffalo, N.Y.

“We’ve had 200 some-odd veterans who completed our program and probably only four or five who experienced recidivism. It’s been a blessing to work with veterans,” Russell said.

The VA has embraced veterans courts and mandates that each of its medical centers has a veterans justice outreach specialist who provides legal assistance to veterans and supports veterans treatment courts in their region, according to the story.…

Active military get first shot at Trump vs. Clinton

Jeremy Wallace, Times/Herald Tallahassee Bureau
Monday, September 26, 2016 10:04am


The wait to vote in the presidential election is already over for thousands of Tampa Bay area residents.

While most Floridians still have weeks until they can weigh in on Donald Trump vs. Hillary Clinton, thousands of voters who call the Bay Area home but are on military bases or overseas are already getting their ballots. That is because late last week, local elections officials were required to ship ballots to military and overseas personnel to assure it reaches them and can be returned in time to be counted.
Combined, Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco counties say they’ve already shipped out almost 10,000 ballots.

How many were shipped out statewide will be tallied later this week. In 2012, more than 65,000 ballots went out to military and overseas voters.

Some of those ballots will come back really fast, said Manatee County Supervisor of Elections Mike Bennett. Unlike traditional vote-by-mail ballots, voters overseas and in the military can fax their ballots in on a secure line to local supervisors of elections. Bennett said he’s certain some of the more than 1,000 ballots his office sent out will start arriving to be counted by mid-week….

**Senate Confirms Lt. Gen. Daniel Hokanson as National Guard Bureau’s Vice Chief**

Dominique Stump, September 22, 2016, Defense & National Security


Army Lt. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, former deputy commander of the U.S. Northern Command, was approved by the Senate on Thursday to serve as the new vice chief of the National Guard Bureau.

He helped spearhead Northcom’s efforts to prepare for and address threats within North America and the command’s area of responsibility as well as managed the military organization’s defense support to civil authorities, the National Guard said Monday.

Hokanson also previously served as vice commander of the North American Aerospace Command’s U.S. element, adjutant general of the Oregon National Guard, commander of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team based in Iraq and chief of staff at Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan.

He has completed more than 2,600 flight hours as a command pilot in the *AH-64 Apache, OH-58 Kiowa* and *UH-60 Black Hawk* helicopters…..

**Florida expedites 50,000 CCW permits for military, vets**

9/29/16| by Chris Eger


Since a 2015 terror attack on military personnel, officials in Florida announced this week the state has rapidly processed tens of thousands of applications for permits for service members and veterans.

As a response to a terror attack in Chattanooga, Tennessee that left three U.S. Marines and a Navy Sailor dead, Florida Gov. Rick Scott (R) instituted a number of measures to help allow those in uniform more protections. Among these was to authorize the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to expedite the permits of those in the military – to include the Florida National Guard – as well as veterans.
On Tuesday, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam announced his agency has issued more than 50,000 expedited permits to current and former service members under the new guidelines. “The men and women who serve and have served our country deserve all of the support we can provide,” said Putnam in a statement. “I’m pleased that we have been able to expedite so many active military members and veterans’ applications for a concealed weapon license.”
7 October 2016

Task Force members --

1. **Next Meeting:** The next Task Force meeting will be by Conference Call / Webex on October 20, 2016 – beginning at 9:00 AM.

2. **Call In Numbers** –
   
   **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 8784566

3. **Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony:** Task force Members are cordially invited to join Governor Rick Scott at the induction ceremony for the 2016 class of the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame.

   The Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame recognizes and honors those military veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the state of Florida through civic, business, public service or other pursuits. It is not a traditional military hall of fame, as it focuses on post-military contributions to the State of Florida.

   **Inductees in the 2016 class are:** (Highlighted names are former Task Force Members)

   - 1st Lt. Reubin O’Donovan Askew, USAF
   - LT j.g. LeRoy Collins, USN
   - Sgt. Jordon J. “J.J.” Corbett, USA
   - RADM Kevin Delaney, USN (Ret)
   - LTC Dennis O. Freytes, USA (Ret)
   - SGT David L. Goetsch, USMC
   - Capt. Spessard Holland, Air Service, AEF
   - Capt. William L. Proctor, USAR
   - COL Washington J. Sanchez Jr., USA (Ret)
   - CMSgt Johnny E. Stewart, USAF (Ret)
   - SP4 Frederick A. Taylor, Jr. USA (Ret)

   **Hall of Fame Ceremony**

   **When:** Wednesday, November 9, 2016
   **Time:** 2:30pm
   **Location:** Cabinet Room, State Capitol Building, Tallahassee

   [Click here to RSVP]

   Please contact Jessica Kraynak or Lillian Dupree with questions at (850) 487-1533 or email us at KraynakJ2@fdva.state.fl.us and DupreeL@fdva.state.fl.us.
4. **FDA Meeting on November 16th in Tampa** – This event will be the day prior to our Task Force meeting. Task Force members are encouraged to attend (draft agenda located in the attached FDA Newsletter). Michelle Griggs will be sending out registration forms (no cost for registration) by mid-October to ensure we have a good handle on how many we will have attending. The meeting will also be held at the Tampa Airport Marriott.

5. **City of Jacksonville Shows Great Support for the Triton and Guard F-35 Stationing** – The Mayor of Jacksonville, Lenny Curry, has written letters of support for both the Triton and the F-35. Additionally, the Jacksonville City Council passed a Resolution supporting the stationing of the Navy Triton (all attached).

6. **Attachments:**
   - TPG Update – Sept 2016
   - FDA News Letter (October 5 Final)
   - Mayor Curry Support for F-35
   - Mayor Curry Support for Triton
   - JAX City Council Triton Resolution

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**Terry**

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**Hurricane Matthew**
U.S. Navy evacuates military families from Guantanamo Bay to Pensacola

BY KRISTIE HENDERSON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2nd 2016


PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) — In preparation for Hurricane Matthew, the commander of Navy Region Southeast has ordered the mandatory evacuation for about 700 spouses and children from Guantanamo Bay Naval Air Station.

They are being flown to the Pensacola Naval Air Station and will remain at that naval base until it is safe to return, according to the statement.

Navy Region Southeast is coordinating the temporary move with U.S. Southern Command and U.S. Transportation Command for an airlift to take family members via military aircraft to a safe haven at NAS Pensacola.

Matthew's coastal impact means heavy preparation for Naval Station Mayport

By Stephanie Brown


Jacksonville, FL —
As Florida prepares for the effects of Hurricane Matthew, Naval Station Mayport is planning for keeping personnel, infrastructure, and assets alike safe.

Mayport’s Emergency Manager Steve Millican says they’ve been following Matthew since it was a tropical wave last week and are constantly assessing any changes in the forecast track and the potential impact it will have along the shore. He says they prepare every year for storms, and while they’ve already had to put that preparation to work a few times this season, this storm presents some unique elements.

Port Canaveral issues evacuation order ahead of Matthew

Marco Santana and Paul Brinkmann, Contact Reporters
Orlando Sentinel

Port Canaveral CEO John Murray has issued an evacuation order ahead of Hurricane Matthew, the first for the port since 2004.

The order affects all cruise ship traffic, fishing boats and cargo, along with Port businesses and tenants, marinas and campers at Jetty Park. The deadline to evacuate is noon on Wednesday.

Some cruise ships, including Disney Cruise Line, two Royal Caribbean cruises and a Carnival Cruise line, had already updated itineraries to avoid the storm, according to reports.

No boats will be allowed in harbor until after the storm passes and the order is lifted.

“This is a serious storm and the protection of people and property is our primary concern,” Murray said in the announcement. “We expect high winds and storm surge throughout the port and have urged the Port community to prepare their facilities so business can resume as quickly as possible after the storm.”

In 2004, with Hurricanes Charley, Jeanne and Frances, the harbor was closed for 11 days to ship traffic. The Space Coast's military and space installations were also getting ready for the onslaught of Hurricane Matthew, expected to reach the area overnight Thursday into Friday.

Patrick Air Force Base and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station have been placed on alert, as the storm barrels up the Caribbean Sea with the region in its crosshairs…..

How the U.S. military is responding to Hurricane Matthew

By Dan Lamothe October 4 at 4:01 PM
Washington Post


The Pentagon is ready to dispatch at least three Navy ships and a detachment of military helicopters to assist Caribbean countries hit by Hurricane Matthew, defense officials said Tuesday.

The powerful storm made landfall Tuesday in Haiti with Category-4 strength, packing winds of up to 145 mph. Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook said Tuesday that the aircraft carrier USS George Washington, the hospital ship USS Comfort, and the amphibious ship USS Mesa Verde all may be called in to assist, potentially deploying thousands of U.S. sailors and Marines in the relief effort.

The Pentagon also will move a detachment of nine U.S. military helicopters from Honduras to the Cayman Islands in anticipation of possible hurricane response efforts, Cook said. The move puts them within a few hundred miles of Jamaica, Cuba and Haiti. U.S. Southern Command, with headquarters in Miami, also will establish a joint task force commanded by Rear Adm. Cedric Pringle in anticipation of requests for help…..
MATTHEW: Brevard County evacuating as hurricane draws near

By Jerry Hume and Greg Pallone, Team Coverage
Last Updated: Thursday, October 06, 2016, 2:57 AM EDT


COCOA BEACH --
Mandatory evacuation orders began Wednesday for those on Brevard County’s barrier islands. Matthew is making its way towards the Florida peninsula. The Brevard County Emergency Operations Center activated a Level 1 Full Activation Wednesday morning.

They’re ordering the mandatory evacuation for Brevard County’s barrier islands, including low-lying flood-prone areas and those living in mobile and manufactured homes.

Those in Merritt Island, Cape Canaveral, Cocoa Beach, Satellite Beach, Indian Harbour Beach, Indialantic and Melbourne Beach began evacuating at 3 p.m.

Matt McHenry's parents live beachside in Indialantic. The Palm Bay resident helped put up shutters on their home, which is less than a mile from the ocean.

"I think it's necessary to put them on, whether it be debris or windows breaking," he said….

Updated: Navy Sends 3 Mayport Ships to Sea Ahead of Hurricane Matthew

By: Sam LaGrone
October 5, 2016 12:50 PM • Updated: October 5, 2016 5:37 PM

https://news.usni.org/2016/10/05/navy-sends-3-mayport-ships-sea-ahead-hurricane-matthew

Three warships have scrambled from Naval Station Mayport, Fla. ahead of the landfall of Hurricane Matthew later this week, a service official told USNI News on Wednesday.

Guided-missile cruiser USS Anzio (CG-68), Littoral Combat Ship USS Montgomery (LCS-8) left the base last Tuesday and the big deck amphib USS Iwo Jima (LHD-7) was sortied this afternoon to ride the storm out at sea.

“The current track of the storm indicates sustained winds of 40-45 knots in the Mayport basin later this week,” said U.S. 4th Fleet commander Rear Adm. Sean Buck in a statement provided to USNI News.

“The decision to sortie was made early to allow sufficient time for the ships to prepare adequately and sail to safe waters.”
Six ships of the 15 homeported at the Florida base will remain in port through the storm.

**BRAC**

**Turner warns of another round of base closures**

By Barrie Barber, Staff Writer
Updated: 5:48 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 4, 2016 | Posted: 12:35 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 4, 2016


DAYTON —
A Dayton congressman expects the next presidential administration will “probably push very hard” for another round of military base closures in fiscal year 2018-19.

U.S. Rep. Mike Turner, R-Dayton, made the prediction after meeting Tuesday with seven area Republican state lawmakers to strategize ways to protect military installations in Ohio and deal with a heroin epidemic across the state.

State Sen. Peggy Lehner, R-Kettering, said the legislators have started a discussion on how to create a coordinated response to address the heroin epidemic.

“The federal government does bits and pieces but no one does overall (planning) on how do we get more beds, more treatment and those things that we know work,” she said.

Turner has introduced legislation in the House that would allow Medicaid or federal grants to reimburse agencies for substance abuse treatment of those incarcerated or in community-based programs, and the costs to treat newborns exposed to opioids and other addictive substances in pregnant women.

In remarks after the lawmakers closed-door meeting, Turner said he believes sequestration, or a decade of automatic defense budget cuts reached under the Budget Control Act of 2011 will be set aside for a fourth year.

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**NAS Pensacola**

**Energy Efficiencies Coming to Naval Air Station Pensacola**

Story Number: NNS160930-10Release Date: 9/30/2016 10:10:00 AM
By Earl Bittner, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast Public Affairs


JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (NNS) -- Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Southeast selected Pensacola Energy of Pensacola, Florida to receive a $31.5 million award Sept. 29, for a Utility Energy Service Contract (UESC) project to bring energy upgrades to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola.
A UESC is a limited-source contract between a federal agency and its serving utility for energy and water efficiency improvements and demand-reduction services.

"This project improves on the culture of energy conversation at NAS Pensacola, reinforcing our commitment to good stewardship of the environment, gaining efficiencies in our infrastructure, and reducing energy consumption by 10 percent over our 2015 baseline," said NAS Pensacola Commanding Officer Capt. Christopher Martin. "We continue our partnership with Pensacola Energy and recognize the remarkable work that both teams have contributed in putting this project into action."

The UESC will apply several energy conservation measures to 43 facilities at NAS Pensacola. The project calls for the design and installation of interior and exterior lighting upgrades, water conservation measures, chiller plant improvements, upgrades to NAS Pensacola's energy management and control system (EMCS), and building envelope improvements.

In addition, the project will include transformer replacements to improve energy security and mechanical upgrades to modernize the heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) systems in many of the base facilities. All EMCS improvements were carefully analyzed for compatibility with Department of the Navy cyber security and "Smart Grid" future goals…..

**Blue Angels announce NAS Pensacola homecoming show**

BY TAREN REED TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4TH 2016


PENSACOLA, Fla. (WPMI) —
The Navy’s Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, will close the 2016 season at their annual Homecoming Air Show aboard Naval Air Station Pensacola on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 11-12.

Prior to the world-famous Blue Angels F/A 18 Hornet performances, the Blues’ C-130 Hercules transport known as “Fat Albert” will thrill the crowd with its short field take-off and low-level passes.

Tentatively scheduled for both days will be extraordinary aerobatics by performers such as the Vertigo Air Shows Jet Glider, the world’s only jet-launched sail plane, flown by Bob Carlton; an Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon Demo and Heritage Flight with a vintage warbird, Skip Stewart in a high-flying aerobatic symphony, Kevin Coleman in his one-of-a-kind Extra 300SHP, the Pemberton Aerosports Team in their Edge 540, the Shockwave Jet Truck driven/piloted by Chris Darnell, plus many more acts…..

**EGLIN AFB**

The COLSA Corp. awarded $50M option for C4ISR, cyber support

By Mark Hoover
Oct 05, 2016
The COLSA Corp. has been awarded a $44.9 million option to provide technical and management advisory services to a number of Air Force bases.

The Defense Department said in a release that the technical and management advisory services will include C4ISR and cyber support as well as additional research and development, test and evaluation and acquisition support services.


NS Mayport

Mayport Naval Base Getting Energy, Water Upgrade

October 3, 2016, By Carl Weinschenk


The Mayport Naval Station in Jacksonville, FL, will save about $600,000 annually through a water and energy efficiency program, according to Jacksonville.com.

The Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast awarded a $12.8 million contract last week to TECO Inc., which is based in Tampa. The project, which is slated to be done by November, 2017, will impact about 50 facilities.

The upgrade will feature upgrades to interior and exterior lighting, an expansion of the energy management and control system and replacement of transformers to the HVAC system. Real-time tracking of energy use will be possible when the upgrade is complete.

The system also will save about 2.9 million gallons of water annually, the story said.

NAS Jacksonville

PENSACOLA CONTRACTOR AWARDED $8.5 MILLION NAVY CONTRACT

PULSE STAFF, OCTOBER 3, 2016, BUSINESSMILITARY & DEFENSE

Clark Pierce/Special to The Pulse

http://pulsegulfcoast.com/2016/10/pensacola-contractor-awarded-8-5-million-navy-contract
A Pensacola-area contractor has been awarded a $8.5 million contract to build a new mission control facility for Triton drones at Naval Air Station Jacksonville.

Whitesell-Green, Inc. of Pensacola will build the new 12,200 square foot Triton Mission Control Facility, its second such project at the base in recent years. The company was awarded a $16 million contract for a previous Triton facility in 2014.

“The new facility will be located adjacent to the existing and recently-completed Triton facility aboard NAS Jacksonville,” said NAS Jacksonville Commanding Officer Capt. Sean P. Haley. “The new building will include primary and redundant Mission Control System (MCS) modules, a server room, mission planning and brief/debrief rooms, and a secure equipment vault.”

Developed by Northrop Grumman, the MQ-4C Triton unmanned aircraft system provides real-time intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance over vast ocean and coastal regions. Navy officials announced in October 2013 that Unmanned Patrol Squadron (VUP) 19 would be based at NAS Jacksonville to operate and maintain the Triton. VUP-19 provides the organizational framework for mission control, mission planning and data analysis from NAS Jacksonville, officials said.

Construction on the new facility is expected to be completed by July 2017.

**Navy Moves Forward with Second Lot of Tritons**

By RICHARD R. BURGESS, Managing Editor
Posted: October 4, 2016 2:27 PM

http://seapowermagazine.org/stories/20161004-triton.html

ARLINTGTON, Va. — Fresh on the heels of the order to begin serial production of the MQ-4C Triton unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) is a contract to the builder to order materials for the second production lot.

Naval Air Systems Command has awarded to Northrop Grumman Systems Corp. a $49 million modification to a fixed-price incentive contract “for the procurement of long-lead components, materials, parts, and associated efforts in support of MQ-4C Triton LRIP 2 [low-rate initial production lot 2],” according to the Sept. 30 contract announcement.

The high-altitude, long endurance MQ-4C Triton will be a forward-deployed, land-based, autonomously operated system that provides persistent intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance within a range of 2,000 nautical miles using a multi-sensor mission payload including maritime radar, electro-optical/infrared, electronic support measures, Automatic Identification System and basic communications relay.

Only three days earlier, the day after the Navy awarded to Northrop Grumman a $255.3 million contract for LRIP 1, the production of three MQ-4Cs plus one main operator control station, one forward-operation control station, training courseware and tooling. On the same day of the LRIP 1 award, Northrop Grumman also was awarded a $94.9 million order for spare parts to support the initial deployment of the Triton.

The MQ-4C will be deployed in several locations around the world to establish 24-hour orbits over the oceans for maritime surveillance. The MQ-4Cs will pass information from its sensors to P-3 and P-8 maritime patrol aircraft or other units for investigation or prosecution.
This month the Navy is standing up its first Triton squadron, VUP-19, at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla.…

**US Central Command**

**CACI Awarded $22 Million Prime Contract to Continue Communication Integration Support for U.S. Central Command**

October 03, 2016 08:00 AM Eastern Daylight Time


ARLINGTON, Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--CACI International Inc (NYSE MKT: CACI) announced today that it has been awarded a $22 million prime contract to continue supporting the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Central Command Communication Integration (CCCI) organization. This five-year award represents continuing business for CACI.

With national and international partners, CENTCOM promotes cooperation among nations, responds to crises, and deters or defeats state and non-state aggression. CCCI serves as CENTCOM’s principal adviser on all internal and external communication strategies and supports the command’s theater objectives. CCCI also keeps U.S. and regional audiences informed about CENTCOM operations focused on maintaining national security, improving regional stability, and promoting and protecting U.S. interests in the command’s area of responsibility.

Under this contract, CACI will provide CCCI with planning support as well as cultural and linguistic expertise to assess information that supports senior leader decision-making. CACI’s experts will also evaluate public information in order to enhance the command’s communication of its purpose and activities to regional audiences. This will include leveraging innovative solutions to enable the command to maintain a proactive and relevant social media presence, engage regional populations, and communicate its mission…..

**US Special Operations Command**

**How a former tattoo parlor is helping fight ISIS**

By Jamie Crawford, Video by Jeremy Moorhead and Cassie Spodak, CNN

Updated 11:09 AM ET, Fri September 30, 2016

Tampa (CNN) In a historic building where Teddy Roosevelt and Winston Churchill once laid their heads and where, more recently, tattoo artists plied their trade, US Special Operations Command has now set up shop, hoping to find the next big thing in battlefield gadgetry.

Students, professors and members of the military come together in this non-traditional military lab tucked away in Tampa's Ybor City that seems more like a Silicon Valley tech start-up than an arm of the US military.

It's called SOFWERX, and it's the brainchild of US Special Operations Command headquartered just a few miles away at MacDill Air Force Base.

"What we wanted to create was an inviting place," said James Guerts, acquisition executive at Special Operations Command, "somewhere you would want to come to work, where if you're a 19-year-old and you have a great idea, you'd be happy to come here."

Indeed, anyone with thoughts on how to make the life of Special Operators easier and more effective is invited to walk in off the street.

The idea is simple: With Special Operations Forces facing life-and-death decisions and in need of regular equipment replacement or upgrades, SOFWERX can serve as a faster alternative to the slow and deliberate bureaucratic acquisitions process for military equipment.

The creative types who work here run the gamut from high school and college students to people from the tech field to members from the military who have expertise in what's needed in battle.....

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**United Launch Services wins $861 million U.S. defense contract: Pentagon**

AEROSPACE & DEFENSE, REUTERS/Mike Brown
Fri Sep 30, 2016 | 5:37pm EDT

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-united-launch-services-pentagon-idUSKCN1202M4

United Launch Services, a joint venture of Lockheed Martin Corp (LMT.N) and Boeing Co (BA.N), has been awarded an $861 million modification to a previously awarded contract for Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle launch capability for the Delta IV and Atlas V rockets, the Pentagon said on Friday.

**Air Force Extends InDyne’s Cape Canaveral Infrastructure O&M Services Contract**

Posted By: Scott Nicholason: October 03, 2016, In: Industry News


**InDyne** has received a $71.5 contract modification from the U.S. Air Force to continue the company’s infrastructure operations and maintenance services at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.
The Defense Department said Friday InDyne will continue to help the military branch manage the facilities, systems, equipment, utilities and infrastructure that support the 45th Space Wing and its mission partners.

The Air Force’s 45th Contracting Squadron at Patrick AF Base is the contracting activity and work will occur at Cape Canaveral AFS as well as its annexes through Sept. 30, 2018.

Reston, Virginia-based InDyne offers operating range and test facilities management, base operations support, communications, information technology, multimedia and integrated security products and services to military, civilian and commercial customers.

**Grants to support launches, simulation in Central Florida**

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel
October 3, 2016, 2102


Two economic development agencies in Central Florida were among 10 to receive defense-based grants from the State of Florida, Gov. Rick Scott announced today.

The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast and the Orlando Economic Development Commission landed a portion of the $846,136 given in Defense Reinvestment grants. Combined with Defense Infrastructure Grants, the state awarded nearly $2.2 million.

The Space Coast grant, worth $97,925, was meant to provide the funds to "protect and enhance military missions" at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station and Patrick Air Force Base.

Cape Canaveral Air Force Station hosts regular launches into space.

Meanwhile, the Orlando grant of $81,400 was meant for the Team Orlando partnership. Team Orlando is the region's modeling and simulation sector, made up of military, educational and business leaders in the industry.

**Patrick AFB**

**Pediatrician Opening at Patrick AFB in Florida**

Saratoga Medical
Patrick AFB, FL 32925

https://www.practicelink.com/jobs/547676/physician/pediatrics/Florida/Patrick%20Air%20Force%20Base

This civilian outpatient opportunity is located at Patrick Air Force Base in Florida.
Physician can practice as an employee with a salary of $172,640 with full benefits OR as an Independent Contractor with an hourly rate of $114.00.
Employed benefits include 4 weeks paid time off, 10 Federal Holidays, health, dental, vision, life and disability insurance, and $1500.00 CME stipend.
The Air Force covers the malpractice insurance.
The schedule is Monday through Friday with no evening or weekend responsibilities.
Physician must be Board Certified in Pediatrics.
The patient base includes the Air Force beneficiaries with a daily patient census of 16-18.
Any active state license is accepted – you do not have to have a Florida license.

**US Southern Command**

**New commander takes reins of 12th AF, AFSOUTH**

12th Air Force (Air Forces Southern) Public Affairs / Published October 04, 2016


During a change of command ceremony here Oct. 3, Kelly replaced Lt. Gen. Chris Nowland who was selected to become the next Air Force deputy chief of staff for operations at the Pentagon.

Kelly most recently served as the 9th Air Force commander at Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina. He was also the commander of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, and has commanded two other wings, the 354th Fighter Wing at Eielson AFB, Alaska, as well as the 4th FW at Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina. He is a command pilot with more than 5,500 flying hours, primarily in the F-15E Strike Eagle, F-16 Fighting Falcon and F/A-18 Hornet….

**U.S. Southern Command Supports Caribbean Hurricane Response Efforts**

By Cheryl PellerinDoD News, Defense Media Activity


WASHINGTON, Oct. 5, 2016 — U.S. Southern Command is supporting the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development in delivering and coordinating humanitarian relief to Haiti, which has been hard hit by Hurricane Matthew, Southcom Commander Navy Adm. Kurt W. Tidd told reporters here today.
Tidd, during a conference call from Southcom headquarters in Miami – itself only a day away from the hurricane’s high winds and rain -- said Haiti is the only country so far whose government has requested U.S. assistance in the wake of the storm.

Southcom is standing up Joint Task Force Matthew, commanded by Navy Rear Adm. Cedric Pringle, to support requests for humanitarian assistance, Tidd said, “and we've moved or we're in the process of moving nine helicopters to the Cayman Islands for potential onward movement to Haiti.”

Haiti Hurricane Damage
Hurricane Matthew has caused heavy wind damage and extensive flooding in southern Haiti, and strong winds have downed trees and power lines and destroyed agricultural fields, Tidd said. “We have reports indicating that communication infrastructure [is damaged] and that roads along the southern coastline are impassable,” he added. “We should have more information coming through USAID and our six-member attache's office within the embassy country team over the next few hours.”

DoD Budget

Pentagon will need to fund 'enduring requirements' now in OCO account once combat ends

September 30, 2016
By Tony Bertuca

https://insidedefense.com/share/181524

The Defense Department estimates it will need about $30 billion annually to support “enduring requirements” once overseas combat operations end. Those requirements are now being funded through the department’s Overseas Contingency Operations account.

"The Department of Defense Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) budget request includes requirements associated with a forward presence and readiness that will likely continue after current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq/Syria conclude," according to a statement from Lt. Col. Eric Badger, a DOD spokesman. "The cost associated with these enduring requirements is in the range of $30 billion annually."

The Pentagon does not consider these “enduring requirements” to be base budget requirements, which are paid for through DOD’s annual budget request. The “enduring requirements” are associated with current warfighting needs. Once combat operations end, the department will have to negotiate with Congress for funding to meet those requirements.

Some lawmakers and analysts have been citing the $30 billion figure in studies and official hearings. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain (R-AZ) said on Sept. 15 that approximately $30 billion meant for emergency operations is really being used for "base defense requirements."

"Roughly $30 billion of annual spending for base defense requirements is buried in the budget account for emergency operations -- requirements that will remain for our military even if our present operations immediately ended, which of course they won't," he said during a committee hearing….
Topline Spending Still Remains a Hurdle in Reaching a Deal on Authorization Bill

In Congress/DoD
October 2, 2016
Dan Cohen


While leaders of the Armed Services committees have pointed to a dispute of whether the greater sage grouse should be barred from being placed on the endangered species list as the primary holdup in House-Senate negotiations over a conference agreement for the fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill, discussions over the measure’s topline spending level and what programs will suffer cuts have yet to be settled.

Lawmakers reportedly have reached a compromise over the House version’s reliance on $18 billion in overseas contingency operations (OCO) account funds to augment the department’s base budget. The maneuver would allow Congress to evade the defense spending cap and fund weapons and equipment, and higher end strength levels not requested by the Obama administration. The move, which is intended to restore shortfalls in military readiness, would force the next administration to request supplemental funding for overseas operations before the end of April.

While negotiators apparently agreed to use only $9 billion from the OCO account for base budget items, they still need to hammer out a deal on how those funds would be allocated and what programs won’t benefit from war funds, reports Politico.

Lawmakers, for example, need to decide whether to retain funding to increase the active-duty end strength for the Army and Marine Corps beyond DOD’s request, a high priority for many lawmakers. Cancelling the extra troops would save over $1 billion….

Other Of Interest

Gov. Scott Announces More Than $2.2 Million for Florida Defense Communities

On October 3, 2016, in News Releases, by Staff

http://www.flgov.com/2016/10/03/gov-scott-announces-more-than-2-2-million-for-florida-defense-communities/

PANAMA CITY BEACH, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced that 10 counties were awarded $2,221,136 through Florida’s Defense Infrastructure and Reinvestment Grant Programs under the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. The 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. Florida’s military installations contribute more than $79.8 billion in economic impact, and the defense industry supports nearly 775,000 jobs in the state.

Governor Scott said, “As a Navy Veteran, I am proud to announce today that more than $2 million has been awarded for defense communities across 10 Florida counties. Florida prides itself on being the most military friendly state in the nation, and many of our families and communities depend on the economic investments that Florida’s 20 military installations provide. We will continue to do everything we can to recognize and support the brave military men and women who serve to protect our freedom.”

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 total grant award amount of $846,136 will help to protect Florida’s military installations, as well as promote economic diversification strategies in defense-dependent communities. The 2016-2017 Defense Reinvestment Grants were awarded to defense partners in the following counties: Bay, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Miami-Dade, Walton, Orange, Escambia, Brevard, Clay and Duval.

Five counties also received a 2016-2017 Florida Defense Infrastructure Grant: Bay, Clay, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Duval. Defense Infrastructure Grants are awarded to communities to make improvements to a military installation’s surrounding area in order to positively impact its military value and the local community. The Defense Infrastructure Grants total $1,375,000 and will help fund projects that include encroachment mitigation and transportation and access…..

Leading the Day

The Insider | October 5, 2016
With Dan Cohen

http://us4.campaign-archive2.com/?u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=ff24724031&e=28cebe069c

Leading the Day: Army to Transform IMCOM
Starting Nov. 1, the Army will reorganize Installation Management Command (IMCOM), grouping installations by mission rather than geography, senior leaders revealed Tuesday at the Association of the U.S. Army annual meeting.

Under the plan, three newly created IMCOM support directorates overseeing readiness, sustainment and training will be collocated with Army Forces Command at Fort Bragg, N.C., Army Materiel Command at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., and Army Training and Doctrine Command at Fort Eustis, Va., respectively. Each directorate will oversee between 15 and 17 installations, reported the Fayetteville Observer.

The personnel and military family members at the installations assigned to those three missions each have different demographic profiles. By being collocated with the major commands, the directorates will have a better understanding of the unique challenges of installations under their command, said Lt. Gen. Kenneth Dahl, IMCOM commanding general. Those support directorates will replace the existing IMCOM Atlantic and IMCOM Central regions.

“This is a big change. And I think it’s going to really provide us a great way forward said,” Dahl said….
White House Rolls Out Armed Drone Declaration

By: Aaron Mehta, October 5, 2016 (Photo Credit: John Moore/Getty Images)

WASHINGTON -- The Obama administration has lined up more than 40 countries who have agreed to a joint declaration on the import and export of armed unmanned systems, in what the US State Department is billing as the first step toward creating global norms for the weapon systems.

The agreement will be formally announced Wednesday afternoon. Defense News first broke news of the agreement, then in draft form, in August.

In addition to the US, signatories include Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Titled the “Joint Declaration for the Export and Subsequent Use of Armed or Strike-Enabled Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs),” the one-page statement lists five general principals, in line with those established last year by the US, for the import and export of armed drones….

Symposium: Military driver of development in region

PANAMA CITY BEACH — Hundreds of scientists and engineers are working on new technological developments at Northwest Florida’s military bases everyday, creating technologies that will eventually bleed over into daily life.

“We were talking about self driving cars earlier,” said Dr. Morley Stone, the Chief Technology Officer at the Air Force Research Laboratory, while listing some of the projects his people are working on. “Those things rely on navigation aide machine vision (which is being worked on at the Air Force)."

As part of a panel discussion, representatives from the Institute for Human Machine Cognition, Air Force Research Laboratory and Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Panama City Division spoke about the value of having military research facilities in Northwest Florida.
While the region may not have the best research schools in the country, Stone said the military helps to draw top notch employees.

“The thing is from a defense perspective we own the most interesting problems,” Stone said. “The best talent wants to come work on the most interesting problems … so we continue to have that pipeline.”
October 14, 2016

Task Force members --

1. **Next Meeting:** The next Task Force meeting will be by Conference Call / Webex on October 20, 2016 – beginning at 9:00 AM. Agenda attached.

2. **Call In Numbers** –
   - Call In Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Support Task Force FY17-18 Grants:** The Task Force initiated the FY17-18 Grant application/RFP window on 28 September 2016. We will accept applications (attached) through 27 October 2016 for funding consideration during FY17-18. No final decisions on the grant applications will be made until May 2017. To account for emerging projects, the Task Force will accept additional applications during February, 2017. **Task Force members should expect to be contacted as sponsors for project applications over the next several weeks.**

4. **Southeast Range Complex Initiative** – TPG has been establishing relationships with stakeholders and has set a meeting for **3 November 2016** in Orlando w/ DOD reps to move this concept forward. Bruce Grant and I will be attending this meeting.

5. **Installation Reuse 2016 Conference** – According to the “Insider” with Dan Cohen, “If you are looking for ways to convert unused infrastructure at either an active or closed installation into an economic asset for your community and the military, you won’t want to miss [ADC’s inaugural Installation Reuse Forum](http://us4.campaign-archive2.com/?u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=20e93bc4d2) coming to Atlanta on Oct. 17-19. The event comes as the military services are increasingly looking to consolidate their footprints, creating a growing portfolio of vacant facilities. Sessions will highlight the latest examples of active reuse projects; how communities can work with installations to identify potential redevelopment projects; Atlanta’s experience in adaptive reuse, including tours of the former Fort Gillem and Fort McPherson; the evolution of LRAs; and many other topics.” See more at [http://us4.campaign-archive2.com/?u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=20e93bc4d2](http://us4.campaign-archive2.com/?u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=20e93bc4d2).

6. **FDA Meeting on 16 November 2016 in Tampa** – The FDA meeting will be the day prior to the 17 November 2006 Task Force meeting also in Tampa. There will be a combined mixer for FDA and FDSTF members following the 16 November 2016 FDA meeting from 5:00-6:00 PM at the Skyye Bar inside the Tampa-Airport Marriott Hotel.

7. **Attachments:**
   - Meeting Agenda – October FDSTF Conference Call / Webex
   - TPG Bi-Weekly Conference Call Notes
   - FDSTF FY17-18 Grant Funding Application
**News Clips of Interest:**

**Hurricane Matthew Recovery**

**Military bases weather Hurricane Matthew, return to operations**

By COREY DICKSTEIN | STARS AND STRIPES, Published: October 11, 2016


WASHINGTON – Normal operations were resuming at military bases along the East Coast of the United States on Tuesday, and officials reported little major damage on posts impacted by Hurricane Matthew, which flooded parts of the region and killed at least 26 in five states.

The storm that pounded the East Coast from south Florida through southeast Virginia caused flooding and wind damage at several posts from Patrick Air Force Base in Florida to Fort Bragg in North Carolina. However, military officials said there had been no reports of injuries on any of the more than a dozen military installations hit by the hurricane.

Meanwhile, more than 11,000 troops remained committed to clean up, recover and humanitarian operations in areas impacted by the deadly storm in Haiti and in five U.S. states.
Hurricane Matthew was responsible for more than 500 deaths in the impoverished Caribbean nation of Haiti, and it killed at least 14 people in North Carolina, five in Florida, three each in Georgia and South Carolina and one in Virginia, according to the Associated Press.

The Marine Corps on Tuesday began moving some 6,000 recruits back to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island in South Carolina, said Capt. Gregory Carroll, a spokesman for the Marines basic training base. The base was largely back to normal by Tuesday morning, and it planned to host a recruit graduation ceremony Friday, he said.

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**KSC, Cape resume normal operations**

Posted: 12:13 PM, October 11, 2016 Updated: 4:39 PM, October 11, 2016


CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. - Employees will report to work as usual Tuesday at Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station and Patrick Air Force Base, which had shut down in the middle of last week as Hurricane Matthew approached the Space Coast as a dangerous Category 4 storm.

NASA on Monday evening declared an "all clear" for KSC, saying the center would reopen at 6 a.m. Tuesday.

"Employees should report to work at their normal duty times," an advisory said. "KSC recovery operations are ongoing and personnel should use caution when returning to work."

KSC said some stoplights were out, there was still potential for debris and some facilities in the Launch Complex 39 and Vehicle Assembly Building area remained in "recovery phase." Alternate work arrangements will be made as needed in offices lacking air conditioning.

Patrick Air Force Base and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station are resuming normal operations a day after the 45th Space Wing and United Launch Alliance offloaded an Atlas V rocket booster flown into the Skid Strip late Sunday on an Antonov aircraft, according to the Florida Today.

"The wing is close to being back to 100 percent and this is a huge step in the right direction," said Brig Gen. Wayne Monteith, the 45th Space Wing commander, in an update Monday on Facebook.

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**Guantanamo Bay evacuees head home**

BY GRACE TENNYSON, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11TH, 2016


PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) — Seven hundred people, 60 cats and dogs and one bunny are heading home to Guantanamo Bay.

Seeking refuge from Hurricane Matthew, families and non-essential personnel from Naval Station Guantanamo Bay were evacuated to Naval Air Station Pensacola.

The families have been enjoying the nice weather in Northwest Florida since October 2, but are looking forward to reuniting with loved ones back home.

Channel 3 went to see them off. Many of the people boarding the plane waved and said “Thank you, Pensacola!”
Experts say Ohio could land more defense jobs

Ohio is home to 63,500 military-related jobs that pump $11 billion into the state economy each year but as big as that is, it could increase with the right investments and collaborations, according to U.S. Rep. Mike Turner.

“Our opportunity to grow the impact in this state is significant. Also, if you look at the national security contributions of Ohio, our ability to be more relevant and to support the men and women who are serving is also something that could be enhanced,” Turner said.

Turner organized a two-day forum at Ohio State University with military, community, business and political leaders that looked for ways to bring more defense jobs and research money to Ohio. One path is to build connections between Ohio universities and federal defense installations, he said.

The defense forum is also a strategic hedge against Ohio losing jobs if there were another Base Realignment and Closure process — BRAC. Hundreds of installations have been closed through five BRAC rounds held since 1988. The most recent round was held in 2005. While military leaders have called for another BRAC, members of Congress have resisted, given it may lead to closures in their own states.

Improving schools can help blunt base closures: Guest commentary

Communities in California with a large military presence should take note: the armed forces are sizing up the value of installations in preparation for potentially dramatic action at the local level. And this time around, the military will be placing a greater emphasis on non-traditional qualities such as the performance of local schools, in addition to the standard military utility.

The education of military-connected kids is a top quality-of-life issue for service members. Because military families move an average of six to nine times throughout a child’s K-12 career — two to three times more frequently than their non-military peers — educational quality has an impact on whether service members opt to make a career in the military.

“The quality of public schools near some military bases has been an issue for military families, and the subject of a number of studies, for decades,” the Military Times noted in what is an understatement for many service members.

Of all U.S. states, California has the greatest concentration of active duty military members at 155,051, according to a 2014 Pentagon study of armed forces demographics. In the Los Angeles region and
surrounding area, some facilities have sizable populations, including Los Angeles Air Force Base with 3,221 service members and their dependents; the Naval Construction Battalion Center at Port Hueneme with 3,531 service members and dependents; and the National Training Center at Fort Irwin in San Bernardino County with more than 11,000 service members and dependents.

What makes the consideration of local school performance particularly important is that it is coming from the top, certainly for the Army. Before he retired as the Army’s top officer, Gen. Ray Odierno, then the Army chief of staff, said that it would be a factor in the placement of Army units around the country. Driving home the point, the Army commissioned a study to examine the quality of schools that serve the children of soldiers.

That 2014 study examined the performance of a sampling of schools in the Golden State that serve Army families — those near the Presidio of Monterrey and others near Fort Irwin. It found a mixed bag. School quality was generally average to below average, with some of the schools having above-average teacher quality and low student-to-teacher ratios.

The general consensus is that another base closing round will get the green light from Congress at some point in the near future. But in the meantime, the military will be making periodic — and sometimes significant — cuts to its bases with the quality of local education certain to be a consideration.

Many communities are not waiting for a formal base closing commission before engaging with military leaders on local school performance.

A poll conducted at the Association for Defense Communities’ recent summit of local leaders from around the country found that 64.5 percent were working to improve school performance — in direct response to the military’s focus on the issue. And nearly 55 percent said that community leaders were regularly meeting with military families to discuss education standards and related quality-of-life issues.

**NAS Pensacola**

**Cabbies not happy with new rules at Pensacola NAS**

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, mnelsongab@pnj.com 4:16 p.m. CDT October 7, 2016


Pensacola Naval Air Station announced changes in access requirements to the base for taxicabs this week in a move that drew loud complaints from some cab company owners.

"This is going to take away a lot of my business, thousands of dollars out of my drivers' pockets," said Gary Worley, owner of American Topflight Taxi.

The cab companies and the base have been at odds since August, when the base announced a temporary moratorium on renewing the cab drivers' access passes. Base leaders later lifted the moratorium, but said changes in guidelines for cab drivers on the base were needed to ensure the safety and security of thousands of sailors, Marines and civilians who live and work on the base.

The new rules limit cab drivers to specific locations on the base. The base also created a taxi stand for the cabs to meet and drop off passengers.
Japanese consul general to visit NAS Whiting Field

MILTON — National Aviation Museum in Pensacola soon will host the Japanese U.S. Military Program for the second year in a row.

However, the day before it does, Ken Okaniwa, Consul General of the Consulate General of Japan, will tour Naval Air Station Whiting Field. It will be the first time a consul general will have visited NAS Whiting Field.

Last November, Okaniwa couldn’t attend the fifth-anniversary celebration of the Florida Okinawa Kenjinkai Cultural Club at the Santa Rosa County auditorium. However, he did make Santa Rosa County connections in April during a meeting in Valparaiso that independent consultant Stanley Harper, with Naval Supply Systems Command Operations Services, and Santa Rosa County Economic Development Director Shannon Ogletree attended.

“We talked (about Naval Air Station Whiting Field) and the number of military retiring and their skill sets, and how that would fit in with companies from Japan looking to invest in the U.S. or, specifically, Santa Rosa County,” Ogletree said in April.

Ogletree and Harper said Okaniwa is particularly interested in the aerospace industry…..

SR Co. gets funding to keep, enhance military presence

Santa Rosa County received $346,050 in state funding to enhance and protect local military presence. The Santa Rosa County Board of County Commissioners received a $46,050 Defense Reinvestment Grant for protecting and enhancing military missions and a $300,000 Defense Infrastructure Grant for base buffering efforts at NAS Whiting Field through Florida’s Defense Infrastructure and Reinvestment Grant Programs.

“These grants allow us to continue Santa Rosa County’s long-standing defense support program to protect the mission of NAS Whiting Field and Navy outlying fields,” said Sheila Fitzgerald, grants and special programs director for Santa Rosa County. “Increasing the buffer zone around our airfields effectively minimizes encroachment and strengthens the Navy’s mission.”

“The aviation industry is a prime target for northwest Florida and Santa Rosa County. We have numerous assets that provide a business advantage for companies,” said Shannon Ogletree, economic development director. “Our goal is to inform companies and site selectors of our workforce, education system, low-tax structure, available sites and quality of place. This grant will help us further promote these advantages for both the state and Santa Rosa County.”
EGLIN AFB

Airport tower nearing completion

Posted Oct 7, 2016 at 9:00 AM Updated Oct 7, 2016 at 9:00 AM
By Annie Blanks | 315-4450 | @DestinLogAnnie | ablanks@thedestinlog.com


The air traffic control tower at the Destin Executive Airport is scheduled to be completed by the end of next month, according to officials.

The six-story, $4.8 million project, which began construction in November 2015, is scheduled to be completed Nov. 23. The control tower includes a manager’s office, equipment rooms, break space, a new beacon and a “cab,” or the circular room with large glass windows at the very top.

“This is a very sturdy structure,” said Ian Wright, architect and quality control manager for the project.

The Destin airport traffic is currently managed by the air traffic control tower at Eglin Air Force Base. The new control tower will take over Destin airspace management, but will still work in conjunction with Eglin AFB.

GULF POWER ADDS MORE WIND TO ENERGY MIX

PULSE STAFF, OCTOBER 11, 2016

http://pulsegulfcoast.com/2016/10/gulf-power-adds-wind-energy-mix

Gulf Power received unanimous approval today from the Florida Public Service Commission to add additional 94 megawatts of wind energy from the Kingfisher Wind farm in Oklahoma.

Since January, Gulf Power has utilized 178 megawatts of wind-generated energy purchased from Kingfisher Wind. With the approval of a second agreement, Gulf Power will add an additional 94 megawatts from Kingfisher to its energy mix, for a total of 272 megawatts.

“This is a major step forward in our mission to deliver reliable, affordable, and clean energy with renewable energy that makes economic sense for our customers,” said Rick DelaHaya, a spokesperson for Gulf Power. “Part of our commitment to an efficient and reliable energy future means making more renewable sources of energy accessible to our customers. These smart renewables, like Kingfisher Wind, can actually put downward pressure on prices.”

Operated by Virginia-based Apex Clean Energy, the Kingfisher Wind project is located in rural Oklahoma and has a total of 136 wind turbines, capable of producing enough energy to power approximately 77,150 homes for a year.

“Adding alternate sources of renewable energy to our portfolio is important for our customers and takes careful planning,” added DelaHaya. “By diversifying our energy supply with an ‘all-of-the-above’ approach that includes renewable energy plus 24/7 traditional sources, our customers can count on us for their energy needs today and well into the future.”
Gulf Power is also bringing large-scale solar to Northwest Florida at three military solar energy projects across Northwest Florida. Located at Eglin Air Force Base, Saufley Field and Holley Field, the projects are expected to provide approximately a combined 120 megawatts of renewable energy. Other Gulf Power investments in renewable energy include the Perdido Landfill Gas-to-Energy Facility, which has produced more than 100 million kilowatt hours of electricity since 2010.

Eglin to privatize all four utility systems

*By Jessica Dupree, AFCEC Public Affairs / Published October 13, 2016*

http://www.afcec.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/973311/eglin-to-privatize-all-four-utility-systems/

**TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.** – The Defense Logistics Agency awarded a utilities privatization contract to Choctawhatchee Electric Cooperative, or CHELCO, to own, operate and maintain the electrical system infrastructure at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida for 50 years.

Having previously privatized the water, waste water and gas utility systems, this contract award makes Eglin AFB, which is the largest installation within the continental United States, the second Air Force installation to privatize all four utility systems.

"This is another significant step forward for Eglin AFB toward a more efficient, resilient and reliable energy program with an outstanding energy partner in CHELCO," said Col. Craig Johnson, commander of the 96th Civil Engineer Group at Eglin.

American States Utility Services was awarded the base’s water and waste water utility systems this past July and Okaloosa Gas was awarded the gas utility system in 2005. CHELCO joins these companies to make all the installation’s utility systems privatized.

“CHELCO is excited to be supporting the infrastructure on Eglin AFB as we have always been very supportive of the military community we serve,” said Steve Rhodes, CHELCO chief executive officer. “We are looking forward to working with existing utility companies that already serve the base.”

Eglin AFB covers more than 640 square miles of land in Northwest Florida. The large footprint of the installation posed a unique challenge to awarding the contract, said David Mathews, project manager at the Air Force Civil Engineer Center at Tyndall AFB, Florida.

Tyndall AFB

**CareerSource helps veterans find employment after service**

*By COLLIN BREAUX, News Herald Reporter*

Posted Oct 12, 2016 at 5:16 PM, Updated Oct 12, 2016 at 5:51 PM


PANAMA CITY — With some help from CareerSource Gulf Coast, Army veteran Adrian Ramirez is starting a new job Monday at a local military base.

Ramirez will work in an administrative role, experience he carries over from the military. While the small unit and weapon skills he picked up don’t transition well in civilian life, overseeing soldiers does.
“I’m happy,” Ramirez said. “It means more to me because I’m supporting the military.”

Ramirez retired from the Army, after serving 20 years, to do something different. He began preparing for civilian life in January when he entered the military’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP). The program educates exiting service members about benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs, job searching and finances.

It also connected Ramirez to CareerSource, which helps job seekers with resumes, interview skills and computer access.

“A lot of people in the military take (TAP) for granted,” Ramirez said. “I didn’t. I knew I was going to get back into the jungle, the civilian world.”

Ramirez moved to Panama City from Crestview in January and is leaving behind a job as an event supervisor at a local resort, which he has held for several weeks. He has applied to be an administrator and weapons instructor.

“Extensive. Exhausting,” Ramirez said of the job search. “Frustrating at times. And not too many calls back. ...The process is slow and frustrates service members, who feel they’re not qualified.”

He said the biggest obstacle he has encountered is that companies want to see discharge papers. They also don’t respond to applications and have unrealistic qualifications, he said.

“Nobody goes into a job knowing everything,” Ramirez added. “I know how to manage my time and supervise personnel, but I can also learn on the job.”

CareerSource has helped veterans since its inception 20 years ago, said workforce services and communications director Maria Goodwin, adding they provided 3,388 veterans with employment services during the past service year, from July 2015 to the end of June 2016....
the Regional Training Institute (RTI) that is traditionally used for Florida’s military units to collectively train for their military missions.

“The RTI is a training location so they had to make the center fit for active emergency operations,” Ribas said. “We are blessed throughout the Florida Guard for having really great non-commissioned officers. As soon as they got on the ground, they were immediately troubleshooting any small issues.”

Ribas, who has 28 years of service in the Florida National Guard, experienced Hurricane Andrew as his first state active duty mission and considers Hurricane Andrew a watershed moment for the Florida Guard in terms of disaster response. Today, Ribas is confident in the readiness of today’s troops and the people leading them.

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**NS Mayport**

**LCS Montgomery Sustains Hull Crack in Hurricane Surf**

Military.com | Oct 07, 2016 | by Hope Hodge Seck


The littoral combat ship Montgomery is once again in need of repairs after suffering a hull breach in rough waves off Florida.

Lt. Cmdr. Rebecca Haggard, a spokeswoman for Naval Surface Force Pacific, told Military.com the ship sustained a crack to its hull while departing Naval Station Mayport, Florida, under orders to sortie Tuesday ahead of Hurricane Matthew's landfall on the coast.

The mishap is under investigation, but a Navy official said it's strongly suspected that the ship collided with its tugboat.

Ships are often ordered out of port as a precaution ahead of significant storms. Haggard said the Montgomery was not the only ship told to sortie Oct. 4. Ahead of the storm, conditions were already choppy: Naval Station Mayport recorded maximum wind speeds of 28 miles per hour and maximum gusts of 38 miles per hour on Oct. 4.

The crack resulted in a minor leak, but the crew of the LCS contained the seawater intrusion, Haggard said. The damage did not necessitate an immediate return to port.

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**McDill AFB**

**MacDill to host cybersecurity conference Oct. 18**

Howard Altman, Times Staff Writer
Thursday, October 6, 2016 5:07pm

When Michael Kolb got out of the Air Force in 2014, he found that his skills as a member of the bomb squad at MacDill Air Force Base didn't translate easily into the civilian world.

So after a stint managing a gym in Pinellas Park, Kolb, 27 and living in Valrico, went in a new direction. He enrolled in the National Cyber Partnership's Cyber Foundation's courses, designed to help fill some 50,000 jobs statewide in a field that's booming because of threats ranging from low-level hackers to state actors.

Thanks to the program, which partnered with Saint Leo University, Kolb is now a security analyst for ReliaQuest, a Tampa-based IT security company. He got the job in April, right after graduating.

"It was 100 percent because of the course," he said.

Kolb's success is something the partnership would like to replicate thousands of times over. To that end, it is holding a "Cyber Ready" Cyber Security Conference at MacDill Air Force Base on Oct. 18.

"We will have speakers and attendees from some of the most prominent sectors of the cybersecurity industry, including the Army Cyber Institute at West Point, the Secret Service, the U.S. Senate and several major companies," Colin Arnold, the partnership's director of academic affairs, said at the Florida Chamber Foundation's 2016 Future of Florida Forum.

"The speakers and panelists alone at this event represent funding and revenues in excess of $4.5 billion annually," Arnold said. "So it's not a terrible place to network." ....

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**US Central Command**

**Defense Innovation Board Makes First DoD Interim Recommendations**

*Posted on October 6, 2016 by glenn.selby*

*By Cheryl Pellerin, DoD News, Defense Media Activity*


Defense Secretary Ash Carter often says that one of his core goals is to push the Pentagon “to think outside our five-sided box and be more open to new ideas and new partnerships that can help our military remain what it is today … as we confront a changing and fiercely competitive world.”

That’s why he created the Defense Innovation Board earlier this year, he added, “to advise me and future defense secretaries on how we can keep growing more competitive, stay ahead of our competitors [and] stay the best, particularly by keeping DoD imbued with a culture of innovation in people, practices, organizations and technology.”

Board members already have spent time with airmen at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, sailors aboard ships docked in San Diego, California, soldiers and special operators at Fort Bragg in North Carolina, at U.S. Central Command and Special Operations Command in Tampa, Florida, at U.S. Cyber Command in Maryland and other DoD installations.

“As a result of this initial fact-finding,” Carter said, “and based on the knowledge and experience each of you brings to the table from your private-sector lives … members of the board have made some preliminary observations and interim recommendations about certain innovative practices from outside DoD that might be useful to us.”
Carter established the board in March, inviting as members 15 innovators from the private sector and academia to enhance the department’s culture, organization and processes. The DIB chairman is Eric Schmidt, executive chairman of Google’s parent company Alphabet…..

**US Special Operations Command**

**General Dynamics Wins USSOCOM Contract (GD)**

By Daniel Kobialka | October 10, 2016 — 9:26 AM EDT


General Dynamics Corp. (GD) has been awarded a contract from the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) that could be worth up to $900 million over the next five years. (See Also: General Dynamics Wins Census Bureau Contract (GD).)

The American aerospace and defense company announced it secured the USSOCOM's Wide Mission Support contract.

Under the terms of the contract, GD said it will provide USSOCOM forces and staff with technical and management support around the globe. GD also stated all work under the contract will be completed by ARMA Global, a subsidiary of GD's information technology business segment.

Furthermore, GD noted it will deliver "engineering and technical services for major weapon systems, program technical assistance, support systems requirements and assist with production decision-making and program controls" as part of the agreement…..

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**Air Force Hit With Suit Over Cape Canaveral Contract**

By Chuck Stanley, Law360,


Washington (October 7, 2016, 7:57 PM EDT) -- The U.S. Air Force was hit Thursday with a lawsuit in U.S. Federal Claims Court alleging it improperly awarded noncompetitive contracts for launch operations and infrastructure support at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

Maryland-based Artic Slope claims the Air Force abruptly canceled a solicitation set aside for small businesses to consolidate two separate contracts at the base amid scrutiny of the procurement process from the Government Accountability Office.

Rather than address the issues raised by the GAO, the Air Force awarded long-term contract extensions to InDyne,...
Patrick AFB

Emergency Family Assistance Center Opens

45th Space Wing Public Affairs / Published October 12, 2016


PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- The 45th Comptroller Squadron process reimbursement claims and paper vouchers for active duty, civilians and dependents with Evacuation Orders during Hurricane Matthew at the Emergency Family Assistance Center at the Airman & Family Readiness Center Oct. 11, 2016, at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. In an effort to help assist those who may have permitted entitlements, the squadron set up centers at various locations at Patrick Air Force Base and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. Other base support agencies at the EFAC will provide support, relief and assistance such as Community Readiness Consultants, Base Legal, Chaplain, Mental Health, School Liaison Officer and Military Family Life Counselors.

US Southern Command

Joint Task Force Matthew Arrives in Haiti to Provide Relief Efforts

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI, 10.06.2016
Story by Capt. Tyler Hopkins, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/211497/joint-task-force-matthew-arrives-haiti-provide-relief-efforts

The personnel of JTF Matthew began planning efforts at Soto Cano Air Base once the storm appeared as if it would make landfall in the Caribbean. JTF Matthew planned for a rapid departure and made sure they had the ability to get affected areas as quickly as possible if requested and to help as many people as possible.

“A response like this takes the entire team to provide timely aid to those most affected” according to Maj. Rick Childers, the Joint Task Force Bravo engineer assigned to JTF-Matthew. Childers will facilitate coordination through JTF Matthew and U.S. Southern Command for the response and potential infrastructure assessments in affected areas, if requested.

Once approved, U.S. Southern Command directed JTF Matthew and SPMAGTF-SC to pre-position on the Grand Cayman Islands. By doing so, JTF-Matthew was in a unique position to respond and provide relief efforts quickly after receiving the request from USAID.

“Having the approval and the ability to pre-position our assets was absolutely critical,” stated Col. Thomas Prentice, commanding officer, SPMAGTF-SC. “In the aftermath of any natural disaster, military capabilities are desperately needed in the early stages of relief operations. By staging in the Cayman Islands and refueling in Jamaica, we were able to arrive on the ground within hours of receiving the request for assistance.”
JTF Matthew departed Honduras’ Soto Cano Air Base and brings with them CH-53E Super Stallion, CH-47 Chinook, and UH-60L Black Hawk helicopters. These vertical take-off assets will prove critical in gaining access to areas that are otherwise unreachable. Their focus will be to provide heavy lift support to ongoing U.S. disaster assistance missions in the country.

Iwo Jima racing to Haiti loaded with sailors, Marines and relief supplies

By: David B. Larter, October 10, 2016


ATLANTIC OCEAN, ABOARD THE AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT SHIP IWO JIMA — An additional 150 Marines and four MV-22 Ospreys flew aboard here Monday afternoon, adding to the 1,700 troops and four MH-60 Seahawks headed to help Haiti after a ferocious hurricane.

Six days since Hurricane Matthew carved a swath of destruction through southern Haiti, U.S. Southern Command stood up Joint Task Force Matthew at the Port au Prince airport. The amphibious transport dock Mesa Verde arrived in Haiti with 300 Marines on Sunday. Iwo Jima will arrive later in the week.

The recently added Ospreys and Marines are part of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit’s aviation wing, which had been embarked on the carrier George Washington. But through the weekend the USAID-led mission came into better focus as assessment teams surveyed the wreckage left in Matthew’s wake.

The GW was slated to provide assistance to the Bahamas, but that government determined the help wasn’t necessary. Leaders then shifted many of the assets and equipment to the Iwo Jima.

Marines Go Ashore for Hurricane Relief in Devastated Haiti

Military.com | Oct 10, 2016 | by Richard Sisk


About 375 Marines and sailors from the amphibious transport dock ship USS Mesa Verde went ashore Monday delivering tons of aid and medical supplies to devastated Haiti, where cholera is spreading in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew, U.S. Southern Command said Monday.

The Mesa Verde is part of Joint Task Force-Matthew, the relief operation that formed as Hurricane Matthew grew to a Category 4 storm in the Caribbean. As of Monday, the task force had delivered more than 98,000 pounds of relief supplies to hard-hit areas of Haiti, SouthCom said.

Haitian authorities have put the death toll from Matthew at more than 300, but an analysis by Reuters said the toll will likely top 1,000.

Matthew hit hardest on Haiti’s southern peninsula, which juts westward into the Caribbean, and the relief efforts thus far are concentrating on the towns of Les Cayes and Jeremie, said Jose Ruiz, a SouthCom spokesman.
Other Of Interest

More National Guard activated in Southeast as hurricane approaches, death toll in Caribbean soars

By COREY DICKSTEIN | STARS AND STRIPES
Published: October 6, 2016

WASHINGTON – Military installations along the U.S. southeast coast evacuated non-essential personnel and equipment as troops were mobilized to respond to Hurricane Matthew that barreled toward Florida on Thursday after killing nearly 300 people in the Caribbean.

Some 4,500 National Guardsmen in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina were assisting mandatory evacuation orders in coastal counties ahead of the storm that National Hurricane Center officials feared could strengthen Thursday before it impacted eastern Florida.

Matthew is now a Category 4 storm, which means it has sustained winds of more than 131 mph, and could be the most powerful hurricane to hit eastern Florida in decades.

The Miami-based National Hurricane Center issued hurricane warnings for northeast Florida and southeastern Georgia on Thursday, where military officials announced non-essential personnel had been dismissed and training activities were halted. The storm’s expected path would bring hurricane conditions into Georgia and the eastern parts of the Carolinas on Friday into Saturday……

New Director Looking to Take Air Force’s Partnership Program to the Next Level

In Mission Support/Community Partnerships
Dan Cohen, October 13, 2016
http://defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/new-director-looking-to-take-air-forces-partnership-program-to-the-next-level/

After reaching a major achievement last month, the Air Force Community Partnership (AFCP) program is expected to continue growing with a new focus on initiatives with higher returns on investment, says the program’s new director.

While the partnership program is “doing phenomenally well,” the service has started to concentrate on initiatives that can be implemented across a variety of installations and that can generate a higher payoff for the Air Force as well as the community, Teran Judd, director of community partnership and encroachment, told On Base.

Since the program started three years ago, most of the community-military partnership initiatives have been smaller projects, explained Judd, who assumed his post in June, replacing Steve Zander. The
partnership program’s first foray into projects with greater returns has focused on small arms ranges, partially because most bases have them, Judd said.

The Air Force is conducting test projects with small arms ranges at several bases to see if establishing a joint use facility for the military and local law enforcement is the kind of partnership that can be expanded across the service.

Along with placing a priority on initiatives with a higher return, the service is striving to identify partnerships that would work across the Air Force, or at least across a segment of the service’s installations.

By taking initiatives that are successful in one community and applying them to others, the service’s goal is “to see if we can grow the program … bring it to a new level,” Judd said.

The AFCP program reached one new level last month when the savings generated by the initiatives it helped create since fiscal 2013 surpassed direct spending on the program for the first time. The program so far has produced a total of $32.5 million in savings, $2.1 million more than the Air Force has spent on it.

“It’s a huge milestone. … To be in the black after three years is fantastic,” Judd said. Partnership agreements in the pipeline are estimated to generate an additional $15 million in net savings, he added.

To date, the 53 installations participating in the AFCP program have reached agreements on more than 200 partnership initiatives with their host communities. Two more bases have committed to joining the program, and another two are discussing the prospect, said Judd, who previously was a branch chief in the service’s strategic basing office….

Missouri leaders continue call for F-35s at Whiteman

Knob Noster – Top Missouri Democrats and Republicans support stationing F-35s at Whiteman Air Force Base.

The Air Force – earlier expected to make a decision by fall – may not decide until December or early 2017, House Armed Services member Vicky Hartzler said. Whiteman is one of four bases the Air Force is considering for F-35s.

“We feel really good about Whiteman’s chances,” Hartzler said. “I’ve been visiting with a lot of generals, and the deputy secretary of the Air Force just last week, about the benefits of having the F-35s come to Whiteman.”

Sen. Roy Blunt, Senate Armed Services Committee member Claire McCaskill, Hartzler and the seven other House members from Missouri sent the Air Force a letter of support for placing the F-35s at Whiteman.

The letter offered to incentivize Whiteman as the choice.

Appointed this year as the first Missouri Military Advocate, Joe Driskill said Monday his office is coordinating closely with the congressional delegation. He declined to get into specifics about potential economic support.
“We are examining options … with the least amount of capital investment,” he said. “We are deeply involved in making sure Whiteman has the greatest chance to be selected.”

Each base has advantages and disadvantages and supporters want to increase Whiteman’s advantages.

“We are aware of what the competition looks like,” Driskill said.

What adding to Whiteman’s advantages might cost has not been determined, he said.

“We’re going to have to come to some conclusions on that fairly soon,” he said. “We’re exploring mechanisms for being able to address some of these capital improvements issues.”

Driskill works within the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

“State leaders are discussing a strategy to provide economic development resources to support capital improvements needed at Whiteman,” the letter to Air Force stated. “Currently, the state is taking a close look at the possibility of funding construction of the required simulator facility and new apron to accommodate the F-35 if Whiteman is selected.”….
October 21, 2016

Task Force members --

1. **Next Meeting:** Thanks for a great meeting yesterday; we apologize for the technical issues. The next Task Force meeting will be in person on **Thursday, 17 November 2016** beginning at 9:00AM at the Tampa-Airport Marriott Hotel, 4200 George J. Bean Pkwy, Tampa, FL 33607. Michelle sent pre-meeting registration forms earlier this week and she must have your accommodation needs **no later than 5:00 pm OCTOBER 31, 2016**. Please get these back to her at your earliest convenience.

2. **Call In Numbers –**
   - Call In Number: 800-501-8979  Access Code: 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Support Task Force FY17-18 Grants:** The Task Force initiated the FY17-18 Grant application/RFP window on 28 September 2016. We will accept applications (attached) through 27 October 2016 for funding consideration during FY17-18. No final decisions on the grant applications will be made until May 2017. To account for emerging projects, the Task Force will accept additional applications during February, 2017. **Task Force members may still be contacted as sponsors for project applications over the next week.**

4. **Southeast Range Complex Initiative** – TPG has been establishing relationships with stakeholders and has set a meeting for **3 November 2016** in Orlando w/ DOD reps to move this concept forward. Bruce Grant and I will be attending this meeting. TPG will provide an update on this issue at our 17 November Task Force meeting in Tampa.

5. **FDA Meeting on 16 November 2016 in Tampa** – The FDA meeting will be the day prior to the 17 November 2006 Task Force meeting also in Tampa. There will be a combined mixer for FDA and FDSTF members following the 16 November 2016 FDA meeting from 5:00-6:00 PM at the Skyye Bar inside the Tampa-Airport Marriott Hotel.

6. **Attachments:**
   - Team Orlando - October News Letter
   - Approved 2017 FDSTF Meeting Schedule

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**Terry**

Terry McCaffrey  
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Expanding Goals of BRAC Could Improve Its Political Prospects, O’Hanlon Says

October 20, 2016
Dan Cohen

BRAC has always been a hard sell, a point borne out by the Obama administration’s failure to persuade lawmakers to authorize one or more base closure rounds over the past five years.

Maybe if the Pentagon were to broaden the aims of the BRAC process from simply winnowing unneeded infrastructure to an effort that simultaneously reinvests in the neglected facilities at enduring installations. Reconceptualizing BRAC possibly could improve its prospects in Congress, Michael O’Hanlon, a senior fellow in foreign policy at the Brookings Institution, told On Base.

A more comprehensive BRAC effort could both rightsize the military’s portfolio of installations as well as reverse the deterioration of facilities that have been underfunded in recent years as DOD has been forced to operate under a budget cap, he said. O’Hanlon views BRAC as an initiative that has been effective in the past — with some exceptions, particularly in the 2005 round — and could contribute in a moderate way to future budget savings for the Pentagon.

Expanding BRAC to include repairing and refurbishing enduring installations isn’t specifically required from a management standpoint, but the concept is worth considering if it helps convince Congress of the department’s need to shed a portion of its excess infrastructure, he added.

O’Hanlon recommends at least one, and possibly two, new base closure rounds in his recent look at how the U.S. military can maintain its global edge in national security without breaking the bank — “The $650 Billion Bargain: The Case for Modest Growth in America’s Defense Budget.”

Hurlburt Field

Hurlburt memorial honors 'legacy of valor'

Thursday, Posted Oct 20, 2016 at 5:25 PMUpdated Oct 20, 2016 at 5:25 PM
By Kelly Humphrey | 315-4443 | @Kellyhnwfdn | khumphrey@nwfdailynews.com

HURLBURT FIELD — As the chief of staff of the United States Air Force, Gen. David Goldfein’s time is in high demand in Washington, D.C.

On Thursday morning, however, the general had a special message for the 800 or so people who gathered at the base’s airpark for the dedication of the nation’s first memorial to Air Force Special Tactics personnel.

“Today, there’s no place in the world ... I’d rather be than here with you,” Goldfein said. “I’ve never been prouder to be an airman than I am today, standing on this sacred ground.”

As a former fighter pilot, Goldfein has a special place in his heart for Special Tactics airmen. In 1999, a Special Tactics team rescued the then-lieutenant colonel after he was shot down by hostile forces over Serbia.

Goldfein paid tribute to the team who saved his life as well as to the Gold Star families whose loved ones died in the line of duty while serving in one of the four Special Tactics career fields: pararescuemen, special operations weather technicians, combat controllers and tactical control party members.

“I wish with all my might there was a way to heal your pain,” he told the families. “I pray this sacred place affords you peace in honoring their memory.”

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**Eglin AFB**

**Eglin to welcome some 500 transplanted tortoises**

**Posted Oct 14, 2016 at 2:31 PM, Updated Oct 14, 2016 at 2:56 PM**

By Kelly Humphrey | 315-4443 | @Kellyhnwfdn | khumphrey@nwfdailynews.com


EGLIN AFB — Gopher tortoises may be a threatened species in Florida, but the resilient reptiles have managed to gather their fair share of headlines in recent weeks.

In September officials at the DeFuniak Springs Airport discovered one of the burrowing creatures near the runway. To protect the tortoise and air traffic from possible encounters, the airport staff called in a crew from No’kuse Plantation in Bruce to relocate the reptile.

Now officials at Eglin Air Force Base are taking on an even larger project: creating habitats for about 500 tortoises that were discovered during a building project in Citrus County.

“The state was looking for large landowners to provide habitats for the tortoises, and they approached us since we’re pretty much the biggest game in town when it comes to the Panhandle, and it’s been documented that we have a very low gopher tortoise population,” said Jeremy Preston, an endangered species biologist at the base’s Natural Resources Office. “We pitched the idea to the base’s leadership and they agreed.”

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**Jump-starting the Choctawhatchee Bay**

**Posted Oct 16, 2016 at 10:00 AM, Updated Oct 16, 2016 at 10:55 AM**

By TOM McLAUGHLIN

Boating, fishing, shrimping, swimming, paddling, bird watching, wading or just taking in the sunset. Choctawhatchee Bay plays such a direct role in the day-to-day lives of Okaloosa and Walton County residents that most take its presence, and well-being, for granted.

That attitude is going to have to change, Okaloosa County officials say, if a proposal to preserve the bay is accepted.

Federally-funded waterway restoration success stories, told in places like Tampa and Mobile, Alabama, always include the words “community” and “buy-in,” County Administrator John Hofstad said.

“It takes a collaborative fix,” he said.

Okaloosa and Walton counties want to jointly enlist in an estuary program that would provide dollars to create an organization whose job would be to develop a plan to save Choctawhatchee Bay.

The committee would seek ways to shield the bay from existing threats and defend it against future degradation.

A group called the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council is willing to put $2.2 million in BP money toward establishing a Northwest Florida estuary program or programs, but supporters of doing so at Choctawhatchee Bay face stiff competition for some or all of the available dollars…..

NAS Jacksonville

Jacksonville leaders talk ‘$75-$80M’ economic impact of college football, military events

A.G. GANCARSKI, Florida Politics


After a month defined by preparation for and recovery from Hurricane Matthew, Jacksonville could use some good news, positive economic activity, and a whole lotta fun.

City leaders say it’s coming later in October and early in November, via both sporting events (the 2016 Georgia vs. Florida game and the Navy vs. Notre Dame game) and military events, in the form of the Jacksonville Sea and Sky Air Show and Veterans Day Parade.

On Tuesday morning, Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry, JAXSPORTS Council’s Rick Catlett, and the city’s sports and entertainment czar Dave Herrell spoke at some length about the cumulative “$75 to $80 million economic impact” of this quartet of sports and military events.

Georgia/Florida on Oct. 29 and Navy/Notre Dame on Nov. 5 will generate the bulk of that impact, at $30 million each. The Sea and Sky Air Show on Nov. 5 and 6 and the Veterans Day parade on Nov. 11 will generate the rest…..

McDill AFB
Tampa Bay computer hackers hone their skills, urge the public to change their computer passwords

By Alli Knothe, Times Staff Writer
Wednesday, October 19, 2016 9:19am


TAMPA — Bill Davison has always had a passion for his career. But outside of his field, few others understood what he did.

"Now I say I'm in cyber security and their faces light up with interest. They ask about networks and state attacks . . . I'm not used to that," he said.

It's now common to talk about private email servers and ransomware at the dinner table. The U.S. information security consulting industry is valued at about $9 billion and is expected to grow about 14 percent in the next decade, according to research firm IBISWorld. Several data security companies have moved to the Tampa Bay area in the last few years, where they can find qualified employees and potential clients through MacDill Air Force Base.

On Saturday, the Tampa Bay Chapter of the Information Systems Security Association (ISSA) hosted a hacker competition. About 50 data security experts and aficionados who typically work to guard against cyber breaches spent the day in a simulation that involved breaking into a fake Hillary Clinton private email server, accessing a bogus Donald Trump chatroom and about 20 other challenges.

"Like a locksmith, you have to know how to pick locks," said Joe Partlow, chief information security officer for the event's sponsor, Tampa-based ReliaQuest. These and similar events are held regularly throughout the country to encourage networking and professional growth in the cyber security industry. Partlow said the election-inspired theme was a fun twist on everyday challenges within the profession. The event organizers also played loud YouTube videos of Trump sniffing and Clinton laughing in order to distract the hackers from their tasks…..

US Special Operations Command

Jihadi drones fuel interest in countermeasures by military, civilian interests

Howard Altman, Times Staff Writer
Friday, October 14, 2016 8:11am


But separating the threatening devices from the innocent ones also presents an opportunity for companies offering technology to counter the diminutive, unmanned aircraft.

And recent reports that jihadi groups like Islamic State and Hezbollah are using weaponized drones may help drive a growing anti-drone market that by one estimate will exceed $1 billion annually by 2022.
Drone jitters "are going to make our sales pitch easier, or at least garner more interest," said Jon Bayless, a retired Navy rear admiral from Tampa. Bayless represents California-based CSP Strategies, which sells a system that enables users to scan for drones, then take over their controlling signals if they enter a designated airspace.

"We take control of the drone from the operator and override their signal," said Corey Peters, CSP chief executive officer and a retired Navy chief petty officer. "Then we navigate the drone to a safe area."

Peters said the Drone Detection and Defense System provides users with a 360-degree protection zone that has a radius as big as five football fields.

Given how U.S. adversaries are beginning to use the drones, the Pentagon is taking notice…..

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**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**AIR FORCE SPACE & MISSILE HISTORY CENTER RENAMED**

**BY DAN APTED, OCTOBER 20TH, 2016**


The Air Force Space & Missile History Center, located near the south gate of Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, has been renamed the Sands Space History Center in honor of retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Harry James Sands Jr.

The name became official during a ceremony at 11 a.m. Oct. 14. in the center’s main hall. It was Sands that laid the groundwork for the history center.

“General Sands didn’t just verbally champion this cause throughout his career, but he embodied it,” said Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, 45th Space Wing commander. “His passion for preserving and sharing out history with the public was unmatched by any other.”

Sands first proposed the idea of a space museum in 1961. Despite working for more than 30 years, he did not live to see the Air Force Space & Missile History center open. Sands died in 1993.

However, according to a press release by the 45th Space Wing, Sands work became a reality when the center opened Aug 13, 2010.

Sands joined the military in 1939 as a command pilot. In 1945 he helped start the missile development program before being appointed, in 1953, Headquarters Air Force Missile Test Center’s deputy for operations.

After proposing the idea of a museum, he was appointed the museum’s foundation chairman in 1963. According to the 45th Space Wing, lacking funding, along with receiving donations of poorly-conditioned large artifacts, plans had to be scaled back.

Pressing on, Sands was able to secure $4 million in fundraising over nine months.

“General Sands had a strong vision of what this place could be and his vision continues to grow through the minds and actions of each member supporting this history center today,” Monteith said….
PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — After 10 days running near nonstop helicopter relief flights to the areas in Haiti hit hardest by Hurricane Matthew, the U.S. military said Saturday it is winding down its operations out of the international airport here in the capital. The mission will transition to the Iwo Jima, the Navy amphibious assault ship anchored off the coast.

“What you will see over the next, probably, three days, much of the footprint ashore will move out of here,” said Adm. Kurt Tidd, commander of U.S. Southern Command, who flew down from Miami on Saturday to visit the military operations organized under his command. That meant visiting the joint task force at the airport, and then flying to the Iwo Jima.

“We will move a lot of that footprint out afloat and will continue to conduct support operations,” Tidd said. “And then we will just continue to transition the mission more and more and more to civil authorities.”

The U.S. military was able to rush a joint task force to Haiti just days after the Oct. 4 hurricane tore across the western end of the peninsula that juts out from the southwest of the country. The storm killed at least 500 people, sent trees toppling, flooded roads, destroyed houses and farmland and left 1.4 million people in need of assistance…..

Latin America will test the next president’s security goals

By ALEX HORTON | STARS AND STRIPES, Published: October 16, 2016

There is a microcosm of the world’s security problems on the doorstep of the United States. Islamic State fighters. Ramped-up aggression from China and Russia. Floods of migrants and refugees fleeing conflict. Sophisticated criminal networks undermining peace and stability.

These problems are typically spread across the planet. But they’re also exerting pressure on one region in particular: Latin America.

But for one-sixth of the Earth’s landmass, the area of operations for U.S. Southern Command can seem fairly quiet. There is no direct security threat, and the region tends to fall low on force priorities, Navy Admiral Kurt W. Tidd, the commander of Southern Command, said in a March statement to Congress.

While not as attention-grabbing as hot wars in the Middle East, Southern Command focuses on three objectives: disrupting transregional threats such as drug trafficking, responding to regional natural
disasters and pushing out Russia and China to remain the partner of choice for the 31 Latin American nations.

The next president will inherit a host of global security problems, but few of them will come as close to home as ones in the Western Hemisphere…..

The US Relief Mission to Haiti Is Also a Signal to America’s Neighbors, and Russia

BY CAROLINE HOUCK, ATLANTIC MEDIA FELLOW AT DEFENSE ONE, OCTOBER 18, 2016


THE LEADER OF U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND HOPES HELPFUL ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN MOSCOW’S WORDS.

When U.S. Southern Command dispatched nearly 2,000 Marines, a dozen helicopters, and one amphibious assault ship to Haiti earlier this month, it was an effort to provide lifesaving assistance in the wake of Hurricane Matthew. But the operation also served as a reminder to regional friends and neighbors that they needn’t turn to Russia, SOUTHCOM commander Adm. Kurt Tidd said Tuesday.

Though the U.S. has largely enjoyed uncontested access to Latin America since the Cold War, Russia has in recent years been cozying up to historical allies in the region. Today, Moscow is running what Tidd called a “very aggressive” propaganda campaign to paint the U.S. as an unreliable, uninterested ally and Russia as a “viable alternative.”

“We just need to recognize that whether we like it or not, they are engaged in a competition for influence, and we can acknowledge that, we can ignore that, or we can engage in competition as well,” Tidd told an audience at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

As the hurricane swept through the Caribbean and across Haiti’s vulnerable southwestern tip, Tidd said, the military prepared to send aircraft to help international and nonprofit aid organizations already on the ground.

“When you look at the response to Haiti, we had at one point in time 12 helicopters—heavy-lift and medium-lift helicopters—flying aid and meeting the vital needs of the Haitian people,” he said. “I didn’t see any Russian helicopters out there.”….

Defense Industry

Air Force Launches Space Consortium That Puts Startups to Work On Prototypes

By: Valerie Insinna, October 18, 2016

WASHINGTON—The Air Force is looking for a company to lead a new space consortium formed to help broaden participation in space acquisition programs to startups and small businesses.

During the Air Force Innovation Forum in San Jose, Calif., Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James on Monday announced that the service had issued a request for information for a not-for-profit manager of the Space Enterprise Consortium.

Companies that take part in the consortium will be eligible to compete for rapid prototyping projects and — if successful — spin them off into programs of record. Although both large and small businesses and traditional and nontraditional firms will be chosen for the group, the service especially wants to see increased participation from startups and other vendors that are pioneering innovative space capabilities but don’t necessarily work regularly with the Defense Department, James said.

“We hope the setup will lower barrier to entry, accelerate the timeline from solicitation to award, develop intellectual property rights agreements and eventually transition some successful prototypes to vendor-supported, off-the-shelf projects,” she said.

In a typical acquisition program, the Air Force’s requirements can amount to hundreds of pages of technical specifications, meaning that even startups with effective, inexpensive approaches to problems have a hard time entering the defense sector, James said. For that reason, the service relies on a small number of large firms to create products.

That’s “not good enough for the future,” she said. The service needs to develop space capabilities more rapidly, and for that to happen, it needs to become more accessible and understandable to nontraditional companies. …

The Pentagon Is Planning a New Super Rival to the Troubled F-35

By Eric Pianin, Reuters, October 18, 2016


After years of missteps and ghastly cost overruns, the $1 trillion F-35 Joint Strike Fighter is finally coming on line and generating relatively positive reviews by the military and erstwhile critics.

Lockheed Martin’s F-35 Lightning system is a stealthy state-of-the-art jet fighter designed to span the military services for the U.S. and its allies. There are three distinct models that take off and land in conventional ways, do short takeoffs and vertical landings, and that are launched from aircraft carriers using a catapult.

Last year, a squadron of F-35B fighters tailor made for the Marines was first declared ready for deployment, and this summer those aircraft withstood intensive testing at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Also last August, the Air Force declared its F-35A Lightning II fighter jet “combat ready,” marking another important milestone for the controversial aircraft.

“It has been trash-talked a lot, but this is one mean machine and it will prove its combat value,” Rebecca Grant, president of the Washington-based firm IRIS Independent Research and a consultant to the Air Force, told FoxNews.com. “It’s ready to go to war, it’s ready to keep the peace.”

Ironically, just as the F-35 is getting up to speed, the Air Force and Navy have begun preliminary planning for a long-term successor to the single seat F-35 jet fighter – one that includes futuristic features that once seemed out of reach…..
Budget Fight At The OCO Corral

By JUSTIN JOHNSON, on October 14, 2016 at 4:01 AM

Should war funds be used to help the military patch gaps in its regular budget? It sounds like a technical issue, but the ongoing debate has turned into a battle royale, with a new scuffle breaking out just last week. It’s a slugfest featuring bad ideas, even worse ideas and a healthy dose of hypocrisy, too. Let’s sort this out...

It began this spring when Rep. Mac Thornberry, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, decided to employ a budget gimmick to help increase the defense budget. The ploy involved funding only part of the total year’s military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere, which are paid for through the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) account. The partial funding freed up to $18 billion for other legitimate defense needs like increasing maintenance and training, and growing and modernizing the military.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter slammed the move, saying things like, “it’s gambling with warfighting funds” and that using OCO in this manner “undercuts stable planning and efficient use of taxpayer dollars.”

The latest twist, however, is that the Pentagon now confirms that roughly $30 billion of its OCO request is for “enduring requirements.” In other words, the Pentagon is using the OCO account to pay for normal budget needs like training and regular operations, while publicly blasting Republicans in Congress for proposing to do exactly the same. Even by Washington standards, this hypocrisy is pretty rich....

The US Military Is Shedding Civilian Jobs. It Has No Idea How Much Money It’s Actually Saving

BY ERIC KATZ, STAFF CORRESPONDENT, OCTOBER 14, 2016

The Defense Department is still not tracking the cost savings it is achieving from cutting civilian employees, according to a new report.

The Pentagon has tracked how many total employees it has cut since fiscal 2012, according to the Government Accountability Office audit, but not how much money it has saved from those efforts. At the same time, the department has tracked its cost savings for its contractor workforce but not the number of full-time equivalents it has successfully trimmed. The 2013 National Defense Authorization Act required Defense to make the reductions and track both figures.

The law dictated the contractor and civilian spending cuts should at least equal that of the military reductions, which the Pentagon said will equal 6.4 percent by fiscal 2017. Defense has estimated it will exceed that number on the civilian side—predicting a net cost savings of 7.1 percent from fiscal 2012 to fiscal 2017—but will not reach its target for the contract workforce. The department said it could not
produce the exact number of full-time equivalent contractors it has cut because it is “unable to provide an accurate number” on the size of the workforce. It estimated it reduced contractor workforce costs between fiscal years 2012 and 2015 by 3.2 percent.

The Pentagon shed 5.2 percent of its civilian workforce in the same time period, cutting about 40,000 employees. It reduced military personnel by 4.8 percent in that timeframe. The department excluded more than 70 percent of its civilians—538,000 employees—from the reductions, though GAO noted it has not offered adequate reasoning to explain the exceptions as required by law. The estimate that Defense would meet its required civilian workforce savings is based only on the 240,000 non-excepted portion of workers, GAO said…..

New Threats Spark DoD Spending Debate: Thinktanks Ponder $2 Trillion In Options

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR. on October 18, 2016 at 4:00 AM

http://breakingdefense.com/2016/10/brother-can-you-spare-1-3-trillion-5-thinktanks-offer-defense-alternatives/

WASHINGTON: If you were hoping, after a bitterly contentious presidential campaign, that at least we’d have consensus on national defense spending…tough luck. Instead, teams from five leading thinktanks — spanning the political spectrum but all using the same budget simulator — came up with a more than $2 trillion spread of options. You can watch them debate live here (moderated by, well, me) starting at 9am:

Do you think we need an urgent buildup to counter Russia, China, and the Islamic State? That’ll be $1.3 trillion extra over the next 10 years, please, conservatives estimate. Would you rather save one trillion instead? Sure, libertarians say, but our allies will have to protect themselves. Or would you rather steer a middle course between the high- and low-cost options? Then get ready for tough choices on what parts of the military to modernize for a major-power war and which parts to keep cheap for day-to-day counterterrorism — what’s called a “high/low mix.”

That’s the broad spectrum of alternatives scholars from five thinktanks are presenting today. (It’s important to note that each team represented only the members’ own opinion, not any official position of their parent institution). Despite the diversity of ideas, though, there’s some striking common ground.

To start with, even the most hawkish team didn’t recommend spending as much money on defense as the baseline set back in the presidential budget for 2012, the last before sequestration.

“No one made it to PB12,” said exercise convener Jacob Cohn, from the respected Center for Strategic & Budgetary Assessments, as he overviewed the proposals at a meeting last week. “AEI came closest.”

“We tried,” chuckled Tom Donnelly, head of the team from the conservative American Enterprise Institute, which proposed the $1.3 trillion increase…..

Other Of Interest

A new federal court ruling has huge significance for military reservists

By: Andrew Tilghman, October 15, 2016
A high-level federal court on Friday delivered a blow to the rights of military reservists.

The case involved a Navy reservist who claimed that his civilian employer fired him because he was mobilized and deployed to Afghanistan, a violation of federal laws designed to protect reservists from discrimination based on their military service. But Kevin Ziober lost his case before the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, one step below the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled that his pre-employment arbitration agreement prohibited him from suing his former employer.

And although the court ruled against Ziober, the judge appeared to urge Congress to consider changing or strengthening the 1994 law, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, or USERRA.

“If we have erred by construing [USERRA] too narrowly, Congress will surely let us know,” Circuit Judge Paul J. Watford wrote in a concurring opinion released Friday.

The USERRA law requires employers to allow reservists to return to their civilian jobs after periods of active-duty service.

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McChrystal: Look beyond military to reach peace in war-torn Middle East

Howard Altman, Times Staff Writer
Monday, October 17, 2016 4:34pm

TAMPA — On the first full day of the battle to retake the Iraqi city of Mosul from the so-called Islamic State, the former head of U.S. commando strike operations told a Tampa audience that removing ISIS alone won't bring peace.

"It is certainly not the cause of" the region's problems, said Stanley McChrystal, who once lead the secretive Joint Special Operations Command, the nation's premier counterterror military organization. "Their disappearance is not going to solve it."

McChrystal was in Tampa on Monday afternoon to speak to the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, a bipartisan organization that works to educate policymakers, business leaders and the public on the importance of using America's civilian-led tools of development and diplomacy to make the world safer.

As JSOC commander, McChrystal helped revolutionize warfare by fusing intelligence with the military capabilities of commandos like Navy SEALs, Army Rangers, Green Beret and Delta Force members and Air Force and Marine special operators. He later became a key proponent of counterinsurgency warfare as head of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, where building security, governance and stability were seen as the way ahead.
Department Seeks to Expand Infrastructure Privatization

By Karen Parrish DoD News, Defense Media Activity

http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/978924/department-seeks-to-expand-infrastructure-privatization

WASHINGTON, Oct. 19, 2016 — The Defense Department is pulling out of the landlord business and is looking at areas beyond housing where public-private partnerships could shore up defense infrastructure, according to a senior defense official.

Peter Potochney, acting assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, took part in a panel discussion about such partnerships yesterday at the Center for Strategic and International Studies here.

Learning from Experience

Given the success of privatizing military housing, Potochney said, “We’re looking at other functions … [and asking] what did we learn from that?”

Military family housing privatization has been under way since 1996. The defense acquisitions website reports that at the beginning of the program, the department had an inventory of approximately 257,000 family housing units. Current plans are to privatize about 75 percent of existing family housing units worldwide…..

“Why did it take us so long to implement housing privatization?” Potochney asked. “I don’t think there’s anybody who doesn’t think it’s a great thing, and it’s worked well, and it’s saved us money, and it’s gotten soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines better housing than they had before.”…..

Governor Baker Names John Beatty As Executive Director Of Massachusetts Military Task Force

For Immediate Release - June 28, 2016


BOSTON – Governor Charlie Baker today announced John C. Beatty Sr. as the new Executive Director of the Massachusetts Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force. The task force works to promote and strengthen the Commonwealth’s six military installations and their impact on local communities and economies at the federal, state and local level.

“The Commonwealth’s six military installations play vital roles in our national defense and advancing the Massachusetts economy, from cybersecurity innovations at Hanscom Air Force Base to advanced robotics at Joint Base Cape Cod and Westover Air Reserve Base and pioneering smart, advanced materials at Natick Soldier Systems Center,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “I look forward to John Beatty’s leadership of the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force as we continue to enhance the economic vitality of Massachusetts military institutions”

“The vitality of our military installations, and well-being of our service members and their families, will continue to be a top priority for our administration,” said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. “Mr. Beatty’s extensive management experience in the military at home and abroad, including overseeing over
3,000 service members in New England, makes him uniquely capable for this important role”

As Task Force Executive Director, Beatty will interact with leaders at Massachusetts military installations to identify partnerships, and opportunities for mission enhancement and cost reduction. He will act as liaison between the Commonwealth and community leaders to keep them aligned in highlighting installation activities in both Massachusetts and Washington. 

NEW PROGRAM TO DIVERT VETERANS FROM TRADITIONAL COURT SYSTEM

STAFF REPORT— OCTOBER 20, 2016


MIAMI— Veterans have unique needs that are different from the rest of the civilian population. Now, Miami-Dade Military Affairs Board has pledged $75,000 over the next three years to support the creation of the Miami-Dade Veterans Treatment Court. The initiative will provide rehabilitative services for veterans who have been charged with non-violent crimes and have been identified as suffering from serious mental health conditions or substance-abuse disorders.

The specialty court will divert veterans from the traditional criminal justice system and provide them with the tools needed to successfully reintegrate back into civilian life – while still under court supervision.

“As someone who has served in the military, I am very excited to see the Veterans Court one step closer to becoming a reality,” said Miami-Dade County Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz, who also serves as Chairman of the Miami-Dade Military Affairs Board. “I know the Veterans Court will make a huge difference in the lives of veterans, which is why the Military Affairs Board has pledged $75,000 to this worthy cause.”

A significant number of veterans returning from military service have been exposed to prolonged combat resulting in physical injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury. These conditions sometimes lead to mental health conditions and substance abuse disorders that make it difficult for veterans to reintegrate to civilian life, and sometimes lead to behaviors resulting in arrest.

“We are pleased that our court was recognized as worthy of receiving this prestigious federal grant. With this grant and the pledge of additional funding from the County, our hopes of establishing an independent treatment court for eligible veterans will soon become a reality,” said Judge Marisa Tinkler Mendez, who will lead the implementation of the Veterans Treatment Court…..
October 28, 2016

Task Force members --

1. **Next Meeting:** The next Task Force meeting will be in person on **Thursday, 17 November 2016** beginning at 9:00AM at the Tampa-Airport Marriott Hotel, 4200 George J. Bean Pkwy, Tampa, FL 33607. Michelle sent reminders for pre-meeting registration forms earlier this week and she must have your accommodation needs **no later than 5:00 pm OCTOBER 31, 2016.** Please get these back to her by COB on Monday.

2. **Call In Numbers** –
   
   **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979   **Access Code:** 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Support Task Force FY17-18 Grants:** The application window closes today. Staff and The Principi Group will review the applications and develop a recommendation for the Task Force to review at the November meeting during closed session.

4. **FDA Meeting on 16 November 2016 in Tampa** – The FDA meeting will be the day prior to the 17 November 2006 Task Force meeting also in Tampa. There will be a combined mixer for FDA and FDSTF members following the 16 November 2016 FDA meeting from 5:00-6:00 PM at the Skyye Bar inside the Tampa-Airport Marriott Hotel.

5. **Attachments:**
   - Bi-weekly TPG Conference Call

*Terry*

**Terry McCaffrey**  
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BRAC
Defense Business Board calls for BRAC and DLA restructure

October 21, 2016 | Tony Bertuca


In an aim to find efficiencies in the Pentagon's $150 billion logistics enterprise, the Defense Business Board is calling for another round of base closures; an end-to-end assessment of supply chain vulnerabilities; and the creation of a new management structure for the Defense Logistics Agency. The board unanimously approved a set of logistics reform recommendations at its quarterly meeting Thursday, including calling for another round of base closures and realignments, known as BRAC....

DOD BUSINESS BOARD URGES BRAC ROUND FOCUSED ON LOGISTICS

On Base with Dan Cohen, 24 Oct 16

ADC news=defensecommunities.org@mail159.suw14.mcdlv.net ; on behalf of; ADC news@defensecommunities.org


The Defense Business Board on Thursday recommended a new round of base closures to slash the military’s excess logistics infrastructure. The recommendation, submitted by the board’s logistics task group, called for a BRAC to “target supply chain and excess depot warehouse and capacity.” DOD’s logistics enterprise does not reflect best practices of private industry which rely on flat, flexible management structures, the task group concluded. The department’s portfolio of logistics infrastructure includes 18 maintenance depots and 25 distribution depots. “Legislation authorizing a BRAC process should stipulate the focus is closure, with minimal realignments necessary for closure, efficiency and immediate or near-term savings,” according to the group’s presentation. The briefing noted that a growing number of defense communities and congressional delegations favor a new base closure round. The board, which is made up of private sector executives, unanimously approved the entire set of recommendations submitted by the task group, reported Inside Defense. A separate recommendation called for DOD to revamp the Defense Logistics Agency’s management structure by placing a civilian director and a three-star military deputy at the top of the organization. The task group also urged DOD to review the A-76 process used for public-private competitions and determine what activities should be eligible for outsourcing.

NAS Pensacola
Blue Angels Homecoming Shows Nov. 11-12

By Mullet Wrapper on October 27, 2016
The 2016 NAS Pensacola Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show will be held onboard NAS Penscola November 11-12 and will celebrate not only Veteran’s Day weekend, but the 70th Anniversary of the Blue Angels team. Gates open at 8 a.m. on Friday and Saturday, and the big shows start at 9 a.m. The Blues fly both days at 2 p.m. On Friday, attendees are invited to stay through sunset and watch the spectacular Friday Night Air Show, complete with night time aircraft and performers capped off by the largest fireworks display in the Pensacola area. The night show begins on Friday at 4 p.m. The Angels won’t be flying, but there will be a lot of other activities and entertainment going on.

NAS Whiting Field

NAS Whiting Field, Gulf Power celebrate energy conservation contract

Thursday, Posted Oct 27, 2016 at 5:24 PM, Updated Oct 27, 2016 at 5:24 PM
By Press Gazette staff

MILTON — Gulf Power Company members and Naval Air Station Whiting Field senior commanders have broken ground on a Utility Energy Service Contract to bring energy upgrades to the base. The total project cost is $9.8 million and will reportedly reduce the base's energy consumption by 15 percent and save $495,000 a year in energy costs.

According to Jason Poe, installation energy manager for Whiting Field, approximately 500 interior and exterior fluorescent, metal halide and high-pressure sodium lighting fixtures will be upgraded to LEDs. Cooling systems will be upgraded with a "virtual plant (acting) as one collective unit to serve cooling loads via piping in four different simulator buildings."

Whiting Field Commander Todd Bahlau said, "This is a big deal for Naval Air Station Whiting Field for many reasons. First of all, this project reduces our energy footprint. It enhances our energy resiliency and enables us to reprioritize our savings to improve our operational readiness for years to come.....

Hurlburt Field

Goldfein helps unveil special tactics memorial at Hurlburt

By: Staff, October 21, 2016

A memorial to Air Force special tactics airmen was dedicated Thursday at Hurlburt Field, Florida, the culmination of a four-year effort.
The focal point of the memorial is a 7-foot bronze statue of a special tactics airman in operational gear atop a black granite base, according to an Air Force news release. There will be pedestals on both sides of the statue with the names of fallen special tactics airmen -- 19 killed in combat and eight in training.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein led the dedication ceremony and recounted one of his missions as a fighter pilot in 1999. He was shot down over Serbia and a special tactics team rescued him, then a lieutenant colonel, reported Northwest Florida Daily News.

Special tactics is the Air Force’s ground special operations force……

GULF COAST AIR COMMANDOS PROVE COMBAT CAPABILITY TO CHIEF OF STAFF

STAFF SGT. MELANIE HOLOCHWOST, OCTOBER 26, 2016, GULF COAST MILITARY & DEFENSE OKALOOSA/WALTON

http://pulsegulfcoast.com/2016/10/gulf-coast-air-commandos-prove-combat-capability-chief-staff

The U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff descended upon the nation’s most active air base last week to get a first-hand experience of the capabilities of Gulf Coast airmen and the dynamism of America’s air commandos.

During his first visit as Chief of Staff, Gen. David Goldfein started his visit with an AC-130U Spooky gunship flight, demonstrating the raw firepower of what some refer to as the flying canon.

“It was actually the first time I saw a gunship crew in action, how the aircraft is configured and just what combat capability that weapon system can bring,” Goldfein said. “It was spectacular.”

On board the Spooky gunship, the general flew alongside a gunner that had seen more than 4,000 combat hours and served more than 20 deployments.

“This is one thing that worries me,” Goldfein said. “This Air Commando is on a one-to-one deploy-to-dwell ratio with three children at home. I asked him how this was going for him and his family [because] at some point that [pattern] becomes unsustainable.”

“We need to set a pace that our Airmen and families can sustain over time,” Goldfein added.

The following morning, Goldfein was the keynote speaker at the dedication ceremony and unveiled the first-ever Special Tactics memorial to more than 800 people in attendance.

EGLIN AFB

October is Energy Action Month

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. --
Published October 24, 2016


October is Energy Action Month. With an intention to increase awareness, expand technical insight and foster interest in the multitude of energy challenges facing the country, National Energy Action Month was born to meet the growing need for timely and accurate information about a serious subject affecting everyone.
The federal government sector is the single largest consumer of energy in the U.S. Within the government, DoD comprises the lion’s share of that total. The Air Force is the top energy consumer across all DoD agencies. With annual energy costs exceeding $40 million, Eglin is one of the largest energy users in the Air Force. Base leadership takes the rising cost and strategic use of mission critical and finite energy resources seriously.

Energy Action Month 2016 focuses on educating all energy consumers about: past and current energy issues; renewable and innovative technologies. It encourages conversations about what the future holds for conventional, renewable and alternative energy resources. As the largest U.S. military installation in the world, these concerns are particularly important to Eglin’s day-to-day operations. Simply put, energy is the life blood of Eglin’s mission…..

Tyndall AFB

PAE Aviation Wins Contract for Missile Testing Upkeep on F-35, F-22

https://sputniknews.com/military/201610261046733094-pae-aviation-contract/

WASHINGTON (Sputnik) — Since its introduction in 2006, the F-35 has been criticized as a failure and plagued with multiple problems, including with its logistics systems, avionics processors, landing gear and fuel tank design. The cost of the F-35 program is projected to exceed $1 trillion. “PAE Aviation and Technical Services [of] Marlton, New Jersey was awarded a $14.9 million modification…contract,” the announcement on Tuesday stated. It added that the company will provide maintenance of aerial targets and range-instrumentation systems at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida, and of full-scale aerial targets at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico for the Air Combat Command Acquisition Management and Integration Center. Live-fire weapons testing is conducted out at those bases by the 53rd Weapons Evaluation Group for all Air Force air-to-air missiles and for combat aircraft, the Defense Department explained.

SolarCity (SCTY), Balfour Beatty Communities Near Completion of 7-MW Installation at USAF Family Housing Facilities

October 27, 2016 7:21 AM EDT

http://www.streetinsider.com/Corporate+News/SolarCity+(SCTY),+Balfour+Beatty+Communities+Near+Completion+of+7-MW+Installation+at+USAF+Family+Housing+Facilities/12173023.html

Balfour Beatty Communities and SolarCity are nearing completion of approximately 7 megawatts of solar at Air Force family housing in four states. The rooftop solar panels are installed across the residential communities managed by Balfour Beatty Communities at Travis Air Force Base (AFB), in California; Sheppard AFB in Texas; Tyndall AFB in Florida; and Luke AFB in Arizona. Together the installations utilize more than 26,000 solar panels to provide power to more than two thousand housing units.

"I am very pleased to see this renewable, green-energy project coming to Travis Air Force Base," said Congressman John Garamendi of California. "Installing solar on the homes of service members living in
base housing makes sense. This type of creative partnership between private and public entities and the communities surrounding our major military installations has become essential to the long-term viability of those bases and the critical missions they execute. Funding for facility enhancements and critical base infrastructure has become very scarce due to budget cuts and sequestration. These types of partnerships leverage private and community resources to produce a win-win scenario that mutually benefits all partners. This project will save taxpayer money, help build long-term sustainability into the base, and is strategically smart for our military, our environment, and our nation."

**NS Mayport**

**Navy's newest warship to visit Naval Station Mayport**

By News4Jax.com Staff, Posted: 11:47 AM, October 24, 2016


NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. - The Navy’s newest and most technologically advanced surface ship, the USS Zumwalt, will visit Naval Station Mayport on Tuesday.

The ship, which was commissioned into U.S. Navy active service in Baltimore, Maryland on Oct. 15, during Maryland Fleet Week, is scheduled for its first port visit in Florida.

Zumwalt is the first in a three-ship class of the Navy’s newest, most technologically advanced multi-mission guided-missile destroyers.

The ship is named for Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, former Chief of Naval Operations.

As a veteran of World War II and the conflicts in Korea and Vietnam, Admiral Zumwalt exemplified honor, courage and commitment during 32 years of dedicated Naval service earning a Bronze Star with Valor for his actions during the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the Navy said.

**Secretary of Navy stresses importance of new ships coming to Mayport during tour of shipyard**

Posted October 24, 2016 06:11 pm - Updated October 24, 2016 06:31 pm

By Joe Daraskevich, joe.daraskevich@jacksonville.com


The U.S. Navy’s newest guided-missile destroyer, the future USS Zumwalt, docked in Baltimore on Oct. 13. The destroyer was commissioned Oct. 15, and it will make a stop at Mayport Naval Station on Tuesday on its way to San Diego.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus took time Monday to assure the men and women building littoral combat ships earmarked for Mayport Naval Station that they are working on the best warships in the world despite widespread criticism of the new vessels.

Mabus stressed the importance of rebuilding the Navy’s entire fleet and said there are no plans to slow down production at the Fincantieri Marinette Marine shipyard on the Wisconsin/Michigan border.

“The Navy has a validated need for 52 of these ships, that’s the number we have to have to do all our jobs,” Mabus said as he spoke to a group of shipbuilders Monday afternoon.
The littoral ships are designed to operate close to shore with steerable jet propulsion. There are two types of ships in the LCS fleet, and Lockheed Martin is under contract to build the Freedom-variant ships at the Wisconsin facility.

The Navy recently announced those ships will all be based at Mayport and the Independence-variant ships will be based in San Diego. The Freedom class resemble traditional Navy ships, while the Independence-variant ships have trimaran hulls……

**Rubio Welcomes Navy's Announcement of New Ships Coming to NE Florida**

OCT 25 2016


Miami, FL – U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) issued the following statement today welcoming the U.S. Navy's announcement that three new ships, including a destroyer, the USS Thomas Hudner, and two littoral combat ships (LCS) - the USS Wichita and USS Sioux City - will be homeported at Naval Station Mayport in Northeast Florida:

"This is welcome news for Northeast Florida's military community, which plays a vital role in defending our nation. We look forward to welcoming more than 400 sailors and their families who will soon be calling the Jacksonville area home. For those of us who represent Northeast Florida in Congress, today's news is a welcome development that should give us momentum to finally bring a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to Mayport in the coming years.

"Mayport is the second largest homeport on the east coast, and in addition to serving as the Navy's principal east coast location for the LCS, I am pleased the Navy is increasing its commitment to Mayport with the delivery of a new Areligh Burke Class Destroyer, which I have advocated for throughout my term.

"Florida must continue to be a military-friendly state, with policies that recognize the national security, economic and community benefits of growing our state's military presence. Getting rid of the defense sequester is a key part of strengthening our nation and making sure our military is better prepared to confront new threats."

**NAS Jacksonville**

**Successful rocket launch at Wallops opens doors for Virginia**

Posted: Sunday, October 23, 2016 10:30 pm
By MICHAEL MARTZ, Richmond Times-Dispatch


CHINCOTEAGUE — The day after the Antares rocket program returned to space from a Virginia-owned launch pad on Wallops Island, the cheers were loud and long at a meeting here of a regional alliance committed to expanding the economic development of the 71-year-old NASA Wallops Flight Facility.
“It’s huge,” Del. Robert S. Bloxom Jr., R-Accomack, said after the quarterly meeting of the Wallops Island Regional Alliance on Tuesday. “You feel the relief in the room?”

The successful launch of the unmanned Antares 230 rocket to resupply the International Space Station orbiting above the Earth put to rest doubts about the future of the commercial rocket program at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport, almost exactly two years after an earlier version of the rocket exploded seconds after liftoff and crashed next to the state pad, causing $15 million in damage.

It also opened the door for Virginia to prepare a business plan for making the most of its investments on land leased from NASA on the barrier island, including more than $100 million in two rocket launch pads; a $15.8 million annual operating subsidy for the spaceport; and a $5.8 million runway near completion to allow testing of unmanned aviation systems, or drones.

The plan could include more launches from both pads; a potential federal program for testing unmanned vehicles of all types; and a support role for the Triton drone fleet that the Navy is deciding whether to base at Wallops or two other sites in Florida….

**Navy’s First Operational MQ-4C Triton Squadron Stands Up This Week**

By: Megan Eckstein, October 25, 2016 9:01 AM

[https://news.usni.org/2016/10/25/navys-first-operational-mq-4c-triton-squadron-stands-up-this-week](https://news.usni.org/2016/10/25/navys-first-operational-mq-4c-triton-squadron-stands-up-this-week)

THE PENTAGON – The Navy will stand up its first unmanned-only aviation squadron this week, as the MQ-4C Triton community establishes its first operational squadron in a ceremony Friday, the Navy’s director of air warfare told USNI News.

Unmanned Patrol Squadron (VUP) 19 will operate out of Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla., collocated with manned P-8A Poseidon squadrons. VUP-19 will consist of only unmanned aircraft, a first for the Navy, and will fall under Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 11 with P-8 squadrons, Rear Adm. DeWolfe Miller (OPNAV N98) said Monday.

The official formation of the squadron, led by Cmdr. Benjamin Stinespring, will begin a long process of preparing for early operational capability and a first deployment to U.S. 7th Fleet in 2018, Miller explained.

The squadron has no air vehicles for now; it will receive its first vehicles in late 2017. In the meantime, the approximately 130 squadron members have already begun rotating through Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland to train with the test pilots stationed there. In January a Triton mission systems trainer will deliver to NAS Jacksonville to further train the air vehicle operators, and Naval Air Station Point Mugu in California has additional facilities to help train the maintainers, Miller said.

In addition to training, the VUP-19 crew will be tasked with collaborating with P-8 operators to develop tactics, techniques and procedures for operating the two maritime patrol/reconnaissance aircraft…..

**MacDill AFB**

**Runway resurfacing underway at MacDill, some personnel relocate**
TAMPA — Work began this week on resurfacing an 11,421-foot runway at MacDill Air Force Base. The project is expected to close the runway for about two months.

Resurfacing usually is required every 15 years and this year's project will cost $8.1 million, Capt. Jessica Brown, spokeswoman for MacDill's host unit, said earlier this year. The money will come from the Air Force headquarters budget.

As many as four of MacDill's 16 KC-135 Stratotanker aerial refueling jets will move to Tampa International Airport. Two of MacDill's three C-37 twin-engine jet transport planes will park at Tampa International, as well.

As many as five more KC-135s will temporarily move to Charleston Air Force Base in South Carolina. That means some personnel will face temporary relocation.....

MacDill hosts second annual international symposium on warrior care

By Howard Altman | Times Staff Writer
Published: October 27, 2016

Over the last 15 years of war, battlefield health care has improved so much that about 90 percent of U.S. troops injured in battle survive. That’s a far better rate than during World War II, when just about 66 percent of troops survived.

But that’s created a whole new level of challenge — taking care of those who suffer wounds they wouldn’t have survived in previous conflicts. To address the issues, about 100 people from 15 nations gathered at MacDill Air Force Base for a three-day symposium to share best ways to treat the wounded, ill and injured.

The second annual Warrior Care in the 21st Century Symposium, which kicked off Oct. 25, brought together medical personnel and service providers to identify innovations in resilience, recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration.

“All nations are looking for ways to support wounded warriors,” said Karen Guice, acting assistant secretary of defense for health affairs.

The principal medical advisor to Defense Secretary Ashton Carter, Guice said the symposium is designed to increase the capabilities of partner nations as well as to learn from them.....

Cape Canaveral AFS
SPACE FLORIDA SEEKING FUNDING TO HELP SPACEX MODIFY LC-39A
KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, Fla. — The Orlando Sentinel has reported that Space Florida, the state’s space business development organization, is helping SpaceX obtain funding from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The $5 million would help the Hawthorne, California-based company modify Launch Complex 39A (LC-39A) at Kennedy Space Center.

BUILDING ON SPACEX-SPACE FLORIDA RELATIONSHIP

SpaceX’s modifications to LC-39A are meant to prepare the Apollo and Shuttle-heritage launch site for use by the Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy launch vehicles. If approved, the FDOT funding would come out of a long-term FDOT transportation improvement plan, which treats space-related assets as part of the state’s transportation infrastructure. FDOT will discuss the LC-39A funding during an online board meeting next Wednesday.

With this funding, Space Florida would enter into an agreement with SpaceX. Space Florida helped SpaceX obtain a 20-year lease at LC-39A as well as Space Launch Complex 40 (SLC-40) at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station – which was damaged by a destructive pad fire during a static test on September 1.

Florida gives $5M to SpaceX to help launch crews

USA TODAY NETWORK, James Dean, Florida Today9:59 p.m. EDT October 26, 2016

CAPE CANAVERAL — SpaceX's preparations to launch astronauts from Kennedy Space Center received a $5 million boost from the state on Wednesday.

During a special meeting, Space Florida's board of directors agreed to provide the money to help SpaceX install an access arm at historic pad 39A that astronauts will use to board Dragon capsules bound for the International Space Station, possibly in 2018.

Officials said SpaceX, which must at least double the state's contribution, planned to invest $25 million in the project, creating 130 construction jobs.

"Obviously an important project, and moving to Commercial Crew is both exciting and an important part of the future of the spaceport," said William Dymond, chairman of Space Florida's board.

The project represents the second phase of SpaceX's renovations to pad 39A, a former Saturn V and shuttle pad that the company is outfitting to support launches of Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy rockets, including astronaut flights in Dragon spacecraft being upgraded under NASA's Commercial Crew Program.

Space Florida had already contributed $5 million to the first phase of renovations, which included construction of a large hangar at the pad's base and systems to roll Falcon rockets up the pad and lift them into upright.

Defense Industry
Air Force Defends Decision to Award B-21 Contract Based on Lowest Cost

By: Valerie Insinna, October 26, 2016

WASHINGTON — The Air Force’s top uniformed acquisition leader on Wednesday stood by the service’s B-21 bomber acquisition approach, which a recently-released Government Accountability Office protest decision revealed to be based on cost considerations.

According to the GAO document, which was made public Tuesday, both Northrop Grumman and the Boeing-Lockheed Martin team submitted bids that met the Air Force’s technical requirements, but Northrop’s offering came in at a lower total weighted cost and total estimated cost.

When asked about the source selection during the Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International’s annual defense conference, Lt. Gen. Arnold Bunch, the military deputy of the assistant Air Force secretary for acquisition, did not dispute the GAO’s account.

"We set it up to make sure that they could meet the technical requirements, and if they could all meet the technical requirements, then we would look at the cost," he said. Both systems adequately met the Air Force’s technical requirements, so the service gave the contract to the competitor offering the lowest bid — leading to an October 2015 award to Northrop’s B-21 Raider.

The classified B-21 program remains closely guarded by the Air Force, which has continuously repeated that it is not ready to release details about the bomber contract value or describe the key technologies of the aircraft. The heavily-redacted GAO report also removed all references to costs or specific technological capabilities…..

Defense contractors, vendors and leaders to gather at Florida Defense Expo

Oct 27, 2016, 8:29am EDT
Jensen Werley Reporter Jacksonville Business Journal

A meeting of defense vendors and leaders is gathering today in Ponte Vedra Beach for the annual Florida Defense Expo, hosted by the Florida Defense Contractors Association.

Congressman Ander Crenshaw will be the keynote speaker at the vent luncheon, held at the Marriott Sawgrass Resort & Spa.

There will be a variety of exhibitors, including the Fleet Readiness Center Southeast, Embraer Aircraft Holding Inc., BAE Systems and W&O Supply.

Guest speakers include Congressmen Ron DeSantis, Mario Diaz-Balart and Ted Yoho, as well as the vice president of space operations for Space Florida and the director of small business programs for the U.S. Special Operations Command.

For more information, check out the Florida Defense Expo website.

DoD Budget
By: Karen Jowers, October 25, 2016

The Defense Department is cracking down on all the military services for failing to fully fund their morale, welfare and recreation programs, with each branch falling short of DoD budget requirements.

The services must pay for a certain percentage of some MWR programs using taxpayer money, a rule that would guarantee a minimum level of MWR support and "prevent Service members and their families from bearing costs that should be borne with [taxpayer funding].” Todd Weiler, assistant defense secretary for manpower and reserve affairs, wrote in memos sent in September to service officials.

“These standards are not optional and are not subject to Military Department waiver,” Weiler wrote.....

Other of Interest

As the home to our military, America’s defense communities recognize the unique challenges and hard work needed to ensure that military families are made to feel welcomed, valued and supported. Through a wide array of services and innovative programs, defense communities have a lead role in creating a high quality of life for military families. From providing special training for school counselors and teachers who work with military children, to hosting recreational events designed to integrate military families into the wider community, defense communities serve on the front lines, working every day to create great places for our service members and their families to live and serve.

The Great American Defense Communities program was designed by the Association of Defense Communities in conjunction with the House and Senate Defense Communities Caucuses 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. Selected communities are recognized nationally for their efforts and become part of a growing collection of best practices that are defining the gold standard for all to follow. At the same time, the program works to celebrate the achievements of individual communities locally as a way to thank supporters and build support.

After its highly successful inaugural year, ADC is proud to announce the 2017 Great American Defense Communities program. The nominations process is now open. Please review the following program details and submit your nomination by December 12th. If you have questions on the program or the nomination process, please contact Aleksandar Pavlovich at apavlovich@defensecommunities.org.....
Pentagon Pushes 'Interstate Compacts' for Job Licensing

The Defense Department is pushing state governments to adopt "interstate compacts" to make it easier for spouses to obtain professional licenses, such as those required for physical therapy.

In the past, military spouses in careers that require a professional license, such as teaching or nursing, needed to meet benchmarks for their state-specific license before going back to work after moving to a new state. But the process can be lengthy and expensive, forcing spouses to put their careers on hold.

Since 2008, the department State Liaison office's top goal for military spouse career issues was convincing all 50 states and the District of Columbia to pass laws easing professional licensing restrictions for military spouses through license reciprocity programs, fee reductions or temporary licenses.

Now, with the signing of a New York state law last month that will go into effect early next year, all 50 states and the District have such a set of rules on the books.

Despite that success, standards across states are still inconsistent and often come with large fees. Pentagon officials said Wednesday that they are turning their attention to developing interstate compacts for individual professions, such as physical therapists.

"We see this as an opportunity not just for physical therapists. We see this as an opportunity to impact the other interstate compacts that are ongoing right now," said Marcus Beauregard, who heads department's state liaison office. "We're working with the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy and the National Center for Interstate Compacts on specifically an interstate compact for physical therapists."

Commissioner Adam H. Putnam Sponsors Resolution Designating Purple Heart Trail in Withlacoochee State Forest

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam today sponsored a resolution at the meeting of the Governor and Cabinet that designates a Purple Heart Trail within the Withlacoochee State Forest. The Military Order of the Purple Heart's Purple Heart Trail Program began in 1992 to create a symbolic and honorary system of transportation routes and monuments that honor the nation's Purple Heart recipients. The Governor and Cabinet unanimously approved the resolution.

“More than 1.7 million men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces have been wounded or died defending our freedom, and this Purple Heart Trail designation is one small way we can continue to honor these heroes,” stated Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam.

In another effort to honor the country's wounded veterans, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services runs the “Operation Outdoor Freedom” program, which provides wounded veterans with the outdoor, recreational activities no cost. Designated state and agricultural lands throughout
Florida grant these wounded veterans unique opportunities for recreation and rehabilitation. The Florida Forest Service, within the department, has provided thousands of wounded veterans with the “Operation Outdoor Freedom” experience.

**CRT visits 3 Florida bases**

By Senior Airman Zachary Cacicia, 436th Airlift Wing Public Affairs / Published October 26, 2016


**DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Del.** -- Large cargo aircraft are cool and all, but F-35C Lightning IIs and CV-22 Ospreys might be a little cooler.

A group of 30 past and present Team Dover honorary commanders and local civic leaders joined 436th Airlift Wing leadership on a community relations tour of three Air Force installations in Florida, Oct. 19 to 20, 2016.

“The purpose of the CRT was to expand the knowledge of our honorary commanders to other mission sets that take place in the Air Force but may not necessarily take place in the Air Mobility Command,” said Dawne Nickerson-Banez, 436th AW Public Affairs community relations chief.

The two day whirlwind tour took the group to MacDill AFB, Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field, all via a C-17A Globemaster III, operated by the 3d Airlift Squadron. These installations feature missions that differ greatly from those at Dover AFB, allowing the honorary commanders to gain a better understanding of what the Air Force and military does as a whole.

“This community relations tour, thanks to our staff and thanks to our honorary partners, was a tremendous success,” said Col. Ethan Griffin, 436th AW commander. “Not only did we build our relationships and our trust as a team and further the legacy and foundation of excellence at Dover Air Force Base, but we exposed our honorary commanders, our citizen patriots, to the military experience at diverse locations down south.”...
Task Force members --

1. **Next Meeting:** The next Task Force meeting will be in person on **Thursday, 17 November 2016** beginning at 9:00AM at the Tampa-Airport Marriott Hotel, 4200 George J. Bean Pkwy, Tampa, FL 33607.

2. **Call In Numbers** –
   
   **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 8784566

3. **FY2018 Grant Applications** – Staff received nine grant applications for Task Force consideration. Staff has reviewed the applications, provided recommendations and will mail them to Task Force members for their review next week.

4. **Follow-up on DoD Child Abuse Initiative** – Mr Eric Sherman, DoD State Liaison Office, provided a follow up report (attached) spurred from discussion at the January 2016 Task Force Meeting on statewide procedures for DoD reporting of abuse against military children when it occurs off-base. Mr Sherman has been working with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to ensure the system is supporting military children. Mr Sherman will be attending the November Task Force meeting if members have questions about this report.

5. **Southeast Range Complex Conference** – In accordance with the Task Force directive, TPG conducted a conference on the development of a Southeast Range Complex on November 3rd in Orlando. There were 27+ attendees from the Army, Navy, Air Force, OSD and many other stakeholders in attendance who had several presentations and robust conversations on the issues. TPG will provide a report to the Task Force at the November meeting. Bruce Grant and I also attended.

6. **Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony** – There will be an induction ceremony for the 2016 class of the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame on Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 2:30 PM in the Cabinet Room of the State Capitol Building in Tallahassee. This ceremony is open to the public.

7. **FDA Meeting on 16 November 2016 in Tampa** – The FDA meeting will be the day prior to the 17 November 2006 Task Force meeting also in Tampa. There will be a combined mixer for FDA and FDSTF members following the 16 November 2016 FDA meeting from 5:00-6:00 PM at the Skyye Bar inside the Tampa-Airport Marriott Hotel.

8. **Attachments:**  
   - DoD State Liaison Child Abuse Report  
   - TPG Monthly Report

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**Terry**

Terry McCaffrey  
Deputy Executive Director  
Florida Defense Support Task Force

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News Clips of Interest:

**BRAC**

**ARMY STRATEGIC PLAN EMPHASIZES SHEDDING EXCESS SPACE, PREPARING FOR BRAC:**

Dan Cohen  
3 November 2016, On Base  


The Army has made preparing for the next round of base closures one of the primary pillars of its new strategic framework for supporting its installation requirements. “Given the time required to prepare for and conduct the analysis and recommendation development, setting conditions for a future BRAC round prior to legislative authorization is critical, “Army Installations 2025” states. The document calls for the service to complete property conveyances from previous rounds, develop guidance to conduct a new BRAC analysis and ensure the accuracy of facilities databases.

The Army also will focus on balancing funding for maintaining needed facilities and eliminating excess by improving the condition of mission support facilities and housing, repurposing or divesting facilities no longer required, and demolishing unneeded facilities. The service has more than 47 million square feet of excess space which could be shed, according to recent analyses.

The strategic plan’s other pillars include enhancing installation resiliency, optimizing infrastructure, building the National Museum of the United States Army and improving contingency basing capabilities.

**EGLIN AFB**

**Construction on Eglin VA clinic to begin soon**

Posted Nov 2, 2016 at 12:28 PM,  
By News Bulletin contributor  


EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE — The Department of Veterans Affairs Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System announced a contract award to expand the outpatient clinic near Eglin Air Force Base.
The expansion will almost double the clinic’s current size to approximately 34,000 square feet. The contract to expand the GCVHCS’s VA clinic near Eglin AFB was awarded to ESA South Inc. and the Notice to Proceed was issued.

The expansion, to be completed in approximately 18 months, will allow GCVHCS to expand its primary care and behavioral health services in the additional space. No new services will be added to the Eglin VA clinic. The expansion’s cost is not expected to exceed $10 million.

In the coming weeks, patients receiving care from the Eglin VA clinic will notice fencing and signage around the parking lots as contractors prepare for construction. GCVHCS officials ask patients to use caution and render courtesy to each other and the contractors when they arrive for appointments.

**NS Mayport**

**Mayport Homeporting New Ships**

By KEVIN DERBY  
October 29, 2016 - 1:00pm


During his sixteen years in Congress, U.S. Rep. Ander Crenshaw, R-Fla., focused much of his efforts in maintaining and expanding the roles of the various Navy stations on the First Coast. Opting against running for another term this year, Crenshaw, who sits on the U.S. House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, announced one final success on that front this week.

Crenshaw announced the USS Thomas Hudner, a destroyer currently being built in Maine and expected to be launched at the end of next year, will be homeported at Naval Station Mayport.

The congressman also spotlighted two Freedom-class littoral combat ships (LCS) also heading to Mayport which where announced in 2014 as the USS Sioux City and the USS Wichita, which launched last month, will also be based on the First Coat. These surface vehicles are mostly used for operations near shore.

“This is great news for our national security and for the First Coast,” Crenshaw said in the announcement. “The world is not a safe place, and the Navy is continually being asked to do more with its resources. That’s why I’ve been fighting my entire career on Capitol Hill to fund and maintain a robust fleet that includes the LCS, and bring these ships to Northeast Florida. With its strategic location and top-notch defense and ship repair industry, Naval Station Mayport is the perfect fit for these ships….

**USS Montgomery Suffers Another Hull Crack**

By MarEx 2016-10-31 18:49:58


The littoral combat ship *USS Montgomery* sustained a second crack to her hull on Saturday when she struck a lock wall in the Panama Canal.

The Navy said in a statement that the incident occurred during a southbound transit of the Gatun and Pedro Miguel locks while a Canal pilot had the conn. The *Montgomery* struck the "center lock wall" and suffered a crack a foot and a half long between her port quarter and transom plates; the statement said that the crack is eight to 10 feet above the waterline, and it does not pose a water intrusion or stability risk.
The *Montgomery* has continued on her voyage to San Diego as scheduled.

The newly built *Montgomery* has already suffered three other hull and equipment casualties since her commissioning in September. On her maiden voyage after the ceremony, her crew detected a seawater leak in the hydraulic cooling system, and later the same day, she suffered an unspecified casualty to one of her gas turbines, according to the Navy. Following these casualties she rerouted to Naval Station Mayport in Florida for repairs.

On October 4, the advance of Hurricane Matthew meant that *Montgomery* had to leave Mayport's harbor. As she was being escorted from her berth, a tug struck her with force, putting a foot-long crack along a weld in her hull about three feet above the waterline. According to a report from the Navy Times, she also suffered five bent stringers behind the cracked plate.

**NAS Jacksonville**

**Navy unveils unmanned-aircraft squadron at NAS Jacksonville**

By Chris Parenteau - Reporter  
Posted: 3:48 PM, October 28, 2016Updated: 7:05 PM, October 28, 2016


NAS JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - A new era began Friday for the Navy in Jacksonville as it unveiled an unmanned-aircraft squadron that will be operated at Naval Air Station Jacksonville.

A new commanding officer took over the squadron, which is designated to operate and maintain the MQ-4C “Triton” unmanned-aerial system.

The future of patrol and reconnaissance aircraft at NAS Jacksonville began Friday with the establishment of VUP-19, the squadron that will operate the drones.

“This is a day that is years in the making,” said Rear Adm. Kyle Cozad, commander, patrol and reconnaissance group.

With a 130-foot wingspan -- the size of a 757 -- the new aircraft will be able to fly at 50,000 feet, giving a 24-hour view of whatever operating area the Navy is monitoring.

“Twenty-four hour intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance is something that will provide unparalleled information to our forward-fleet commanders,” said Cmdr. Benjamin Stinespring, commanding officer of VUP-19.

Stinespring said there have been sleepless nights over the last few months leading up to the milestone event, but he knows what an asset the drones will be.

The planes won’t be based in Jacksonville, but they will be operated from here as they fly all over the world. Even having a day like this is something many dreamed of but weren’t sure was possible.

**Navy Secretary makes last visit to NAS Jacksonville**

By Chris Parenteau - Reporter  
Posted: 7:08 PM, November 03, 2016Updated: 7:08 PM, November 03, 2016

NAVAL AIR STATION JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - The Secretary of the Navy made his final visit to Naval Air Station Jacksonville on Thursday as he nears the end of his tenure.

Naval Secretary Ray Mabus thanked sailors for their service and spoke with the media about a variety of topics, including the future of Mayport and the importance of eradicating sexual assault in the Navy.

Mabus said that there were 21 ships at Naval Station Mayport in 2009, and by 2023 there will be 41.

"Mayport's doing really well," he said.

He said he still supports bringing a carrier to Mayport, but that goal was pushed back because of the budget.

Mabus also spoke passionately about the issue of sexual assault in the military.

"It's a crime. It's an absolute crime," he said. "It rips the fabric of the Navy, Marine Corps, armed forces. It's an attack on a shipmate, and we've got to get rid of it. People have an obligation, if they see something happen, to step in."

He said the Navy is taking actions against the culture of sexual assault.

"This is not just 'Sailors will be sailors.' It's a crime," Mabus said. "We've got to get rid of it."

As far as recent issues with the new Littoral Combat Ship class, Mabus said every new ship class has its problems and there is not a fundamental issue with the LCS class.

"I went back into the 60s and looked at every new ship class, at the reports done on them, every one, 'This is a terrible ship. This ship isn't going to work,'" Mabus said. "In fact, when the frigates came in, which the LCS is replacing, there was a report that said if you serve your sailor on a frigate, you ought to get submarine pay because it's going to sink."

MacDill AFB

Ferry tale: The cross-bay ferry launches, now we all just have to remember to ride it

KATE BRADSHAW, NOV 2, 2016 9 AM


As Tampa City Councilman Guido Maniscalco put it as they stood on the top deck of the catamaran that was pulling away from St. Petersburg's Vinoy Basin, Ed Turanchik was beaming like a child on Christmas morning.

The vessel in which they were riding, along with dozens of local dignitaries and members of the local press, was making its maiden voyage across Tampa Bay on a sunny, warm day (though the further out into the bay the vessel ventured, the more the wind whipped through its open-air spots.

It was the launch of what officials hope will be a popular option for locals and tourists to get across the bay.

The Cross Bay Ferry, a twin-hull aluminum catamaran named Provincetown IV (the vessel's point of origin) will carry up to 149 passengers across the bay, two to three roundtrips a day at ten bucks a rider ($8 for children).
Turanchik had for years been advocating for Hillsborough County to adopt a ferry service between the southern part of the county to MacDill Air Force Base, and that may still be in the cards — especially if the cross-bay pilot is able to draw enough ridership to put it in the black....

**US Special Operations Command**

**CACI wins prime slot on SOCOM contract**

By Richard Tomkins  |  Nov. 4, 2016 at 8:26 AM


ARLINGTON, Va., Nov. 4 (UPI) -- CACI International has won a place on a five-year contract to continue providing a variety of services to the U.S. Special Operations Command.

Company services under the multiple-award, indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract comprise program management support, including assistance with strategic and operational planning, support for irregular warfare, and studies and analysis that help special operations forces best determine mission plans.

CACI said it will also provide engineering and technical documentation development and support, analysis and evaluation, and research that optimizes information management; as well as intelligence and information operations capabilities that enhance decision-making.

"CACI will leverage our track record of providing innovative, high-value solutions and services to the U.S. Special Operations Command to enhance its capability to gain an operational advantage in performing its most complex assignments," said John Mengucci, CACI's chief operating officer and president of U.S. Operations.

The contract, issued under the SOCOM-Wide Mission Support program, carries an overall ceiling value of $900 million.

**Homestead AFB**

**Wings Over Homestead back after 4-year hiatus**

NOVEMBER 2, 2016 2:33 PM

HTTP://WWW.FLKEYSNEWS.COM/NEWS/LOCAL/ARTICLE112078017.HTML

After a four year absence, the thunderous roar of the United States Air Force Thunderbird’s F-16 demonstration team will be tearing through the skies over Homestead Air Reserve Base during the 2016 Wings Over Homestead Air Show, Nov. 5 – 6.

This year’s event theme is: “Spirit of Flight, Celebrating Superior Air Power.”

Wings Over Homestead organizers are really excited to have the T-birds and Golden Knights back in Homestead. In 2012, the air show was attended by almost 300,000 people making it one of the largest shows attended in the country.
The Thunderbirds squadron is an Air Combat Command unit composed of eight pilots (including six demonstration pilots), four support officers, four civilians and more than 100 enlisted personnel performing in almost 30 job specialties.

Flying the Lockheed Martin F-16 Fighting Falcon, more than 280 million people in all 50 states and 57 foreign countries have seen the red, white, and blue jets in more than 3,500 aerial demonstrations.

Also announced for the 2016 show is the U.S. Army parachute team, The Golden Knights. The “Knights” have performed more than 16,000 shows in all 50 states and 48 countries, reaching more than 20,000 people per show with their spectacular live parachutes demonstrations. Homestead ARB is the winter home to The Golden Knights.

US Southern Command

U.S. SouthCom on Talamanca Indigenous Health Mission This Week

By Wendy Anders – November 1, 2016

http://news.co.cr/u-s-southcom-on-talamanca-indigenous-health-mission-this-week/52623/

Yesterday morning, Costa Rica’s Minister of Public Security Gustavo Mata Vega together with Costa Rican police officials welcomed a humanitarian mission at the Limón International Airport on the country’s Atlantic coast.

Helicopters from the US Southern Command based in Panama arrived with a 16-person medical team comprised of doctors, nurses, dentists, and other volunteers that will provide free care to residents of the indigenous Piedra Mesa, Telire region of Talamanca, Limón.

Preventive health services, dentistry, pediatrics, ophthalmology, and gynecology will be offered during the weeklong mission, reported the Public Security Ministry. Thirty Costa Rican doctors and nurses will join the mission.

This is the fifth time that such assistance has been organized in Costa Rica by the U.S. Embassy. The mission, named “Operation Pura Vida,” was set-up at the request of the Costa Rican government, and aims to provide humanitarian and civic assistance, while also promoting diplomatic relations....

NAS Key West

NAS KW hosts new fighter jets

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff, alinhardt@keysnews.com

http://keysnews.com/node/78677

The future of American combat aviation is coming to Key West.

On Monday, Naval Air Station Key West will welcome its first training detachment of F-35C Lightning II Joint Strike Fighters. There have been a few instances this past year of F-35s briefly stopping by Boca Chica Field for fuel during extended training flights, but this marks the first time a squadron of the steal...
Defense Industry

Pentagon Moves Forward — Unilaterally — on $6.1B Contract for Ninth F-35 Lot

By: Valerie Insinna, November 2, 2016

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon on Wednesday evening announced a $6.1 billion contract with Lockheed Martin for the ninth lot of joint strike fighter aircraft, but the F-35 manufacturer is not happy with the terms of the arrangement, which was not mutually agreed upon, according to a company spokesman.

The contract covers 57 low rate initial production (LRIP) aircraft, which will be procured for 3.7 percent less than the LRIP 8 batch of jet, the F-35 joint program office stated.

The joint program office initially intended to broker a deal for LRIP 9 and 10 together, a contract F-35 program executive officer Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan had said would procure about 150 aircraft for a total contract value of about $14 billion. Lockheed and the government intended to finalize an agreement in the early months of this year, but as negotiations pressed on into the fourth quarter, the government opted to award a unilateral contract action — a decision Lockheed disputes.

“The definitized contract for LRIP 9 announced today was not a mutually agreed upon contract, it was a unilateral contract action, which obligates us to perform under standard terms and conditions, and previously agreed-to items,” said Lockheed spokesman Mike Rein. “We are disappointed with the decision by the government to issue a unilateral contract action on the F-35 LRIP 9 contract. For the past 18 months, Lockheed Martin has negotiated in good faith consistent with our commitment to reach a fair and reasonable agreement on this critical program. We will continue to execute on the F-35 program and we will evaluate our options and path forward.” …..

Other Of Interest

Local FIFTH THIRD BANK: CAMPAIGN TO SERVE FLORIDA VETS AND MILITARY FAMILIES

Oct 30, 2016 Seraaj
Bank to Match Donations to Camaraderie Foundation

ORLANDO, Fla. – According to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, nearly 200,000 veterans live in the Central Florida area. To support those troops and their families, Fifth Third Bank has partnered with Camaraderie Foundation to help heal the invisible wounds of war.
From Oct. 19 to Nov. 19, all Fifth Third banking centers throughout Central Florida, Tampa Bay and Jacksonville will collect and match donations for Camaraderie Foundation, up to $10,000 cumulatively.

“We are honored to be able to serve our veterans, military and their families,” said Barb Scherer, regional marketing director for Fifth Third Bank (North Florida). “By matching donations to help provide support, encouragement and financial assistance, we hope to give back to those who have already given so much.”

Currently, one in four active duty service members experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and other mental health problems. To help combat these statistics, Camaraderie Foundation provides scholarships for private counseling, community support networks and mentor leadership programs for local military veterans and their families…..

Gov. Scott: Florida’s Job Growth Rate Leads the Entire Nation

OCT 28 • 112 VIEWS • VIEW COMMENTS

Governor Rick Scott announced today that Florida had the highest annual private-sector job growth rate of any other state in the nation. Over the year in September, Florida added 252,400 new private-sector jobs, raising Florida’s private-sector job growth rate to 3.6 percent. Florida’s manufacturing industry also led the nation in job gains over the year in September, adding 15,300 new jobs.

Governor Scott said, “Florida’s strong job growth has consistently outpaced our top competitor states, including Texas, California and New York, and last month our job growth rate outpaced the entire nation. This great news is sending a message across the country that Florida is the best place for businesses to grow and create new opportunities. By creating a business-friendly environment and cutting taxes, we have been able to diversify our economy and put Florida on track to becoming first for job creation.”

Since December 2010, Florida businesses have created 1,222,500 private-sector jobs. In September, the unemployment rate was 4.7 percent.

For the 54th consecutive month, Florida’s annual job growth rate of 3.6 percent is exceeding the nation’s rate of 1.9 percent. Florida had the second-highest job gains in the professional and businesses services; trade, transportation and utilities; financial activities and construction industries….

Best for Vets: Colleges 2017 — new rankings of 175 schools

By: George Altman, November 1, 2016

At many colleges and universities, you can go to the veterans center for extra help if you fall behind academically. At the University of South Florida, the veterans center goes to you — and you don't have a choice in the matter.

"A lot of veterans won't ask for help, even when you reach out to them," said Larry Braue, director of the USF Office of Veteran Success.
To address this, the school regularly tracks the academic performance of its vet students. Those whose grades start to lag and who don't go to Braue's office for help will find a hold placed on their records that prevents them from registering for new classes until they sit down with the vet staff.

"It's working. They've got to come in, and we've saved a bunch — that's for sure," Braue said. "'Intrusive counseling' is kind of what we've been calling it."…

**Outsourcing, Mission Changes to Shape Installation of the Future**

In Mission Support/Community Partnerships
November 3, 2016
Dan Cohen


The Army’s real property footprint can be expected to evolve incrementally as past decisions about the role of the service’s installations continue to exert a critical influence on its infrastructure, according to an appendix in the Army’s new strategic framework for supporting its installation requirements.

But several changes already are shaping the installation of the future, starting with a trend toward greater outsourcing for both installation and mission support activities. The extent to which an installation can rely on the surrounding community for support services — including housing, childcare, recreation and retail — will depend on local conditions. While quality-of-life for soldiers and their families needs to be considered, “managers should ensure that facilities on post are supporting needed missions, rather than needlessly duplicating existing off-post capabilities,” states Army Installations 2025.

In cases when the Army decides to provide facilities for a particular service, officials should consider locations that will accommodate future outsourcing or public use, it adds. The same considerations should apply to decisions about the location of mission support facilities operated by contractors. Mission infrastructure that is not unique to the Army — such as offices and R&D facilities — likely will continue to be built and owned by the government. “Nevertheless, consideration should be given to future reuse scenarios, as well as the potential provision of facilities or services by the private sector,” according to the vision document.

Planners also will need to account for the increased interest by communities in sharing municipal services and other resources…..
November 10

Task Force members – This update is a day early as we will be off tomorrow to honor our nation’s veterans.

1. **Next Meeting:** The next Task Force meeting will be in person next **Thursday, 17 November 2016**, beginning at 9:00AM (agenda attached) at the Tampa-Airport Marriott Hotel, 4200 George J. Bean Pkwy, Tampa, FL 33607.
   - For TF Members – We have planned a no-host dinner with Tampa Bay Defense Alliance members Wednesday evening at 6:30PM following the FDA mixer, details to follow. The SOCOM tour originally planned for this meeting was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts.
   - Readahead books for Task Force members are being mailed today. Electronic copies of meeting materials will be posted on the Task Force Website on Monday, 14 November 2016 at this link. [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/)

2. **Call In Numbers** –
   - **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979  
     **Access Code:** 8784566

3. **FY2018 Grant Applications** – Staff received nine grant applications for Task Force consideration. Staff has reviewed the applications, provided recommendations and will mail them to Task Force members for their review today.

4. **FDA Meeting on 16 November 2016 in Tampa** – The FDA meeting will be the day prior to the 17 November 2006 Task Force meeting also in Tampa. There will be a combined mixer for FDA and FDSTF members following the FDA meeting from 5:00-6:00 PM at the Skyye Bar inside the Tampa-Airport Marriott Hotel.

5. **Attachments:**
   - Agenda – Task Force Meeting #49
   - Bi-weekly TPG Conference Call

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**Terry**

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WASHINGTON – For several years, the Pentagon has been blocked by Congress in its request to begin another round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). Now, facing an expected wave of modernization bills in the next decade, a top DoD official has suggested the building needs to look for alternative ways to shut down excess infrastructure.

Jamie Morin, the head of the Pentagon’s office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE), told Defense News that he believes the department needs to look at all the options on the table and try to work with Congress to dump excess infrastructure, even if it means going outside the BRAC procedure.

“It’s not clear to me that BRAC is the only model to follow. Maybe we need to think about redefining what a process might be for getting to recognition that some installations need to close,” Morin said in an Oct. 22 interview. “I am not writing a legislative proposal at this point, but I think if Congress can’t see its way through to BRAC, what was constituted in the Nineties and reprising one of the 1990’s rounds, then we need to find another alternative that does work for them.”

There were BRAC rounds in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995, but the one that still echoes today is the 2005 round. While the Pentagon says it is now enjoying the benefits of that effort, the 2005 effort was seen as excessively costly and left members of Congress, already sensitive to political ramifications of bases leaving various states, with a built-in aversion to further efforts….

The Pentagon wasted tens of millions of dollars of taxpayer dollars purchasing spare parts for its fleet of H-60 helicopters flying, according to its own auditors.

A redacted report from the Defense Department’s inspector general analyzed a year’s worth of spending on spare parts for the H-60 helicopter, versions of which are flown by the Air Force (Pave Hawk), Army
(Black Hawk), Navy (Seahawk), and Special Operations (MH-60) for troop transport and recovery operations.

In a memorandum accompanying the report, assistant inspector general Jacqueline Wicecarver said the Defense Department spent "at least $394.9 million" on parts during the period, but could have paid much less if the military service branches had consolidated their purchases.

Auditors said the services were buying “the same H-60 spare parts on different contracts, often at different prices, which occurred or potentially occurred in 1,319 instances.”

In one case, auditors said one contract for 29 landing wheels and a second, with a different supplier, for 1,150 of the same wheels resulted in a 127 percent price difference. In another, three separate contracts with three different suppliers for coiled springs showed a 414 percent price difference.

Pentagon auditors faulted the department’ undersecretary for acquisition, technology, and logistics for not fully implementing a 2005 recommendation from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission that would have put almost all spare parts purchases into a single entity: the Defense Logistics Agency.

The BRAC Commission estimated the move would save the Pentagon more than $156 million per year, or nearly $1.8 billion over a 20-year period.

In 2011, the Defense Logistics Agency certified it had complied with the BRAC recommendation. But as auditors discovered that wasn’t true….

EGLIN AFB

F-22, F-35 Outsmart Test Ranges, AWACS

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR. on November 07, 2016 at 5:55 PM

CAPITOL HILL: How smart is too smart? When F-35 Joint Strike Fighters flew simulated combat missions around Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, their pilots couldn’t see the “enemy” radars on their screens.

Why? The F-35s’ on-board computers analyzed data from the airplanes’ various sensors, compared the readings to known threats, and figured out the radars on the training range weren’t real anti-aircraft sites — so the software didn’t even display them. While the software and pilots on older aircraft hadn’t noticed the imperfections and inaccuracies in how the Eglin ranges portrayed the enemy, the F-35s’ automated brains essentially said, “Fake! LOL!” and refused to play.

The Eglin anecdote is just one example of how the F-35 Lightning and its twin-engine older brother, the F-22 Raptor — collectively called fifth-generation fighters — are overturning how the Air Force operates. The sophistication of fifth gen sensors, software, and stealth requires the Air Force to overhaul training and network infrastructure. They even challenge longstanding assumptions about who makes
what decisions and who’s in command. If the pilot of a fifth gen jet infiltrating enemy airspace has a clearer picture of the battle than senior officers further back on a vulnerable AWACS command plane or back at base in Air Operations Center, why should they be telling him or her what to do?....

Developer, volunteers team up to save tortoises

By Michael D. Bates
Monday, November 7, 2016 at 9:09 pm
http://www.chronicleonline.com/content/developer-volunteers-team-save-tortoises

About 40 to 50 gopher tortoises living on 27 acres in the Westchase subdivision will be packing their bags this week and getting a free ride to their new home at Eglin Air Force Base in the Florida Panhandle.
Actually, the reptiles are lucky to be alive — despite being protected, the whole bunch of them could have legally been killed.

Michael Czerwinski, president of MGC Environmental Consultants in Lecanto, is working with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and several volunteers to capture the tortoises and send them on their journey to Eglin. The property, located off West Tortuga Loop, is slated to be developed with new homes soon after Thanksgiving.

In 2007, the state put the gopher tortoise on its threatened species list. That means any site designated for site work or construction must be cleared of all tortoises before work begins — a sometimes costly and lengthy process.

But this particular developer didn’t have to abide by that regulation, because the property was permitted before 2007. He could have simply bulldozed the property, killing the animals.

Hardly a humane option, Czerwinski said.

So after Czerwinski obtained the proper permits and receiving permission from the property owner in Ohio — who Czerwinski said knew next to nothing about gopher tortoises — the crew went to work Monday morning to save the reptiles. He expected the work to wrap up in a few days.....

Tyndall AFB

Innovative cyber program protects critical Tyndall AFB assets

By Senior Airman Solomon Cook, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs / Published November 08, 2016
TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) --

The 325th Communications Squadron became the first Air Combat Command squadron to join a new initiative to ensure Tyndall Air Force Base is able to train and project unrivaled combat airpower. The Cyber Squadron Innovation is a pathfinder program among Air Force communication squadrons, enabling communications squadrons to provide secure communication assets and services with a focus on security assurance.

“The big thing is understanding the mission, and we do that by a process called functional mission analysis,” said 1st Lt. Terel Hayes, the 325th CS special missions flight commander. “We look at the 325th Fighter Wing as a whole, and see how it actually projects that airpower. We break that down into smaller mission threads, and we then do analysis on those threads to see where cyber has an impact on them, positively or negatively.”

The ever-growing need for cyber surety from enemies, home and abroad, prompted the initiative. The pathfinder program brings Airmen of different Air Force specialties together to build the future structure of communications squadrons…..

NS Mayport

Mayport Awarded For Energy Efforts

Posted: Wed, 11/09/2016 - 12:21pm

By Seaman Michael Lopez, NPASE Det Southeast

http://mayportmirror.jacksonville.com/military-mayport-mirror/2016-11-09/story/mayport-awarded-energy-efforts#.WCSytC0rLIU

The Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV), Ray Mabus presented energy conservation awards to several commands in the Southeast Region during an all hands call at Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville on Nov. 3.

Naval Station (NAVSTA) Mayport and NAS Jacksonville were awarded gold level of achievement certificates. Patrol Squadron (VP) 5 received a command level award for Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic.

“I am proud to recognize the commitment to excellence that the Southeast Region has shown in energy efficiency and conservation,” said Mabus. “Achieving these goals have made our Navy and Marine Corps stronger by reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and improving our energy security.”

The SECNAV annually grants eight energy conservation awards to various units and activities of the Navy and Marine Corps for their energy conservation accomplishments during the preceding fiscal year.

“The fiscal year 16 Gold Award NAS Jacksonville received is recognition of our installation’s outstanding energy program and its achievement in fiscal year 15,” said Andrew Rubio, NAS Jacksonville’s installation energy manager. “The Navy has some very challenging energy goals to meet
and in fiscal year 15 we made some significant strides towards those goals with energy and water intensity reductions of 24 and 26 percent respectively.”

The objective of this award program is to promote excellence in the areas of energy conservation and efficiency, energy management, renewable energy, new technology, training innovation, and awareness efforts within the Department of the Navy (DON).

**NAS Jacksonville**

**Blue Angels, flight teams to perform at Sea & Sky Air Spectacular**

By Ashley Mitchem - Reporter, anchor

Posted: 5:06 PM, November 04, 2016Updated: 6:52 PM, November 04, 2016


**JACKSONVILLE BEACH, Fla.** - The world-famous United States Navy Blue Angels, along with other military and civilian flight teams will be performing at the 2016 Jacksonville Sea and Sky Air Spectacular this weekend in Jacksonville Beach.

The free air show -- held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday -- will features a dynamic over-the-ocean sky show, live entertainment, a street festival with static displays of aircraft and military vehicles, simulators, recruitment booths and a kids area.

Temperatures will be in 70s this weekend, which will be perfect for the huge crowd expected at the beach to watch the skies and waterways become the backdrop for exciting air acts and the Blue Angels.

Excitement was already in the air Friday as stunt teams practiced ahead of the show.

"All kinds of acrobatics -- and it never gets old. I've done several of these air shows when the boys arrived yesterday. It's still just as thrilling as the first time you've ever seen them and they're just excited," said Bill Austin, public affairs officer for Naval Station Mayport. "With each and every show, they're ready to put on a spectacular event." 

**MacDill AFB**

**MacDill supports largest DoD photo lab in Florida**

By Senior Airman Vernon L. Fowler Jr., 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs / Published November 07, 2016

At some installations, each U.S. service branch has a specific location designated for official photos. At MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, the Airmen in the 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs (PA) photo lab support the 6th Air Mobility Wing (AMW), 927th Air Refueling Wing (ARW), two Combatant Commands and 32 tenant units.

In total, MacDill PA Airmen support more than 18,000 joint service and civilian personnel in one location. This does not include the off-base Reserve Officer Training Corps, Reserve and Army National Guard units who have established support agreements with MacDill.

“This is the busiest photo studio I’ve ever worked with,” said Tech. Sgt. Krystie Martinez, NCO in charge of Command Information assigned to the 6th AMW. “Our photographers are dedicated to the studio on a weekly rotation, and can take at least 50 studio portraits and 20 passport photos during their shifts. Those are pretty high numbers for just one person.”

**Homestead AFB**

**HARB Airmen welcome over 100,000 guests during air show**

482nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs / Published November 07, 2016


**HOMESTEAD AIR RESERVE BASE, Fla. --** More than 100,000 people came here to watch the Wings Over Homestead air show featuring the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds demonstration team, Nov. 5-6.

Along with the Thunderbirds, the event featured demonstrations from the 93rd Fighter Squadron, the U.S. Navy Tac F-18 Tac demo team, the U.S. Army Golden Knights parachute team, Franklin’s Flying Circus Comedy Act, Oracle, Lima Lima, Tora Tora Tora!, the Shockwave Jet Truck and others. All in all, the public saw and toured a wide range of static displays from prop planes to a jet-powered truck.

“We had an amazing time at the air show,” said Genny Restrepo, an air show attendee. “All the military personnel were so nice and so friendly. The shows were incredible.”

This air show marks the fourth Wings Over Homestead air show since 2009.

"It's a great way to open up our arms to the South Florida community," said Col. David Garfield, 482nd Fighter Wing commander, “We’re proud to open our base and connect with our community. Most of the service members assigned to this base are Reservists who live and work in the South Florida area, so that community connection is very important to us.”

**Traffic Concerns Stall Project on Campbell Drive**
Homestead City Council delayed consideration of a new commercial project on the south side of Campbell Drive due to traffic patterns.

Council’s second public hearing was for a 14 acre property in the southwest corner of the Park of Commerce. The applicant asked for a variance on parking and approval of a site plan for a light industrial facility.

The company, Dunham-Bush USA, plans to assemble air conditioners as part of its manufacturing operation. City ordinance requires 265 parking spaces where 244 are available for 100 employees, with two bays for tractor trailers.

When asked, Marcello Fernandez, the company’s representative, said he met with the Homestead Air Reserve Base because the property is in the accident potential zone. HARB’s spokesman Lawrence Ventura said there was no objection to the proposal.

Council unanimously praised the community partnership that brought this business to town. Councilman Shelley called it a win/win situation and Councilman Williams called it a great project for new jobs.

NAS Key West

Stealth jet pilots praise Key West base

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff, alinhardt@keysnews.com

Sunday, November 6, 2016

http://keysnews.com/node/78802

The new stealth jets screaming in and out of Boca Chica Field this week are widely described as the most advanced fighters in the world — and one of the easiest to fly.

“The biggest advantage is the automation of the jet,” said Strike Fighter Squadron 101 (VFA-101) Lt. Michael “Squintz” Procelli. “It’s smoother and frees up a lot of time. It takes a lot of variables away so we can focus on the mission instead of maintaining air speed and altitude.”

This week and next week mark the first time that Naval Air Station Key West has hosted a squadron of the new F-35C Lightning II Joint Strike Fighters for training. A few of the jets have briefly stopped over at Boca Chica Field in the past, but never to train.

“To truly understand how powerful the airplane is and how easy it is to fly, you immediately can attend to pressing matters, which makes it a far more lethal aircraft,” Procelli said. “The improvement in technology between 1990 and 2010 alone is significant. The displays and avionics are a leap in generation as far as the evolution of the technology.”
The F-35 is one of the most computerized fighter jets in history and much of what it can do is classified, but much also has been publicized of its futuristic heads-up display that provides pilots with relevant flight information or weapons information without having to look down at the cockpit.

Sailors and residents not in the squadron are not allowed within 20 feet of the F-35s and when the Navy allows them to be photographed on the tarmac, their canopies must be closed and out of view, said NAS Key West spokeswoman Trice Denny.

The VFA-101 squadron, also known as the Grim Reapers, are flying several adversary squadrons, including Key West’s own Fighter Composite Squadron 111 (VFA-111) — the Sun Downers. Some of the Sun Downer pilots have had the opportunity to fly against the F-35 elsewhere in the country, said commanding officer Cmdr. Paul “Bobo” Felini.

“It’s nice to prove that NAS Key West can support a F-35 detachment and it lends itself to future detachments in Key West from not only the Navy, but the Air Force and Marines as well,” Felini said. “It’s always cool to look out the window and see the Navy’s newest aircraft.”

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**Defense Industry**

**Defense Industry Expecting Boost from Trump Election**

By: Aaron Mehta, November 9, 2016


WASHINGTON – The election of Donald Trump as the next President of the United States should give a boost to the defense industry, although one analyst warns there may be new challenges that arise in the international market.

Stocks for defense firms, including Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Northrop Grumman and General Dynamics jumped between five and seven percent the morning after the election, a sign of early investor confidence that the Republican control of the White House and both chambers of Congress will mean boom times for the military-industrial complex.

Byron Callan of Capital Alpha Partners believes a Trump White House, combined with a GOP-controlled House and Senate, should mean the next budget is “at least $18 billion more for FY17 than the [Obama] Administration’s request, with $10 billion or more of that going to investment. Thus, FY17 investment budget authority could be up 2%-3% from FY16, not the flat comp we expected.”

Jim McAleese, a well known industry analyst, predicts a jump in across the board funding, including an increase of $9-18 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding and moderate top-line funding for the next budget…..
Grace Electronics makes bid to relocate headquarters from New York to Jacksonville’s Cecil Commerce Center

A New York-based aerospace manufacturing company is considering relocating its headquarters to Jacksonville’s Cecil Commerce Center.

According to documents filed with the city’s Office of Economic Development, Grace Electronics is making a bid to move its headquarters from Bohemia, N.Y., to the commerce center on the site of a former naval air station on Jacksonville’s Westside.

Grace Electronics, which manufactures equipment for military aircraft such as wire harnesses, already has a presence at the Cecil Commerce Center. The company currently leases a 1,500-square-foot, city-owned building there and wants to lease another 10,000-square-foot building to house the headquarters and an additional manufacturing facility for three years.

The additions would bring 25 new jobs to Jacksonville with an average annual salary of about $50,000, according to a draft of an economic development agreement outlined in a proposed ordinance scheduled for consideration by the Jacksonville City Council.

Based upon that, the company is requesting some incentives from the city, most notably through the qualified targeted industry tax refund program, which could provide up to $5,000 in tax breaks per job. The city would pick up about one-fifth of the funding for the tax breaks, while the state would take care of most of the remaining incentive costs.

The company would pay the city $6 per square foot for the new facility, which would come to about $63,000 per year or about $190,000 for the duration of the proposed three-year accord, if it’s approved by the city…..

Other Of Interest

Dana Young beats Bob Buesing in SD 18 race

MITCH PERRY, 11/8/2016
In one of the nastiest state legislative races in Florida this fall, Republican Dana Young has defeated Democrat Bob Buesing, 48 percent to 41 percent. Joe Redner finished third with 9.5 percent. Sheldon Upthegrove, a staff sergeant at U.S. Central Command at MacDill Air Force Base, finished fourth with less than one percent of the vote.

“Tampa Bay voters have spoken tonight in favor of an experienced and proven voice that is dedicated to reforming our state government, and I am honored to be elected your next state senator,” said Young. “This election was won by grassroots campaigning. I cannot thank all of the volunteers and supporters enough who came out each and every day, working tirelessly to spread our positive message of reform. I also want to extend a special thank you to my husband, Matt, and both of my daughters for their encouragement from the very beginning of this journey.”

For liberals who were hoping to defeat Young in this race, there had been concern that Redner, who has ran a Democrat in previous elections and arguably had greater name recognition than Buesing, took votes away from the Democrat, ultimately aiding Young.

**Corcoran Names House Leadership Team**

By JIM SAUNDERS NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA
November 9, 2016 - 5:00pm
http://www.sunshinestatenews.com/story/corcoran-names-house-leadership-team

Ready to formally take charge of the Florida House this month, incoming Speaker Richard Corcoran, R-Land O’ Lakes, on Wednesday named 11 lawmakers to his leadership team.

The announcement came after Tuesday's elections ensured that all of Corcoran's choices, including the chairmen of nine committees, would return to the House for the next two years.

Corcoran named Rep. Carlos Trujillo, R-Miami, to lead the powerful appropriations committee. Trujillo, who fended off a challenge Tuesday from Democrat Patricio Moreno, was one of five Miami-Dade County Republicans named by Corcoran to leadership positions.

Among the others, Corcoran named Rep. Jeanette Nunez, R-Miami, to serve as speaker pro tempore, one of his top lieutenants. Also, Rep. Jose Oliva, a Miami Lakes Republican who is slated to become speaker in 2018, will chair the Rules & Policy Committee.

The House and Senate will hold an organization session Nov. 22 that will include installing new leaders and swearing in members. Corcoran has long been preparing to serve as speaker, replacing outgoing Speaker Steve Crisafulli, R-Merritt Island.

Corcoran has made changes in the House's committee structure, and the 120 members are expected to receive their committee assignments in mid-December, according to a memo issued Wednesday. Also still to be appointed are subcommittee chairmen, including the leaders of appropriations subcommittees that play a key role in drawing up the annual state budget.

Along with announcing the appointment of Nunez and committee chairmen, Corcoran named Rep. Ray Rodrigues, R-Estero, as House majority leader. In that role, Rodrigues will help ensure that Republican members support Corcoran's agenda.
In the other appointments announced Wednesday:

--- Rep. Jose Felix Diaz, R-Miami, will serve as chairman of the Commerce Committee, which will oversee a wide range of issues such as agriculture, utilities and insurance.

--- Rep. Michael Bileca, R-Miami, will serve as chairman of the Education Committee.

--- Rep. Matt Caldwell, R-North Fort Myers, will serve as chairman of the Government Accountability Committee, which will oversee issues such as local and federal affairs, natural resources and transportation.

--- Rep. Travis Cummings, R-Orange Park, will serve as chairman of the Health & Human Services Committee.

--- Rep. Chris Sprowls, R-Palm Harbor, will serve as chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

--- Rep. Larry Metz, R-Yalaha, will serve as chairman of the Public Integrity & Ethics Committee.


The House will hold training meetings for members the week of Dec. 5 before holding five weeks of committee meetings in January and February. The 2017 legislative session will start March 7.

Hart eyed for top Enterprise Florida job

By JIM TURNER
THE NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

http://www.sayfiereview.com/page/Hart%20eyed%20for%20top%20Enterprise%20Florida%20job

THE CAPITAL, TALLAHASSEE, November 9, 2016........ Chris Hart, a former state lawmaker and the longtime president of CareerSource Florida, was added Wednesday to the shortlist to run the state's business-recruitment agency.

The Enterprise Florida President & CEO Search Committee, during a teleconference, agreed to include Hart as a finalist for the $175,000- to $200,000-a-year job. He joined Michael Finney, a former adviser to Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, and Richard Biter, a retired Florida Department of Transportation assistant secretary.

"I think there is probably little doubt that if he had put his name in in the original batch, I doubt that there is … anybody that would have omitted him from the top five and chances are, if we narrowed down, he would have made the top three,” said Enterprise Florida Vice Chairman Alan Becker. "He has the knowledge of the state. He knows the Legislature and how it works and the difficulties we have with getting the message across."

The committee received 101 applications this summer to replace former Enterprise Florida President and CEO Bill Johnson, who resigned after the Legislature rejected Gov. Rick Scott's request for $250 million in economic-incentive money for the public-private agency early this year.....

Florida veterans inducted into Veterans' Hall of Fame
TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (WCTV) -- Veterans across the country will be recognized for their service to our country this Friday, but in Tallahassee celebrations are starting early. Florida is inducting eleven new members into its Veterans’ Hall of Fame. The first names added since the wall was established in 2013.

It was a pretty emotional ceremony Wednesday. Those being inducted stood before a packed room and thanked their wives, family and friends, who stood by them in service. Many of them also paid tribute to the men and women who never made it back home. Many veterans say after the service, and they all seem to agree that it was an honor and privilege to see their name permanently etched into the wall at the Florida Capitol….
November 18

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting:** We will not have a meeting in December, HAPPY HOLIDAYS! The next Task Force meeting will be in person on **Thursday, 19 January 2017**, beginning at 9:00AM in Avon Park, FL. Details on location for lodging and the meeting are being developed and will be provided at a later date.

2. **Call In Numbers –**
   - Call In Number: 800-501-8979  
   - Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachments:**
   - None

_Terry_
Terry McCaffrey  
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**News Clips of Interest:**

**NAS Whiting Field**

**Blackwater River State Forest expands**

Thursday, Posted Nov 17, 2016 at 5:06 PM  
By Press Gazette contributor


NAS WHITING FIELD — The Trust for Public Land announced Tuesday that 626 acres of Wolfe Creek Forest have been acquired and added to the Blackwater River State Forest.
The acquired property includes frontage on Big Coldwater Creek, which is a popular kayaking, tubing, and canoeing stream, according to a press release. It also includes a spring-fed state paddling trail beloved by area paddlers and birdwatchers.

This acquisition will also protect Naval Air Station Whiting Field, water sources, public recreational activities, bird migration and habitat for endangered species and other wildlife.

The Trust for Public Land purchased the property Oct. 18 from CF Florida LLC for a little less than $1.53 million. The land was sold to the state of Florida for the same price Nov. 4.

“Incorporating this section of Wolfe Creek Forest into the Blackwater River State Forest protects it from development, forever, protecting both the natural resources on the property as well as assuring continued naval air station operations. Our goal is to make sure this land remains a recreational hub and habitat center for generations to come while investing in the future of Whiting Field,” said Doug Hattaway, project manager for the Trust for Public Land.

Funding for the acquisition came by leveraging both Florida Forever funds with the U.S. Navy contribution through its Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program. Protecting the property ensures that land adjacent to the base will not be developed in ways that might limit flight operations and vital military training.

NAS Whiting Field is the busiest aviation complex in the world, accounting for almost 15 million annual flight operations, including primary flight training for more than 1,200 students and is the host of 21 tenant activities…..

EGLIN AFB

Defense Secretary Visits Gulf Coast

By Peter Albrecht and Dan Kettinger
Published: November 17, 2016, 10:18 pm  Updated: November 17, 2016, 10:51 pm


Defense Secretary Ash Carter toured Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field in northwest Florida today, while in New York, President-Elect Donald Trump continued the process of putting together his cabinet that very well could include Carter’s replacement.

Carter waived off questions about Trump and his own future saying America’s military has always operated outside the political realm and must continue to do so.

“It has been extremely important to me that not only I, but all the members of the Department of Defense, have stood apart from politics during this long campaign season and that’s what our institution stands for,” Carter said.

Carter could remain as defense secretary. President Obama, for example, kept Republican Robert Gates in the job for the first two and a half years of his presidency.

Regardless of who might be defense secretary, Carter says the work being done in special operations at Hurlburt remains essential.

“This is a kind of capability that we use nearly every day, somewhere in the world,” the Secretary said.

Carter said much the same for the technology advances being implemented at Eglin…
NSA Panama City

PCB VA clinic to be closed Dec. 1-6 during move

Tuesday, Posted Nov 15, 2016 at 4:11 PM, Updated Nov 15, 2016 at 4:11 PM
By STAFF REPORT


The VA outpatient clinic at Naval Support Activity Panama City will be closed Dec. 1-6 as the facility moves into its new location at 2600 Veterans Way in Panama City Beach.

No patient care is scheduled on those dates. Prescription processing will be uninterrupted, and all prescriptions mailed from VA’s Consolidated Mail Out Pharmacy will stay on target for normal delivery. Veterans with behavioral health appointments at the Panama City Beach VA Clinic West location will not be affected by this relocation.

The new 30,160-square-foot Panama City Beach VA Clinic will house the Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System's primary care, laboratory, pharmacy, dental and other services. Behavioral health services are offered through the GCVHCS’s Panama City Beach VA Clinic West location, 140 Richard Jackson Blvd.....

Camp Blanding

Land Trust acquires land for conservation near Camp Blanding

By News4Jax.com Staff
Posted: 11:18 AM, November 16, 2016Updated: 2:09 PM, November 16, 2016


CLAY COUNTY, Fla. - North Florida Land Trust has acquired 624 acres of land in what is known as the triangle parcel near Camp Blanding.

The property, located in Bradford County, is adjacent to Camp Blanding Joint Training Center in Clay County.

NFLT worked closely with the Department of Defense’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program to identify the land, which was both a prime candidate for conservation and important to protect the base from the threat of encroaching development.

The triangle parcel and Camp Blanding are both located in what is known as the “O2O” corridor, which is a nationally critical wildlife corridor that stretches from the Ocala National Forest to the Osceola National Forest and eventually to the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia.

“Preserving this piece of land will not only keep development away from Camp Blanding, but will also be beneficial to several endangered species like the gopher tortoise, red-cockaded woodpecker and indigo snake,” said Jim McCarthy, Executive Director of NFLT. “Working with the Department of Defense has allowed us to preserve these 624 acres of natural habitat and all the ecosystem services that they offer, like clean air and water.”
The 624 acres that NFLT acquired is a resource rich timberland that has potential for restoration forestry. Much of the property is covered by bottomland hardwood and hardwood pine stands……

NS Mayport

Jacksonville company awarded $25 million contract to build training facility at Mayport

By Joe Daraskevich
Posted November 17, 2016 05:50 pm - Updated November 17, 2016 06:01 pm


A company headquartered in Jacksonville won a $25 million contract this week to build a training facility at Mayport Naval Station for half the Navy’s fleet of new littoral combat ships.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast awarded the contract Tuesday to Sauer Inc. of Jacksonville, and the project is expected to be complete by April 2018.

The littoral ships are designed to operate close to shore with steerable jet propulsion and two different hull designs.

The Freedom-variant ships will be based at Mayport and the Independence-variant ships will be based in San Diego. The Freedom class resemble traditional Navy ships, while the Independence class have trimaran hulls.

“Awarding this contract marks another significant step in supporting additional homeporting of littoral combat ships at Naval Station Mayport,” said Capt. David Yoder, commanding officer at Mayport. “The LCS program is a key element of our future Navy and we fully support the development of critical infrastructure that will ensure Naval Station Mayport’s ability to effectively and efficiently serve as the East Coast home port for these innovative ships.”

The training facility will include system trainers, simulators, classrooms, personnel support space, a high-bay operational training area and instruction space specifically designed to train personnel from the Freedom class of ships, according to the Navy…..

MacDill AFB

Altman: Advocates use ferry test to push for MacDill route, too

Howard Altman, Times Staff Writer
Thursday, November 17, 2016 5:29am

But that's not stopping the Apollo Beach resident from being a strong advocate for waterborne transportation. He started up the Tampa Bay Citizens for High Speed Ferry to help get commuters off the bridges and onto the bays.

Earlier this month, Scott, along with scores of other local VIPs, community leaders and military personnel, got a chance to see for himself what it would be like to ride the waves to work.

On Nov. 1, the Cross Bay Ferry, a $1.4 million pilot program to link St. Petersburg and Tampa, made its inaugural run. Two days later, the ferry took a demonstration trip to the waters off south Hillsborough County to show how effective water transportation could be for people who work at MacDill and live in places like Riverview, Apollo Beach, Ruskin and other parts of the county.

Scott, who used to commute to MacDill daily from his home in Apollo Beach, was among those on both trips.

On Nov. 3, as the ferry left for the demonstration run, Scott stood at the back of the ship and followed speakers like ferry advocate Ed Turanchik, U.S. Rep Kathy Castor and County Commissioner Sandra Murman to talk about his support.

During a recent flight from Key West back to Tampa, Scott said he was struck by the small bridges and vast expanse of water.

With so few ways to get across, "something is wrong," he said.

Scott's vision is an easier commute for those who work at MacDill.

Castor said she shares that vision.

"We have a $5 million federal grant that is pending and a local commitment to get that done," said Castor. There are roadblocks.

HMS Ferries, which runs the pilot program, also is working with Hillsborough County on one that would connect the south shore area near Apollo Beach to MacDill Air Force Base. But it will be years before the county completes the necessary environmental impact studies to unlock those dollars…..

Cape Canaveral AFS

More satellites headed into space from Florida next month

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter
November 10, 2016, 1:28PM


A group of satellites set to launch from Florida next month will work in tandem to measure wind speeds inside hurricanes and cyclones in real time.

“This is a first-of-its-kind mission,” said Thomas Zurbuchen, associate administrator for NASA’s Science Mission Directorate in a news release. The new constellation “will do what a single craft can’t in terms of measuring surface wind speeds” inside violent storms.

It’s another effort to improve the accuracy of weather forecasts, following closely on the heels of the high-profile GOES-R launch, set for Nov. 19.
Known as the Cyclone Global Navigation Satellite System, or CYGNSS, the satellites will use GPS technology to measure surface activity on the oceans.

CYGNSS will travel into space aboard an Orbital ATK Pegasus XL rocket, which will be carried into low earth orbit after hitching a ride on a Stargazer aircraft.

Scientists will translate the data recovered into wind speeds and other information that will give a better picture of a storm’s strength…..

Weather satellite launches into space this weekend

By Rebecca Barry - Meteorologist
Posted: 5:19 PM, November 15, 2016Updated: 5:20 PM, November 15, 2016

http://www.news4jax.com/weather/weather-satellite-launches-into-space-this-weekend

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - A long-anticipated launch of a weather satellite, the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite R Series (GOES-R,) is planned for Saturday. The launch will take place at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station at 5:45 p.m. Click here to see a schedule for the launch. The launch has been pushed back a few times due to technical issues. The satellite will launch from Space Launch Complex 41 aboard an Atlas V 541 rocket.

The forecast for Saturday afternoon is relatively clear, with only 33% sky cover and temperatures will be dropping out of the low 70s and through the 60s. The sun will have set at 5:27 a few moments prior to the launch, which should make the viewing conditions spectacular.

According to NASA, GOES-R, which will be known as GOES-16 once it reaches geostationary orbit, will be placed in the 89.5 ° checkout orbit where it will undergo an extended checkout and validation phase of approximately one year. The satellite will transition to operations immediately afterward…..

Port Canaveral rail through Air Force station 'promising'

Dave Berman, FLORIDA TODAY9:18 a.m. EST November 17, 2016


A proposed cargo rail route through Cape Canaveral Air Force Station looks more promising now than it was perceived a year ago, Canaveral Port Authority Chairman Tom Weinberg says.

Weinberg — who was elected by port commissioners as chairman on Wednesday — told commissioners they likely will hear a consultant's report on the route at their Dec. 20 meeting.

That route is among three that have been considered by port officials during the last several years.

"It's been an important issue for this board, our staff and community," Weinberg said.

Weinberg said the port commissioners want to focus on an option that is the "least expensive" of the three, would have the "least impact on the community" and "would meet the environmental studies that would be required."….
Patrick AFB

Assured access to Space: 25 years in the making

By Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith 45th Space Wing Commander / Published November 10, 2016


PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- The 45th Space Wing will celebrate another significant milestone in its rich and storied history of providing assured access to space when the wing turns 25 years young on Nov. 12, 2016.

Although we’ve had an Air Force presence on the Space Coast since Oct. 1, 1949, and are known for our long-standing history of contributions toward moving America’s interest in space forward, I would like to draw your attention to a few historical events over the last 25 years.

The history of the 45th Space Wing was born on Nov. 12, 1991. On that date, Patrick Air Force Base and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, previously consolidated under the Eastern Space and Missile Center (ESMC) in 1979, and were designated the 45th Space Wing.

The designation was monumental in scope for the entire Air Force. It included our realignment under Air Force Space Command as part of a redistribution of assets following the Cold War and stand down of Strategic Air Command.

Previously, Air Force Space Command considered renaming the ESMC and Western Space and Missile Center as the 4th and 5th Space Wings, respectively. The plan eventually changed following then Chief of Staff of the Air Force General Merrill A. McPeak’s disapproval of the proposed unit designations. He turned down several other number designations before approving the 45th Space Wing for the ESMC.

General McPeak made his selections based on the lineage and honors of inactivated flying units. The 45th Bombardment Group (Light), activated in January 1941 to conduct patrols and search missions off the Atlantic and Gulf coasts until its deactivation in December 1942, served as the basis for the designation of the 45th Space Wing.....

Team Orlando

Lockheed Martin lands $48.5 million contract

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter
November 15, 2016, 6:17PM


Lockheed Martin, a defense contracting giant with two facilities in Orlando, has landed a contract worth roughly $48.5 million for work on Saudi Arabia’s military training system.

The company was the only one to bid on the work, which will be performed in Orlando and Saudi Arabia and is expected to be completed by April 28, 2019.

Lockheed Martin is one of the largest contractors in the defense industry and anchors a strong military defense ecosystem in Central Florida.
That community will showcase itself during the weeklong Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference, which arrives in Orlando Nov. 28.

That show is expected to draw more than 15,000 people over the course of five days at the Orange County Convention Center.

For the contract, the company received some help from another Orlando-area agency. The U.S. Army’s Program Executive Office Simulation, Training and Instrumentation helped land the deal.

**Defense Industry**

**Trump White House could boost Tampa defense industry, experts say**

By Howard Altman, Times Staff Writer
Published: November 17, 2016, Updated: November 17, 2016 at 05:16 PM


Candidate Donald Trump called for increasing the number of troops, ships and fighter jets, and derided generals running wars in the Middle East as losers.

Now, as with other campaign statements, whether these actually come to pass depends on what President Trump decides he really wants to do — and by what he can push through Congress.

No matter the details, though, few communities have as much at stake in Trump's military agenda as the Tampa Bay region, where the defense industry's impact is estimated at $16 billion a year across seven area counties.

And, despite major question marks, local defense contractors see the potential for economic growth.

"If Trump is able to do even a portion of what he promised on the campaign trail regarding defense, then the defense industry will be positively affected," said Mike Jones, a retired Army major general living in Tampa whose last assignment was chief of staff in Tampa with U.S. Central Command.

On his campaign website, Trump's vision for defense includes increasing the size of the Army about 60,000 to 540,000 soldiers, rebuilding the Navy from 272 ships to 350 ships and providing the Air Force with 1,200 fighters compared to about 1,100 mission ready aircraft, according to Air Force Times.

"If you do all those kinds of things, you are going to add all kinds of numbers to the budget," said Jones, now with the Spectrum Group, a Washington-based strategic advisory firm with more than 100 top civilian and retired military leaders. The group met last week to talk about the future under Trump.
For all that to happen, Jones estimated the defense budget — now around $600 billion — could increase by as much as $50 billion. That's well above the $18 billion increase that Congressional Republicans are likely to seek…..

**DoD Budget**

**Trump’s Big-League Defense Buildup Would Face Hurdles in Congress**

By: Joe Gould, November 10, 2016


WASHINGTON — If US president-elect Donald Trump pursues multi-billion-dollar plans to “rebuild” the military with new fighter jets, ships and troops, analysts are optimistic the Republican-led Congress will lift spending caps to fund it.

But to do so, he would have to surmount GOP fiscal hawks with an aversion to deficit spending and Democrats who want parity for defense and non-defense spending.

Far from a doctrinaire conservative, Trump cast himself as a pragmatist and transformational figure. He ran on populist promises to cut taxes, rebuild infrastructure and to expand the military, all while refusing to cut Medicare or Social Security benefits. Simple math suggests this yields higher budget deficits—a debt increase of between $4.4 and $5.9 trillion, according to the Tax Foundation.

The campaign’s proposed action plan for the first 100 days includes a Restoring National Security Act, aimed at “eliminating the defense sequester” — assumed to mean repeal of the Budget Control Act and its multi-year caps — “and expanding military investment.” It would also expand health care options for veterans, protect infrastructure from cyberattacks and impose politically charged screening on immigrants.

In service of Trump’s peace-through-strength approach, his proposed military buildup features an active-duty Army of 540,000 soldiers, a Navy of 350 ships, an Air Force fleet of 1,200 fighter aircraft and a Marine Corps stocked with 36 battalions. He has also said he also will build a “state-of-the-art missile defense system” and modernize the Navy’s cruisers to provide ballistic missile defense capabilities…..

**Other Of Interest**

**Military leaders will be key to educating Trump, retired 4-star says**

By: Charlsy Panzino, November 11, 2016

Donald Trump's lack of foreign policy experience will prove challenging to the Pentagon, a member of Bill Clinton's administration told Military Times on Thursday, but retired Gen. Barry McCaffrey says he is confident military leaders will try to work constructively with the unpredictable president-elect.

“He’s remarkably uneducated about almost every aspect of defense and foreign policy,” said McCaffrey, 73, a highly decorated Vietnam combat veteran who rose through the Army's ranks during a 32 year career that included high-profile roles in the Pentagon and with NATO. He's also a national security and terrorism analyst for NBC News.

Trump will, however, come into office with automatic support from senior military leadership, McCaffrey said during a visit to Military Times’ offices outside Washington, D.C.

“There won’t be a shred of doubt that they’ve got to figure out how to support him,” said McCaffrey, who was Clinton's drug czar from 1996 until 2001. “Generally speaking, admirals and generals don’t resign. They won’t resign either. They’ll try to work as best they can with Trump as he takes charge.”

**Tampa earns top 10 ranking in best U.S. cities for veterans to live, St. Pete places in top 50**

Ken Knight, 3:54 PM, Nov 11, 2016, 4:19 PM, Nov 11, 2016


TAMPA - On Veterans Day, Tampa is a haven for ceremonies honoring military heroes who sacrificed life and limb for American freedom.

Many of its military-related and government institutions are steeped in flags and patriotism.

With the prominence of MacDill Air Force Base and James A. Haley Veterans Hospital to the city's economic fabric, Tampa has become a major destination for servicemen and women to put down roots after their stint of duty.

Research conducted by WalletHub, a personal finance website, now bares that out.


Other Florida cities to make the list and their rankings are as followed:

Orlando, 10th;
Jacksonville, 16th;
Miami, 67th;
Hialeah, 76th
November 23 2016

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting:** We will not have a meeting in December, **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!** The next Task Force meeting will be in person on **Thursday, 19 January 2017**, beginning at 9:00AM in Avon Park, FL. Details on location for lodging and the meeting are being developed and will be provided at a later date.

2. **Call In Numbers –**
   
   Call In Number:  **800-501-8979**  Access Code:  **8784566**

3. **Triton Support Letter:** A few months ago, the Task Force asked Governor Scott for a letter of support for basing the MQ-4C Triton aircraft in Florida. Attached is a copy of the letter Governor Scott sent to Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus in September asking to assign the Triton to either NS Mayport or NAS Key West.

4. **Simulations Symposium:** The 2nd Annual Simulations Symposium, sponsored by the Mayor Jakob of Orlando and held on September 22 attracted 400 vendors with a specific focus on modeling and simulation in human performance, athletics, and medical fields.

5. **Pensacola Naval Aviation Museum:** The national Naval Aviation Museum has been named one of the top 25 museums in the country by travel website TripAdvisior. The 350,000 square foot museum ranks 14th overall on the 2016 list of U.S. museums.

6. **Attachments:**
   - Governor Scott’s Triton Support Letter
   - Picture of Senator Richter’s Certificate Presentation
   - Bi-weekly TPG Conference Call

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**News Clips of Interest:**
Eglin AFB

Endangered species thrive on Eglin's reservation

Saturday, Posted Nov 19, 2016 at 12:00 PM
By Tom McLaughlin | 315-4435 | @TomMnwfdn | tmclaughlin@nwfdailynews.com


EGLIN AFB — The 464,000-acre Eglin reservation affords the Air Force the space it needs to test weapons far from civilian populations.

It also provides a vast swath of land and varying ecosystems where a host of unique and rare plants and animals coexist with the military mission.

Iconic species like the bald eagle, Florida black bear and American alligator call the reservation home. So, too, do such natural oddities as the endangered white-top pitcher plant — one of a handful of predatory plants— and an extremely rare and ancient lichen called the Florida Perforate, a fungus and algae co-existing as a single organism.

In all, 38 species of plants and animals listed by state or federal agencies as endangered, and 41 more that are considered threatened, take refuge and receive support to survive on the reservation.

The towering king of the Eglin reservation is the longleaf pine, the tree whose presence many of the reservation’s inhabitants depend on for their existence.

Longleaf pines once covered more than 60 million acres in the southeastern United States coastal plain area, according to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, but because of their popularity as home-building material, the trees were nearly eradicated years ago. Longleaf pines today cover just 3 percent of their original range…..

Tyndall AFB

Singapore air force visits Tyndall AFB for weapons exercise

By Airman 1st Class Cody R. Miller, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs / Published November 22, 2016


TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- Airmen from the Singapore air force participated in a weapons exercise at Tyndall AFB Nov. 7-18.


The purpose of the WSEP is to evaluate operational DoD and allied personnel, fighters, missiles and gunnery in realistic air combat scenarios.
“The Singapore air force was here to participate in live-fire exercises,” said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Corey Hinton, 83rd Fighter Weapons Squadron aircraft armament systems specialist. “They come almost every year to test their weapons systems and evaluate their effectiveness with them.”

A normal WSEP usually consists of two or three squadrons, with no more than 24 aircraft on the ramp for two weeks. The Singaporean squadrons flew F-15 Eagles and F-16 Fighting Falcons for the exercise.

The weapon systems evaluation allows pilots to experience what they could see in combat. During regular pilot training, pilots go through all the steps to fire a missile except actually firing one, so there is no way to clearly validate whether they’re ready for real combat. The WSEP allows the pilot to actually fire a missile and use advanced instruments to determine how accurate they would be in a combat scenario. …

Camp Blanding

North Florida Land Trust purchases 624 acres adjacent to Camp Blanding

Posted Tuesday, November 22, 2016 12:00 pm
Clay Today


KEYSTONE – North Florida Land Trust has acquired 624 acres of land adjacent to Camp Blanding Joint Training Center in Clay County for preservation from encroaching development.

Known as the “O2O” corridor, the triangle parcel of land is a nationally critical wildlife corridor that stretches from the Ocala National Forest to the Osceola National Forest and eventually to the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia.

“Preserving this piece of land will not only keep development away from Camp Blanding, but will also be beneficial to several endangered species like the gopher tortoise, red-cockaded woodpecker and indigo snake,” said Jim McCarthy, executive director of NFLT. “Working with the Department of Defense has allowed us to preserve these 624 acres of natural habitat and all the ecosystem services that they offer, like clean air and water.”

NFLT worked closely with the Department of Defense’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program to identify the land. The property, located in Bradford County, is a resource rich timberland that has potential for restoration forestry. Bottomland hardwood and hardwood pine stands blanket much of the property.

The property received funds from the Missouri Department of Transportation Retirement Fund. The acquisition received by a grant from the National Guard Bureau as part of the REPI program, which secures buffers around military installations. The Clay County Development Authority raised an additional $390,000. Since 2000, the CCDA has awarded more than $8,000,000 in grants to Camp Blanding.

“This deal was really a win-win situation for both Camp Blanding and North Florida Land Trust,” said Paul Catlett, installation and environmental program manager for Camp Blanding. “This purchase will help to protect the military mission of Camp Blanding by allowing soldiers to train to the fence line without fear of affecting the quality of life for our neighbors.”…. 
NS Mayport

Sauer contracted to build LCS training facility at NS Mayport in US

Naval Technology.com, November 22, 2016


The US Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Southeast has contracted US-based construction services provider Sauer to construct a littoral combat ship (LCS) operational training facility at Naval Station (NS) Mayport, Florida.

Under the $25m contract, Sauer will construct a steel-frame, reinforced concrete multi-story specialised training facility with standing seam roof and pile foundation.

The building will house systems trainers, simulators, classrooms, personnel support space, a high-bay operational training area and applied instruction space suited to train personnel for the Freedom-class (LCS 2) platform.

The new facility is slated to be completed by 2018.

NS Mayport commanding officer captain David Yoder said: "Awarding this contract marks another significant step in supporting additional homeporting of Littoral Combat Ships at NS Mayport.

"The LCS programme is a key element of our future navy and we fully support the development of critical infrastructure that will ensure NS Mayport's ability to effectively and efficiently serve as the East Coast homeport for these innovative ships."

The crew will be trained within the LCS operational training facility and not on the actual ships.....

Cape Canaveral AFS

United Launch Alliance Successfully Launches GOES-R Satellite for NASA and NOAA

NEWS PROVIDED BY United Launch Alliance
Nov 19, 2016, 23:21 ET


CAPE CANAVERAL AIR FORCE STATION, Fla., Nov. 19, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- A United Launch Alliance (ULA) Atlas V rocket carrying the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite R-series (GOES-R) for National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) lifted off from Space Launch Complex-41 Nov. 19 at 6:42 p.m. EST. The Atlas V launched the GOES-R spacecraft to geosynchronous transfer orbit. As the next generation of GOES satellites, GOES-R will produce images of weather patterns and severe storms as
frequently as every 30 seconds. This is ULA's 10th launch in 2016 and the 113th successful launch since
the company was formed in December 2006.

"We are honored that NASA and NOAA have entrusted ULA with the launch of the GOES-R satellite
and grateful for the phenomenal teamwork that made today's launch a success," said Laura Maginnis,
ULA vice president of Custom Services.

This mission was launched aboard an Atlas V Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle (EELV) 541
configuration vehicle, which includes a 5-meter large Payload Fairing (PLF) and four solid rocket
boosters. The Atlas booster for this mission was powered by the RD AMROSS RD-180 engine, and the
Centaur upper stage was powered by the Aerojet Rocketdyne RL10C engine.

"ULA's Atlas and Delta vehicles successfully launched every operational GOES satellite, beginning with
the launch of GOES-A in 1975," said Maginnis. "We are proud to have partnered with NASA and NOAA
in continuing to deliver this capability to millions around the globe."

ULA's next launch is the Delta IV WGS-8 satellite for the U.S. Air Force. The launch is scheduled
for Dec. 7 from Space Launch Complex-37 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida.....

Energy

U.S. Sen. Nelson of Florida helps keep Gulf of Mexico oil drilling bill from floor vote

Ledyard King, USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA7:36 p.m. EST November 17, 2016

vote/94042074/

WASHINGTON — A bill that would have given states along the Gulf Coast and south Atlantic a greater
share of royalties from offshore oil and gas drilling failed to make it to the Senate floor for a vote
Thursday.

Supporters needed 60 votes to end a filibuster on the measure but were able to get only 51.

Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., voted to keep blocking the bill, while Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., voted to move
it to the floor, where it would have stood a good chance of getting the 60 votes needed for passage.

Florida, which has an offshore drilling ban already in place, would not have been affected directly by the
bill.

However, Nelson led the opposition, fearing the lure of royalties might pressure state leaders to open up
energy exploration that could harm the environment and the beaches that generate billions for Florida’s
economy each year.

In addition, he said, encouraging neighboring states to open more water for drilling poses its own threat to
Florida, which still remembers the environmental and economic damage from the 2010 Deepwater
Horizon disaster that released almost 5 million barrels of oil across the Gulf Coast.

“We have watched the tar balls wash up on the beaches,” Nelson said Wednesday on the Senate floor.
“We've seen the sugary white sands of Pensacola Beach be completely black, covered from oil.
"We saw the harm that was done not only to the local businesses that catered to tourists, such as the hotels, the restaurants, the attractions, all the ancillary businesses (such) as the dry cleaners, the real estate firms."

Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La., the bill’s chief sponsor, said the measure would have created up to 280,000 jobs by 2035 and $194 billion in new capital investment that would generate billions for cash-strapped governments.

“And let’s be honest,” he said on the Senate floor Thursday before the vote. “If America does not develop our natural resources, the vacuum will be filled with the likes of Iran, Venezuela, Russia and Cuba – Cuba, which would like to drill off their coastline.”

**DoD Budget**

**DoD says March continuing resolution likely, as it prepares 2018 budget review**

By Nicole Ogrysko | @nogryskoWFED, November 17, 2016 5:31 pm


There are growing signs that Congress is plotting another continuing resolution that would extend government funding through the end of the year and into the next.

Defense Department Comptroller Mike McCord said the prospect of a continuing resolution is the biggest challenge he currently faces.

“[There are] more and more signs that we’re heading toward a CR that’s going to last six months, which would be approximately a three-way tie with fiscal 2011 and fiscal 2013 for the worst performance in the history of the Defense Department,” he said Nov. 17 at the Professional Services Council’s Vision Forecast in Falls Church, Virginia. “We’ve never been under a full-year CR in this department. Hopefully that won’t happen. It’s a possibility this year. [It’s] very disappointing but not surpris[ing] to hear the strong talk of extending the CR until March now.”

House Republicans also indicated Thursday that the incoming Trump administration wants a four-month continuing resolution that would keep the government funded through March 2017.

**22 GOP lawmakers push for NDAA passage before year's end**

By JACQUELINE KLIMAS (@JACQKLIMAS) • 11/21/16 5:08 PM

Twenty-two Republican members of the House Armed Services Committee signed a letter sent to House Speaker Paul Ryan on Monday asking Congress not to adjourn for the year until lawmakers approve a fiscal 2017 National Defense Authorization Act.

The letter points out the 54-year streak in which Congress has passed a defense policy bill, and says this year's bill is just as important because of provisions it includes on military healthcare reforms, a pay raise for troops, and efforts to restore readiness.

"Our nation currently faces more threats than at any point before in our history and our military continues to answer the call," the letter says. "It is our duty to ensure that when they are asked to serve, our military can do so with sufficient resources and training capabilities."

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and one of the top lawmakers negotiating the National Defense Authorization Act, said last week that the bill was "about wrapped up" and that he expected its release soon. Democrats have pushed back against that, saying that negotiations are still ongoing about the topline number for the bill….

**Other Of Interest**

**Willie Rogers, Tuskegee Airman, dies at 101 after stroke**

By: *Greg Toppo, USA Today*, November 21, 2016 *(Photo Credit: Carlos Ortiz/Rochester (N.Y.) Democrat and Chronicle)*


Willie N. Rogers, one of the oldest surviving members of the Tuskegee Airmen, died Friday from complications of a stroke. He was 101.

The longtime St. Petersburg, Florida, resident was a member of the original 100th Fighter Squadron established during World War II.

He was wounded in action, shot in the stomach and leg by German soldiers, during a mission in Italy in January 1943. Rogers spent three months in a hospital in London before returning to the war, the Tampa Bay Times reported.

The group’s 300 surviving members were decorated by President George W. Bush at the White House in 2007, during which they were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal. But Rogers didn’t attend. His family didn’t even know that he was part of the Tuskegee Airmen, first African-American military aviation squadron in U.S. armed forces history.

Willie Rogers, 99, reflects on his service and his life on Feb. 23, 2015, at home in St. Petersburg, Fla. Rogers, the oldest surviving member of the original Tuskegee Airmen, died Friday, Nov. 18, 2016, in St. Petersburg at the age of 101, said Rev. Kenny Irby, the pastor at the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. Photo Credit: Scott Keeler/The Tampa Bay Times via AP

Rogers didn't reveal his service until 2012, partially because his work was in logistics and administration and not in the sky, family members said.

"He would always say there were many who deserved attention more but were not here to receive it," said Veronica Williams, one of Rogers’ daughters.
His Tuskegee service was disclosed in 2012, and his family worked to get him credit for it, the Times reported.

Rogers received a Congressional Gold Medal in November 2013. He was also presented in recent years with the keys to the cities of Lakeland and St. Petersburg, Florida. His portrait hangs in the St. Petersburg Museum of History.

St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Kriseman on Sunday tweeted: "Rest in peace, our friend — St. Pete's 2015 Honored Veteran and Tuskegee Airman, 101-year-old Willie Rogers."

President-elect Trump talks national security, diplomacy with retired Southcom commander

NOVEMBER 20, 2016 9:33 PM
BY CAROL ROSENBERG, crosenberg@miamiherald.com


Retired Marine Gen. John F. Kelly, who until January was in charge of the Pentagon’s U.S. Southern Command, discussed national security and diplomacy with President-elect Donald Trump during a meeting Sunday, the White House transition team said.

Trump and Kelly “had a frank discussion about the global national security situation in the United States and various areas of conflict in the Middle East,” according to a statement issued by the presidential transition team Sunday night.

“Additionally, they discussed General Kelly’s diplomatic experience during his time as the Commander of the United States Southern Command in Latin America, and as a combat commander in various areas of conflict in the Middle East.”

Kelly, 66, retired earlier this year after handing off Southcom to Adm. Kurt Tidd, ending a 45-year military career. He lived and worked out of South Florida from November 2012 until January…..

Tampa vets who served under Mattis laud him as choice for defense secretary

Howard Altman, Times Staff Writer
Tuesday, November 22, 2016 11:51am


In James Mattis, President Donald Trump would get a defense secretary beloved by his troops and respected by his peers, a man as comfortable with books as he is with bombs, and most important, a man who would not hesitate telling the president the truth.

Those are the opinions of Tampa-area men who served under Mattis, 66, a retired Marine general and former commander of U.S. Central Command who interviewed with Trump during the weekend for the top job in the Department of Defense. Mattis, who declined to comment for this story, was widely popular during his time in Tampa, where he was stationed at MacDill Air Force Base from 2010 until he retired in 2013, soon after speaking his mind to President Barack Obama about Iran.
"Jim Mattis is a plain-spoken, up-front guy who would never tell his boss what he wanted to hear, but rather will give him the unvarnished truth," said Mike Jones of Tampa, a retired Army major general who was Mattis' chief of staff at CentCom from 2010 to 2011.

"He truly is a warrior monk, smart and well-read," said Mark Clark of Apollo Beach, a retired Marine major general and former head of Marine Special Operations Command, who served under Mattis in Afghanistan. "He is no-nonsense, common sense, cuts through the crap and does the right thing."

Mattis "was a tremendous leader who cared about his people," said T.G. Taylor of Tampa, a retired Army lieutenant colonel who served as Mattis' press officer from 2011 to 2013. "He was open and honest with the press, and sometimes that may have gotten him in a little trouble inside the Beltway."

All three see Mattis as an excellent choice to run the Pentagon.

Still, for that to happen, Mattis would need not only confirmation by the Senate Armed Services Committee but a waiver from Congress, because law requires any nominee from the military to be retired for seven years. The last defense secretary granted such a waiver was George C. Marshall, a retired five-star general who took the job in 1950 at the behest of President Harry Truman…..
December 2, 2016

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – We will not have a meeting this month, **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!** The next Task Force meeting will be in person on **Thursday, 19 January 2017**, beginning at 9:00AM at Avon Park Air Force Range, FL. Details on location for lodging and the meeting are being finalized and will be provided at a later date.

2. **Call In Numbers** –
   
   Call In Number: 800-501-8979 
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **New CEO Selected for Enterprise Florida Inc.** – Mr. Chris Hart was approved as the next CEO of Enterprise Florida Inc. at the quarterly Board Meeting on 30 November 2016. He is expected to begin on 3 January 2017.

4. **Florida Defense Alliance Engaging New Members of Florida Delegation** – Florida has lost a great deal of seniority in the House and has 9 new members of its Congressional delegation plus a few members whose district lines have shifted with redistricting. FDA has drafted letters to members of the Florida Delegation with military installations in their district (attached). FDA’s basic strategy of engagement is:
   - Engage the new Congressional members early and seek to educate them about the importance of the military to Florida and the value Florida’s installations bring to DoD. This includes providing them information about the economic impact of 20 military bases in Florida and the ranges both inland and off the coast.
   - Impress upon the new members the importance of understanding the military linkages between installations throughout the state. Encourage them to consider overall state impacts of their votes in Congress concerning military and defense issues. Many of these issues are bigger than just the member’s individual district.
   - Provide information to new members about our statewide organizations that have provided support and funding to improve the military value of our installations over the years and tremendous support to our local defense communities. Emphasize the FDSTF and FDA member organizations are non-partisan defense oriented organizations, and a good source of information for the Members and their staffs.
   - Energize our local defense communities to write letters, send emails and call concerning the importance of preserving and protecting Florida’s military missions and installations.

5. **Two Veteran Related Bills Filed** –
   - **HB 25 - Relating to Annual Sales Tax Holiday for Veterans of the United States Armed Forces** (McGhee)
     Annual Sales Tax Holiday for Veterans of the United States Armed Forces: Creates annual sales tax holiday for veterans of US Armed Forces; specifies items eligible for sales tax holiday; specifies tax treatment of layaways, exchanges, & Internet sales; provides definitions; specifies reporting requirements of retailers; authorizes DOR to adopt emergency rules. Effective
HB 55 - Relating to Alternative Treatment Options for Veterans (Burgess)
Alternative Treatment Options for Veterans: Authorizes DVA to contract with certain individuals & entities to provide alternative treatment options for certain veterans; requires direction & supervision by certain licensed providers; authorizes DVA to adopt rules. Effective Date: July 1, 2017

6. Association of Defense Communities Defense Policy Forum – According to Dan Cohen in his 2 Dec 2016 On-Base segment, “in the three-and-a-half weeks since Donald Trump was elected the nation’s next president, Washington insiders have started to get a sense of how the Pentagon’s priorities will change under a new administration. At ADC’s Defense Policy Forum on Thursday [1 Dec], analysts from Washington think tanks and other experts shared their insight on what defense communities can expect regarding possible increases in DOD spending and force structure, as well as the prospects for a new BRAC round. Taking a big picture perspective, many speakers agreed that the Trump administration will be open to new ideas in pursuit of changing how DOD conducts business. “They are looking for opportunities for transformational change,” said Kristine Simmons, director of the Center for Presidential Transitions at the Partnership for Public Service.” (available at http://us4.campaign-archive1.com/?u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=0293051c10&e=28cebe069c). Bruce Grant attended the conference representing Florida on the panel that discussed “How Should Communities and States Engage with New Leaders?”

7. Attachments:
   ■ FDA Letters to New Florida Delegation
   ■ TPG Monthly Report

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**EGLIN AFB**

**Vanquish Worldwide Awarded Contracts for Multiple U.S. Army Base Logistics Readiness Centers**

November 30, 2016, 09:56 AM Eastern Standard Time


MARYVILLE, Tenn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Maryville-based Vanquish Worldwide LLC, a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) providing global support services to the U.S. Government and the commercial market sector, announced today its award of three new, multi-million dollar federal contracts to provide U.S. Army Logistics Readiness Center support at five locations. Contracts include work as a subcontractor to SENTEL Corporation at Fort Bragg, N.C., and as a prime contractor at both Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., as well as Joint Base Fort Rucker, Ala., and Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

As U.S. military forces continue to draw below World War II levels while maintaining global mission readiness, Vanquish will perform critical installation and combat unit maintenance, supply and transportation services to support the United States Army.

“As a former U.S. Marine forward deployed around the world, I understand the critical nature and importance of providing excellent services and support to our installations, units and troops here in the U.S. to help them prepare for ongoing global deployments. Vanquish is excited to be on this mission to support so many bases, units, soldiers and airmen,” said Vanquish CEO and President Dr. Eric W. Barton.

Vanquish will primarily provide support in materiel maintenance on tactical and non-tactical vehicles and equipment, operate central issue, retail supply warehousing, and ammunition supply facilities, maintain property accountability, manage fuel labs and hazardous materials, conduct personal property, freight movement, container yard, railhead and unit movement control operations, as well as operate transportation motor pools….

**Textron Systems A2PATS(TM) Selected for F-35(R) EW Simulation Testing**

11/30/2016


HUNT VALLEY, MD--(Marketwired - November 30, 2016) - Textron Systems Electronic Systems, a Textron Inc. (NYSE: TXT) business, announced today that its Advanced Architecture Phase Amplitude and Time Simulator (A2PATSâ„¢) has been competitively selected for simulation testing of the F-35 Lightning II electronic warfare (EW) systems. Under a contract with Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT),
Textron Systems will provide complex threat simulation capability in the F-35 Norwegian, Italian Reprogramming Lab (NIRL) located at Eglin Air Force base, supporting international partners.

The F-35 NIRL will utilize the A2PATS' unique capabilities to develop and validate aircraft software requirements. The A2PATS is recognized for providing industry-leading simulation capabilities in an affordable, modular and reconfigurable system. The A2PATS direct port architecture provides complete modularity, reduced life cycle costs and maximum system availability. It is ready to test well inside 30 minutes from a daily cold start, with every signal, across all frequencies and dynamic ranges, correctly aligned in frequency, phase, amplitude and time.

The A2PATS is an advanced electromagnetic environment simulator incorporating electronic warfare, communications and electronic intelligence capabilities. Its environment facilitates the testing of precision location, identification and defensive systems against virtually all ground-based and airborne threats. The Textron Systems A2PATS is an advanced technology open architecture simulator that distributes multiple RF synthesizers in a modular and expandable system.

"The F-35 is one of the world's most advanced tactical aircraft, designed to deliver powerful new capabilities to the warfighter," says Senior Vice President and General Manager Steve T. Mensh. "Our A2PATS gives the F-35 community the confidence needed to validate mission-critical electronic warfare systems."

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**Tyndall AFB**

**Parents, teachers spend day in military children's shoes**

Tuesday, Posted Nov 29, 2016 at 3:11 PM, Updated Nov 29, 2016 at 3:33 PM
By Collin Breaux | 747-5081 | @PCNHCollinB | CollinB@pcnh.com


PANAMA CITY — As a media specialist at Bay Haven Charter Academy, Jaycie Holland sees plenty of children from military families on campus each day.

Holland wants to make sure they’re involved with the school and their community — after all, children from military families have a difficult time when their mom or dad is deployed overseas or working long hours at a nearby military base.

“Reacclimating to a new surrounding” is among the chief challenges military children go through, Holland said. “Different schools do different things different ways, so they have to figure things out.”

Those unique challenges brought Holland to the Holiday Inn in Panama City on Tuesday for a “Helping Military Children Discover their S.P.A.R.C.” course, S.P.A.R.C. standing for strength, potential, aspirations, resourcefulness and confidence.

The course, open to parents, professionals and interested adults, also taught everyone how to approach military children in a positive way and how children can deal with parents who are damaged from deployment. That is often the new normal for families, said Bill Lawson, a trainer for Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC), the event sponsor.

“How does it affect the child when the parent comes home not the same parent when they left?” Lawson said. “We think it’s important we deal with families. More specifically, kids.”
Holland and the other 25 or so people there, most of them educators and school employees, found out what those kids go through during one role-playing scenario. Everyone had to move to a different table, introduce themselves to their new companions and collectively select an agenda master — a reflection of how military families have to keep a sense of order despite frequently shuffling around because of deployments….

The F-4 Phantom II, in the QF-4 Aerial Target variant, performs final display before retiring from USAF

Nov 30 2016, By David Cenciotti


After more than 50 years of service, the F-4 Phantom II is about to be retired by the U.S. Air Force.

The final F-4 Phantom appearance at an airshow while in USAF service occurred during Nellis Air Force Base’s Aviation Nation air show, on Nov. 12 and 13.

QF-4E 74-1638, piloted by Lt. Col. Ron “Elvis” King and Jim Harkins, pilots from Holloman AFB, New Mexico, flew at the show on both days, making several passes in afterburner to the delight of more than 295,000 spectators from around the world.

“[The QF-4 retiring] is bittersweet,” said King, 82nd Aerial Target Squadron Detachment 1 commander in a U.S. Air Force release. “It’s been a phenomenal workhorse for our country for years. When the military revitalized the aircraft after retiring them in 1997, it gave them a second lease on life.”

The aircraft have flown as unmanned aerial targets for several DoD and foreign military sales customers testing next generation weapons.

“Just as service members come and go in their military careers, unfortunately so do aircraft,” said Harkins. “It’s getting harder and harder to do the job that it’s supposed to do [based on new technology].

“It’s too old to go as high and as fast or as many [gravitational forces] as the customers need it to so they can proper test equipment,” he added.

Air Combat Command declared initial operational capability for its replacement, the QF-16 full-scale aerial target, that has been flying with the 82nd ATRS, based at Tyndall AFB, Florida, since September 2014, on Sept. 23: therefore the QF-4 flown by the 82nd ATRS Det. 1 at Holloman AFB is being retired on Dec. 21….

NAS Jacksonville

Training to increase aircraft activity around NAS Jax

Posted: 6:01 PM, November 30, 2016Updated: 6:01 PM, November 30, 2016

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - Carrier-based jet fighters and other types of aircraft will be conducting training out of Naval Air Station Jacksonville starting Friday through Sunday, Dec. 18, according to Navy training schedules.

Residents in neighborhoods surrounding NAS Jacksonville may notice an increase in aircraft activity and noise during this training period.

This training operation is in support of aircraft carrier USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) and embarked Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 2 staff, which departed Naval Station Norfolk to begin Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX) on Nov. 28.

COMPTUEX is a robust test combining technology, training and tactics into multiple scenarios leading to certification for deployment.

"This culminating event builds confidence that we can employ the strike group as a maritime superiority force against any potential adversary, located anywhere in the world, regardless of their military capabilities," said Rear Adm. Kenneth Whitesell, commander, CSG 2. "This is the most effective method to actually demonstrate how we adapt to an ever-changing world environment. There is no better training in preparation for deployment."

Throughout the exercise, fictitious geopolitical scenarios are used to replicate real-world circumstances that may be encountered during deployment.

MacDill AFB

Hurricane-hunter planes, staff moving from MacDill to Lakeland

Howard Altman, Times Staff Writer
Wednesday, November 30, 2016 9:23am


LAKELAND — After more than two decades at MacDill Air Force Base, the hurricane hunting airplanes known as Kermit and Miss Piggy are moving to Lakeland.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has selected Lakeland Linder Regional Airport as home for its Aircraft Operations Center for the next decade, said NOAA Capt. Michael Silah, who runs the center.

Headed east are Kermit and Miss Piggy — venerable Orion WP-3 propeller planes — along with a Gulfstream IV jet known as Gonzo and about 110 employees. The Orions fly into storms, collecting information about track and intensity, while the Gulfstream IV flies above, collecting data.

NOAA is under a time crunch to get the new aircraft operations center up and running before the next hurricane season really heats up, Silah said. The six-month 2016 season ended Wednesday and the 2017 season starts June 1.

Moving will begin May 1 and must be completed by June 30, Silah said.

Though the operation is leaving Tampa, Mayor Bob Buckhorn said NOAA proved to be a boon for Tampa during its time at the base and even credited the operation with helping save the base.
In the early 1990s, with MacDill under threat of closure by the independent Base Closure and Realignment Commission, Buckhorn — then an aide to Mayor Sandra Freedman — helped negotiate bringing NOAA here.

"They took ownership of the runway when MacDill was at risk of being shuttered," Buckhorn said. "I have a lot of affection for NOAA because they allowed us to buy the time necessary for the BRAC to reverse its decision."

MacDill evicted NOAA to make room for more of the Air Force's own jets — a development Buckhorn called a "win-win" for the region….

**President Obama will visit MacDill AFB in Tampa on Tuesday**

Alex Leary, Times Washington Bureau Chief
Thursday, December 1, 2016 12:22pm


WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama will travel to Tampa on Tuesday for a visit to MacDill Air Force Base, where he will meet active duty service members and give remarks on his administration's counter-terrorism efforts, the White House announced moments ago.

"While at the base, the President will have an opportunity to meet with uniformed leadership from both Commands as well as with some of the men and women stationed there," Press Secretary Josh Earnest said. "Among those the President will meet are members of our Special Operations community, who over the past 8 years been a key element of our relentless pursuit of terrorists who would threaten the United States of America. The President will offer his personal gratitude--and that of the nation--for the professionalism, skill, and sacrifice of those American patriots."

"While in Tampa, the president also will deliver formal remarks on the counterterrorism strategy he has directed as Commander-in-Chief, including our strategy and the gains we have made while staying true to the values that have always been at America's core," Earnest added. The president has no higher priority than protecting the American people, and this speech will be a final opportunity for him to discuss at length how he has effectively, durably, and successfully implemented reforms to keep us safe."

That line is likely to add fuel the ongoing debate about Obama’s strategy, which President-elect Donald Trump and Republicans have sharply criticized….

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**Space Notebook: Busy launch month, pioneering programmer**

James Dean , FLORIDA TODAY3:35 p.m. EST November 26, 2016

At least three missions, each flown by different rockets, are scheduled to launch from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station during a 10-day period next month that could close out the 2016 launch manifest.

Here’s what’s coming:

- **Dec. 7:** United Launch Alliance plans to launch its fourth Delta IV rocket and 11th mission overall this year, sending the Air Force’s eighth Wideband Global Satcom communications satellite into orbit. The night launch window opens before 7 p.m. The WGS-8 spacecraft was lifted atop the rocket last Monday.

- **Dec. 12:** Orbital ATK brings its air-launched Pegasus rocket to Cape Canaveral for a rare flight. A carrier aircraft will take off first thing in the morning to deploy a rocket carrying eight small satellites forming NASA’s CYGNSS science mission, which will study hurricanes.

- **Dec. 16:** ULA’s final mission of the year will see an Atlas V launch the EchoStar-19 commercial communications satellite in the early afternoon.

The lineup doesn’t yet include a return to flight by SpaceX, which has said it hopes to launch a Falcon 9 rocket before the end of the year, pending completion of its investigation into a Falcon 9 rocket’s Sept. 1 launch pad explosion.

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**SpaceX plans five-year lease of Port Canaveral complex**

Dave Berman, FLORIDA TODAY1:48 p.m. EST November 23, 2016


Port Canaveral has reached a tentative five-year lease agreement with SpaceX, which will operate a rocket refurbishing facility there.

As part of the deal, SpaceX will continue to work out of a 53,360-square-foot building at the port that formerly was used by SpaceHab.

SpaceX currently is using that facility at 620 Magellan Road, occupying the building under terms of a month-to-month temporary use permit. It also plans to build a 44,000-square-foot hangar building on the 4-acre site.

SpaceX operates two launch pads at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station and Kennedy Space Center, but has needed more room since it began landing Falcon 9 rocket boosters last December.

“With SpaceX’s recent progress in recovering first-stage Falcon 9 boosters, we’re looking to expand our facilities on the Space Coast to support rocket refurbishment," SpaceX Communications Director John Taylor said in a statement. "We appreciate the port's partnership in our recovery efforts to date, and continue to discuss further opportunities at Port Canaveral.”

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**Swiss company RUAG setting up satellite shop on Space Coast**

SCOTT POWERS, 29 November 2016

Swiss-owned RUAG Space announced Tuesday it will develop a factory in Titusville to provide component parts for satellites to be created by OneWeb Satellites, which announced its presence on Florida’s Space Coast last spring.

RUAG, owned by the Swiss government, is a globally-recognized leader in engineering and manufacturing of components for space vehicles. It is moving into a newly-opened Port Canaveral Logistics Center-Titusville warehouse complex developed by the Canaveral Port Authority just outside the Space Coast Regional Airport.

There it will build the satellite structures – essentially the chassis of the spacecrafts – to support OneWeb’s plans to build and launch 900 satellites into space from nearby Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

Local authorities and those of Space Florida and the Economic Development Commission of the Space Coast hailed the commitment not as the coming of a big player, but rather as one of the necessary supply-line, medium-to-small companies needed for their plans to re-invent the Space Coast economy around private space operations independent of NASA and the federal government.

“This celebration today is what we hope will be one of many new aerospace companies that will locate here for supply chains and key manufacturers,” said Space Florida President Frank DiBello……

**Team Orlando**

**Air Force to Invest in Common Architecture for Simulators**

Defense News  
By: Valerie Insinna, November 29, 2016  


ORLANDO, Fla. — The Air Force is working on a common software backbone for its simulator systems that will make it easier and less expensive for it to sustain its simulators and push through cyber security updates, officials said Tuesday.

Because the service has more than 48 simulators in its inventory made by various manufacturers with different interfaces, updating those systems is a very cumbersome process, said Lynda Rutledge, program executive officer and director for the agile combat support directorate, which includes the portfolio for the Air Force simulators.

“I have to go to 48 different contractors and get on contract to do that. We want to move towards being so flexible and agile that instead of taking two or three years to make a simple modification to a system, we can do that like we do here,” she said, gesturing to her phone. “Download an app.”

Over the next few years the Air Force hopes to establish a new program, called Simulator Common Architecture Requirements and Standards (SCARS), that will allow the service to modernize its simulators without having issue multiple contracts with several companies to do basically the same thing, Rutledge said during a briefing at Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference (I/ITSEC). The program is estimated to cost about $500 million…..
Homestead ARB

Base level cyber squadron takes flight

By 482nd Communications Squadron, / Published November 29, 2016


HOMESTEAD AIR RESERVE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) -- It’s commonly understood that Airmen operate now in a cyber contested environment. Cyberattacks and persistent malware have become so frequent, widespread, and advanced that they now pose a threat to Air Force core missions beyond what national level cyber protection teams can cover and defend against.

In April, communications squadrons across the Air Force were tasked by their respective major commands to be pathfinder units in what has become known as the “Cyber Squadron Initiative” construct. This is meant to be a transition effort toward a new cyber unit that integrates defensive cyber operations concepts toward protecting the five core Air Force missions at the base level.

The pathfinder units were met with the first achievements under the new concept.

A recent rash of malware struck bases across the Air Force in October, causing national level cyber protection teams to fan out to several bases in search of a root cause. One base they didn’t need to visit was the 482nd Fighter Wing at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida, one of the pathfinder units.

“Our mission defense team took notice of the intel traffic happening at other bases, and used their new cyber skills to compare what was happening across the Air Force against our own systems here at Homestead,” said Maj. Michael Wells, the 482nd Communications Squadron commander.

What they found was that similar malware was indeed infecting their systems and that it was coming dangerously close to the jets themselves. They employed the procedures taught by Air Force Cyber Command and used by cyber protection teams to contain the malware, while tightening procedures to prevent further infection. The corrective actions put in place by the base level team directly emulate the actions to be taken by a national level team….

DoD Budget

NDAA to Create New Pentagon Chief Innovator Job, Keep AT&L in Compromise

By: Joe Gould and Aaron Mehta, November 28, 2016


WASHINGTON — Instead of blowing up the Pentagon chief weapons buyer’s office, lawmakers will consider renaming it and creating a new chief technology officer charged with advancing technology and innovation.

Lawmakers negotiating on the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act agreed to the compromise language just as conferees are expected to sign off on the conference report for the legislation this week.
It was first reported by Bloomberg on Monday and confirmed to Defense News by a source with knowledge of the talks.

The House and Senate are expected to vote on the annual defense policy bill this week. The compromise plan would refashion the Pentagon office for acquisition, technology and logistics (AT&L) into an office of acquisition and sustainment (AT&S), and create a new undersecretary for research and engineering (R&E), with implementation of the new positions deferred until February 2018.

Compromise Defense Policy Bill Would Boost Force Levels

Dan Cohen, November 29, 2016

http://defensecommunities.org/blog/congress-dod/compromise-defense-policy-bill-would-boost-force-levels/

The House and Senate Armed Services committees have settled on a compromise fiscal 2017 defense authorization bill that would halt planned cuts in the end strength of the Army, Air Force and Marines in the coming year, while jettisoning several provisions that were likely to draw a presidential veto.

The conference report likely will be filed today. The House is expected to vote on the agreement Friday, and the Senate is expected to take it up next week, reported Military Times.

Perhaps the most far-reaching impact of the legislation for defense communities is its rejection of the Pentagon’s plans to reduce the size of the Army and Marine Corps. The compromise agreement would set the Army’s active-duty end strength at 476,000 soldiers, 16,000 more than the administration requested for FY 2017. The active Marine Corps would have 185,000 troops, 3,000 more than President Obama included in the FY 2017 budget.

The Air Force’s active forces would rise from 320,715 to 321,000 in FY 2017, rather than falling to 317,000 airmen under DOD’s latest budget request. The Navy would remain at 324,000 sailors.

The final bill would authorize topline discretionary spending of $611 billion for national security, including $59.5 billion for the department’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account. The war fund includes $8.3 billion for programs not associated with the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and beyond. That figure is comprised of $5.1 billion from the administration’s request and $3.2 billion added by lawmakers to pay for higher force levels and to push the military pay raise from 1.6 percent — as the Pentagon had requested — to 2.1 percent.

The added $3.2 billion is not matched by corresponding spending for domestic programs, an outcome that could prompt Democrats and the president to object to the final bill. Conversely, Democrats could view the added funds as an acceptable compromise. The House version of the authorization bill called for shifting $18 billion from the OCO account, which is not subject to the statutory budget caps, to augment the department’s base budget in an effort to restore shortfalls in military readiness.

Lawmakers dropped several provisions that could have triggered a veto, reported CQ Roll Call. One would have permitted religiously affiliated federal contractors to discriminate against LGBT workers. The other would have banned the Fish and Wildlife Service from placing the greater sage grouse on the Endangered Species List, a move that could restrict the use of military training ranges in the western United States.

Of course the conference agreement retains many provisions the White House will object to, but committee aides believe those are not as likely to result in a presidential veto. As expected, the final bill
denies the administration’s request for a new BRAC round in 2019. It also retains restrictions on closing the detention center at Guantánamo Bay.

Carter Sends Congress Memo Calling for Quick Budget Action

By Jim Garamone, DoD News, Defense Media Activity, WASHINGTON, Nov. 29, 2016

http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1015175/carter-sends-congress-memo-calling-for-quick-budget-action

In a memo sent to Congress today, Defense Secretary Ash Carter urged legislators to pass the Defense Department’s budget as quickly as possible and to avoid extending the continuing resolution, Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook said here today.

Carter sent the memo following reports that Congress was looking to pass a continuing resolution that would extend into May 2017, Cook told reporters during a scheduled news conference at the Pentagon.

“I am particularly troubled by information that Congress may be considering a CR through May,” Carter wrote in the letter addressed to House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. “A short-term CR is bad enough, but a CR through May means DoD would have to operate under its constraints for two-thirds of the fiscal year. This is unprecedented and unacceptable, especially when we have so many troops operating in harm's way. I strongly urge Congress to reject this approach.”

Carter asked Congress to pass the department’s budget as quickly as possible to keep the time operating under a continuing resolution short. A continuing resolution means that current spending levels would continue and new projects and programs could not begin.…

NDAA Installs Major Structural Reforms to Pentagon

Defense News
By: Aaron Mehta, November 30, 2016


WASHINGTON — Earlier this year, Sen. John McCain unveiled a series of sweeping changes to the Pentagon.

The thought among analysts was that the Arizona Republican — facing down a potentially dicey primary election, challenge by a well-funded opposition in the general election and with no guarantee his party would remain in control of the Senate — had put all his cards on the table. Every change he wanted to make to the Pentagon would be on considered, a potential legacy-building effort from the longtime defense hawk.

McCain won his primary. He won his general election. And his party not only kept the Senate, but captured the presidency, removing the threat from the Obama administration to veto McCain’s more dramatic ideas.

On Wednesday, his ideas seem to have won in conference, with a number of his reforms put forth in May surviving the final version of the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Among those: blowing up the role of the Pentagon’s top weapons buyer, slashing the number of general officers,
capping the size of the National Security Council and extending the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to a four-year role.

It should be noted that McCain’s ideas were not directly opposed by his counterpart in the House, Rep. Mac Thornberry of Texas. And Thornberry certainly got many things he wanted as well. But as he starts what is expected to be his final six-year term in the Senate, McCain has assembled a legacy-defining series of changes for the way the department operates…..

Other Of Interest

VOA Exclusive: Air Force Has Too Few Fighter Squadrons to Meet Commanders' Needs

November 28, 2016 12:50 AM
By: Carla Babb

HTTP://WWW.VOANEWS.COM/A/AIR-FORCE-HAS-TOO-FEW-FIGHTER-SQUADRONS-TO-MEET-NEEDS/3614173.HTML

JOINT BASE LANGLEY-EUSTIS, VIRGINIA — When Iraqi troops began the operation to retake Mosul last month, fighter pilots in America’s F-22 Raptor jets struck the first Islamic State targets there. But that kind of operation may be in jeopardy.

The U.S. Air Force says a shortage of fighter pilots has become so dire that it is struggling to satisfy combat requirements abroad.

“We have too few squadrons to meet the combatant commanders’ needs,” Major General Scott Vander Hamm, the general in charge of fixing the fighter pilot crisis, said in an exclusive interview with VOA.

The Air Force is currently authorized to have 3,500 fighter pilots, but it is 725 fighter pilots short. And with fewer pilots, the number of fighter pilot squadrons have also dropped, from 134 squadrons in 1986 to 55 in 2016.

As a greater percentage of the force has needed to be deployed over the past 10 years, readiness -- the ability to accomplish missions at home and abroad -- has dropped 20 percent.

“We’re having to look across the board and offer some pretty unpalatable options as we get after it,” Vander Hamm told VOA, “and we may have to, within the next calendar year, start to take some degradations in the frontline squadrons.”

“What that would mean to us is that we would have to accept not being able to get forces to theater in the same time we could, which to a warfighter, that means it could cost lives in a conflict,” he said…..

Defense Experts Worry About Florida's Capitol Hill Slide

By JIM ASH • NOV 17, 2016

Last week’s presidential election is cause for much hand wringing, but Florida’s Defense Support Task Force is more concerned about the Sunshine State’s declining clout on Capitol Hill.

Two retiring members of the Florida congressional delegation, Ander Crenshaw of Jacksonville and Jeff Miller of Chumuckla, are giving up defense-related committee chairs.

Add to that a slew of rookies elected last week, and Florida’s Congressional delegation is in the weakest position in years. Alliance D.C. lobbyist John Patrick Walsh put it this way in Thursday’s meeting in Tampa.

“The biggest challenge that we’ll be facing up here in the Washington office, as well as with the Task Force, is the loss of all of our House Armed Services members. We will not have a member, a Florida member, at this moment, for the first time in a number of years.”

Republican Congressman-elect Matt Gaetz of Shalimar served on the Task Force when he was first elected to the Florida Legislature. Walsh says the buzz in Washington is that Gaetz will land on Armed Services after he’s sworn in.

Defense spending in Florida tops 73 billion dollars and is tied to 750 thousand jobs, or put another way, represents a little more than 9 percent of the Sunshine State economy.

**Florida Coast Guard Not Preparing for Large Cuban Migration**

Associated Press | Nov 28, 2016 | by Freida Frisaro


MIAMI — The number of Cuban migrants trying to reach U.S. soil began surging when the United States announced it was resuming diplomatic relations with Cuba.

But officials with the U.S. Coast Guard's 7th District said they're not gearing up for any immediate, large-scale migration from the island nation only 90 miles from Key West following the announcement that Fidel Castro died on Friday night.

"We're going to continue doing the job we've been doing," Petty Officer Jonathan Lally said Saturday morning. He said that includes routine patrols in the Florida Straits.

Earlier last week, the Coast Guard estimated that 598 Cubans have attempted to illegally migrate to the United States since Oct. 1. During fiscal year 2016, 7,411 Cubans have attempted to "illegally migrate via the sea" compared to 4,473 in fiscal year 2015. The numbers represent the number of Cuban migrants who were captured, intercepted or chased away by the Coast Guard.

Coast Guard officials say the increase in Cuban migrants was prompted by rumor that the so-called wet foot-dry foot policy, which usually shields Cubans from deportation if they reach U.S. shore, might end…..

**Gov. Scott: Chris Hart Will Fight for Florida Jobs as New EFI Leader**

On November 30, 2016, in News Releases, by Staff

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott released the following statement on Chris Hart being named the new President and CEO of Enterprise Florida.

Governor Rick Scott said, “I am proud that Chris Hart has been selected as the new President and CEO for EFI. Chris previously co-founded a small business which grew to employing around 75 people in seven states and Canada. Chris has hands on experience building a business, growing a company and making sure families have opportunities to live the American Dream.

“As a former state representative, Chris has the knowledge, understanding and relationships with the Florida Legislature- an important partner to growing Florida jobs. While he led CareerSource, he helped people all across our state find meaningful jobs. In his various roles at Enterprise Florida and in the Governor’s Office, he has also spent a lot of time working on economic development in our state. Chris has dedicated his entire career to serving Florida families and doing all he can to make it easier for businesses and families to succeed in our state.

“Chris understands the incredible impact a job can have on a family and the need for EFI to make job creation the number one priority. Every decision EFI makes has to focus on making Florida more competitive so we can continue to create new opportunities in our state. As President and CEO, I know Chris will immediately get to work to return EFI back to its core mission of creating jobs for our families.
I appreciate the hard work of the EFI search committee to find such a qualified leader.”

Chris Hart is currently the President and CEO of CareerSource Florida Inc., the statewide workforce policy and investment board. He previously served as the Director of the Governor’s Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development from 2010-2011. From 2004-2007, Hart was the Senior Vice President of External Affairs and Investor Relations for Enterprise Florida Inc. Previously, he served in the Florida House of Representatives for two terms and founded Classified Technologies Group, LLC. Hart earned his Master of Business Administration from the University of South Florida and holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Florida State University.
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – We will not have a meeting this month, **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!** The next Task Force meeting will be in person on **Thursday, 19 January 2017,** beginning at 9:00AM at Avon Park Air Force Range, FL. Details on location for lodging and the meeting are being finalized and will be provided at a later date.

2. **Call In Numbers** –
   
   **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 8784566

3. **Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day** – Governor Rick Scott has signed the annual State of Florida Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Proclamation. The governor directed that flags be lowered to half-staff on December 7th to observe the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor that thrust America into WWII.

4. **2017 Index of U.S. Military Strength** – The Heritage Foundation has published their assessment of U.S. Military Strength. This index seems to align with President Elect Trump’s force numbers for his military buildup strategy. See, the assessment at [http://index.heritage.org/military/2017/](http://index.heritage.org/military/2017/)

5. **National Guard F-35 Basing Decision** – The USAF announced on Wednesday, 7 Dec 2016, that F-35 basing for the National Guard is down to five location that included Jacksonville AGS (Slides attached). TPG will be looking at the scoresheets and seeing where we can help as JAX prepares for the site visit that will help determine the USAF’s final choice. Press release can be seen below in “News Clips” or at [http://www.af.mil/News/ArticleDisplay/tabid/223/Article/1022605/air-force-releases-candidate-installations-for-next-f-35a-bases.aspx](http://www.af.mil/News/ArticleDisplay/tabid/223/Article/1022605/air-force-releases-candidate-installations-for-next-f-35a-bases.aspx).

6. **Florida Benefits from NDAA 17** – According to Rep Gwen Grahams’ office release, the Congresswomen supported Florida initiatives in the 2017 Bill including:
   - **FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act:**
     - Protecting a program to study mine countermeasure capabilities – including those at Naval Support Activity Panama City
     - Constructing a new Army Reserve Center and Aviation Support Facility at MacDill Air Force Base.
     - Doubling the amount of money that goes to joint US-Israel anti-tunnel defense cooperation program from $25M per year to $50M per year.
     - Recognizing Panama City for its important role in the development and support of the United States armed forces
     - Progress on a new re-employment program for veterans, a study of an agriculture equipment share program that could benefit new and beginning farmers, and support for lithium ion super-capacitors made in Tallahassee
   - The legislation also raises military pay by 2.1%, the largest pay raise in six years. It provides investments in capabilities for power projection, counterterrorism, deterrence, ground combat, sea power, and air superiority to help maintain the U.S. military’s advantages in the twenty-first century. And, it fully funds cybersecurity and cyberspace operations at $6.7 billion and elevates Cyber Command to a combatant command to better defend against cyberattacks.
7. **I/ITSEC in Orlando** – The annual Inter-service/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference (I/ ITSEC) conference was held Nov 28 - Dec 2 in Orlando. It is the largest Modeling, Training, and Simulation (MS&T) conference in the world, and promised to be another venue for service announcements of new MS&T initiatives. The Joint Training Integration and Evaluation Center (JTIEC) hosted a round of the joint exercise Operation Blended Warrior (OBW) again this year. This year’s OBW goal was to correct lessons learned from last year’s exercise and to expand the scope and complexity of the event. This conference is valuable in highlighting the strength of the MS&T community in Orlando.

8. **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Review of Transportation Access In/Around Military Bases** – FDOT will be conducting a review of transportation access in and around Florida’s military bases over the next few months. The review will allow FDOT to update their statewide Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) database, ensure they have an updated understanding of the military mission at the base as well as visibility on the potential transportation needs. At the same time, FDOT will provide bases and communities updated information on transportation projects in the areas surrounding the bases. FDA is planning to support the effort by linking FDOT and the local community and military bases.

9. **Attachments:**
   - Bi-weekly TPG Conference Call Memo
   - F-35 Basing Brief Excerpt

*Terry*

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**BRAC**  
NDAA Passes, No BRAC in 2018

The House of Representatives today passed the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017, which determined there will be no military base realignments or closures in 2018 and it includes a number of provisions to assist upstate New York’s service members and veterans.

The Base Realignment and Closure process, commonly referred to as BRAC, closes excess military installations. This bill prohibits a BRAC round from being authorized or carried out in 2018. This is especially important for facilities located at the former Griffiss Air Force Base – Rome Lab, the Eastern Air Defense Sector, and the Rome Defense Finance and Accounting Service site. To support our Southern Tier economy, this bill also invests in the multiservice F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, components of which are produced in Owego.

U.S. Representative Richard Hanna voted in favor of the NDAA, an annual bill which is necessary to perform some of the most basic and essential responsibilities of Congress – such as funding our Armed Forces and national defenses and paying the salaries of our servicemen and women.

“This important legislation will bring security to our critical Mohawk Valley defense installations, sustain jobs in the Southern Tier, and provide continued support for our service members and their families,” Rep. Hanna said. “It means no BRAC in 2018 and provides our armed services with the resources they need to respond to a diverse range of national security threats. The NDAA also gives our troops a well-deserved raise and overhauls the TRICARE health program for future enrollees while ensuring that current beneficiaries see no change to their existing plans. I am especially pleased to have included two amendments in this bill that improve our country’s defenses against cyberattacks.”

The bill now moves on to the Senate for approval….

**NSA Panama City**

**New VA clinic opens in Panama City Beach**

Posted Dec 7, 2016 at 4:17 PM, Updated Dec 7, 2016 at 5:42 PM
By COLLIN BREAUX, News Herald Reporter


PANAMA CITY BEACH - As Vietnam veteran David Parrish waited for his medical appointment Tuesday, he gushed about the large, newly opened VA Clinic, the attractive interior design and the scenic location.

"I love it," said Parrish, who came in for his medications and to have his left leg checked out, having lost the lower half due to diabetes. "At the Navy base, it was difficult to get in. It's easy to get in here in a wheelchair. It's much more convenient."

Though his treatment through the old clinic at Naval Support Activity Panama City (NSA PC) was fine, he considered the new clinic an improvement. For one, parking was hard to find at the old clinic.

Parrish, who lives in Fountain, was one of the 66 veterans who scheduled an appointment Wednesday at the new clinic. Officially named the Panama City Beach VA Clinic, the new facility that offers primary care and other services began seeing scheduled patients Wednesday….
Tyndall host Checkered Flag, Combat Archer

By Tech. Sgt. Javier Cruz, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs / Published December 05, 2016


TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) -- The skies over Tyndall Air Force Base will soon be filled with a variety of aircraft as they partake in Checkered Flag 17-1 and Combat Archer 17-3, concurrent large-scale total force aerial integration exercises that will run Dec. 5-16.

Units will be evaluated on their ability to mobilize, integrate, deploy and employ combat airpower assets on a much larger scale than most other exercises.

The exercise focus will be on the tactical integration of three fighter squadrons and select units.

Air Combat Command established the 325th Air Expeditionary Wing for the duration of the exercise, which will operate from Tyndall AFB.

“The nature of airpower includes speed, surprise, maneuver, and focused firepower. Units from greatly dispersed locations are able to rapidly assemble to form a formidable airpower team,” said Col. Randall W. Cason, the 44th Fighter Group and 325th Air Expeditionary Wing commander. “Rapid global mobility begets air and space superiority at a pace and place our adversaries are heavily challenged to adequately defend.”

Airpower assets have come from six ACC installations: Tyndall AFB, Florida; Shaw AFB, South Carolina; Mountain Home AFB, Idaho; Moody AFB, Georgia; Eglin AFB Florida; and Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. The Florida Air National Guard and Louisiana ANG will also provide air assets during the exercise.

The units will integrate to form a large-scale, total force integration element and provide the 325th AEW with the ability to execute rapid global mobility, precision engagement, and air and space superiority in a training environment -- three core competencies of the Air Force.

As a force provider, ACC provides organization, training and equipment to maintain combat-ready forces for rapid deployment and employment to ensure strategic air defense forces are ready to meet the challenges of peacetime air sovereignty and wartime air defense.

“Checkered Flag is an outstanding opportunity for combat units to familiarize and synchronize in order to become even more effective in their combat missions,” Cason said. “In short, it builds a better combat team.”

NS Mayport

Construction company gets Navy contract

Paul Owers, Sun Sentinel
December 2, 2016, 6:29PM


Gulf Building of Fort Lauderdale says it has been awarded a construction contract at Naval Station Mayport in Jacksonville.

Gulf will demolish an existing building and build a single-story facility. Work is expected to start in January and finish in June, the company said.
The construction management services firm says it has completed other projects for the U.S. Armed Forces in Miami, West Palm Beach, and Kings Bay and Albany, Ga.

The firm is working on an operations center and Pompano Beach Tri-Rail station improvements for the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority. It previously has completed work for the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood and a new terminal for JetBlue at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport.

**NAS Jacksonville**

**Jacksonville’s Air National Guard is among 5 finalists for F-35 squadron**

Posted December 7, 2016 03:22 pm - Updated December 7, 2016 05:40 pm

By Joe Daraskevich, joe.daraskevich@jacksonville.com


The pool of potential landing spots for two squadrons of F-35 Lightning II fighters shrunk significantly Wednesday when the U.S. Air Force announced Jacksonville’s Air National Guard and four other bases as finalists in the running to house the new jets.

The original field of 18 was announced in April, but a time frame for narrowing the field was unclear.

“This announcement highlights what we in Florida have always known, that our Florida Air National Guard has the finest facilities, airspace and, most importantly, airmen in the world,” said Maj. Gen. Michael Calhoun, the adjutant general of Florida. “We are honored that the Air Force recognizes that Jacksonville would be an excellent home for the F-35.”

Jacksonville will have to beat out at least three of the other bases in contention since two of the five will ultimately receive F-35 squadrons.

The other locations in contention are Montgomery, Ala.; Boise, Idaho; Selfridge, Mich., and Dane County, Wis.

U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla. and a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, sent a letter to the secretary of the Air Force this year describing why he thinks Florida is the best choice for the new aircraft.

“The military installations in Florida provide access to some of the best maritime training opportunities in the world,” Nelson wrote. “The professionals of Florida’s 125th and 482nd Fighter Wings are more than worthy of selection for transition to the F-35A Lighting II aircraft.”

Officials at the 125th Fighter Wing located at Jacksonville International Airport submitted data detailing their facility after learning they were one of the 18 bases in contention. Now the government will inspect each of the five potential locations in person before making a final decision.

Calhoun said a squadron of F-35s in Jacksonville would guarantee the base’s relevance for the next 50 years….

**MacDill AFB**
Obama to Give Last Counterterrorism Speech in Florida

December 03, 2016 10:18 PM
VOA News

http://www.voanews.com/a/obama-counterterrorism-macdill/3622241.html

President Obama will give his final speech about U.S. counterterrorism strategy Tuesday at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, the White House announced.

The base is the headquarters for the U.S. Special Operations Command and U.S. Central Command, the units in charge of Special Operations elements of the Army, Navy and Air Force.

Obama plans to meet with active-duty service members stationed at MacDill, including members of special ops teams who have played key roles in counterterrorism efforts during his presidency.

Since taking office, Obama has increased the U.S. reliance on special forces to address extremist threats with a limited U.S. footprint.

The visit will allow Obama to elaborate one last time on reforms he implemented to keep the U.S. safe during his presidency, as well as express his gratitude to the special operations forces, White House spokesman Josh Earnest said.

President Thanks MacDill Troops, Families for Their Service to Nation

By Terri Moon CronkDoD News, Defense Media Activity

http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1022582/president-thanks-macdill-troops-families-for-their-service-to-nation

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7, 2016 — President Barack Obama visited service members at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, yesterday to thank them on behalf of the American people for their dedication to the nation.

“We have been so reliant on the outstanding work that has been done by [U.S. Special Operations Command and U.S. Central Command], the extraordinary leadership from the highest general down to the person who's just started,” the president said. “I have been consistently in awe of your performance and the way that you've carried out your mission.”

MacDill also is home to the 927th Air Refueling Wing and the 6th Air Mobility Wing.

Obama paid tribute to MacDill’s 75th anniversary during his troop talk.

“For 75 years -- from World War II through Korea, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, the Gulf War, the Afghan and Iraq wars -- the men and women of this base have always stepped up when we needed them most. So, on behalf of the entire country, I want to wish you a happy 75th anniversary,” Obama said.

“It has been the privilege and honor of a lifetime to be your commander in chief -- the commander in chief of the finest fighting force the world has ever known. You are the best. Because we have the best people,” the president said.
US Central Command

Congress blocks funds for key military intel program, calls for Pentagon-wide investigation


Lawmakers critical of the Obama administration’s cherry-picking of intelligence in the war on terror fired one last shot via the defense spending bill working its way through Congress.

Members of the House Armed Services Committee inserted a little-noticed provision to block funds for a key intelligence program run by U.S. Central Command, agreeing to release the funds only after a Pentagon-wide investigation is opened into intel operations at other regional commands.

Investigators from the Defense Department’s Inspector General’s Office would lead the inquiry at major U.S. commands in the Pacific, South America, Europe and Africa, according to language in the House version of the defense spending bill for fiscal year 2017.

“Additionally, the [defense bill] will fence funding for [Central Command’s] intelligence Fusion Center until the Committee receives documentation about the center’s operation and the DOD IG inquiry has been completed,” House lawmakers added in a statement summing up the legislation’s highlights.

The legislation, which requires approval from defense lawmakers in the Senate, stems from a joint investigation of the House defense panel and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence looking into the accusations against Central Command in August…..

Cape Canaveral AFS

Launch today: Delta IV rocket set with military satellite

James Dean, FLORIDA TODAY, 7:04 a.m. EST December 7, 2016

http://www.floridatoday.com/story/tech/science/space/2016/12/06/delta-iv-night-launch-increase-military-bandwidth/95044470/

Many consumers are more dependent on high-speed Internet connections at home, to connect smartphones and tablets and stream high-definition movies or video games.

The Department of Defense similarly is grappling with a growing need for bandwidth, and on Wednesday night the Air Force will launch its highest-capacity satellite yet from Cape Canaveral to improve military communications.

A United Launch Alliance Delta IV rocket is targeting a 6:53 p.m. liftoff with the eighth Wideband Global SATCOM satellite, or WGS-8.

"The information age has resulted in an explosion of communications demand and capability for everyone globally," said Rico Attanasio, director of military satellite communications for Boeing, the builder of WGS spacecraft. "For our armed forces and DOD users, wideband communications is vitally important to
executing missions that protect and defend the people of the United States and our interests. More and more, WGS is called upon to deliver reliable, high data rate communications anywhere in the world, sometimes in contested environments.".....

**ULA blasts Air Force comm satellite into orbit**

SCOTT POWERS, 7 Dec 2016


A Delta IV rocket blasted into the night sky over Cape Canaveral Wednesday night to carry an Air Force telecommunications rocket into space.

The United Launch Alliance rocket blasted off without a hitch and on time, at 6:53 p.m. from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

ULA’s Patrick Moore declared the rocket’s launch and separation of the first stage went smoothly as the rocket lit up the sky for scores of miles Wednesday night.

The Wideband Global Satcom satellite, known as the WGS-8, is the eighth in a constellation providing upgraded point-to-point communications for the American military.

**Team Orlando**

**Orlando defense firms hope for high-tech focus in Trump funding**

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel

December 2, 2016, 4:42PM


Orlando's cluster of defense contractors hope a renewed emphasis on defense budgets under a Donald Trump presidency will come with a high-tech focus.

If that happens, it could lead to more growth for the industry in Central Florida, as technology investments play into one of the region's strengths.

Central Florida is home to a robust defense industry that includes several large contractors such as Lockheed Martin and Cubic alongside smaller companies. Each major military branch has a research-and-development presence here. The local cluster includes thousands of high-paying jobs and relies heavily on innovative and high-tech programs — such as the National Center for Simulation.

There's been an ongoing effort to grow federal spending on technology, even before Trump won the November election, said Chester Kennedy, head of Kissimmee-based International Consortium of Advanced Manufacturing Research and a former Lockheed Martin executive.

"The important thing is we keep innovating, instead of being like some regions that get locked into a particular set of industries with very specific solutions," said Kennedy, whose consortium oversees Florida Advanced Manufacturing Research Center. "We have the opportunity to reinvent the industry here in Florida every 12 to 18 months. As long as we remain agile, it is working in our favor."
Spending on defense-based contracts in the Orlando cluster of companies has recently hovered around $4 billion to $5 billion annually, according to the Orlando-based National Center for Simulation, which is a group that includes military and private sector members.

But while some in the industry are optimistic, others say announcing more defense spending means little for Central Florida businesses without details — including whether that money would go toward soldiers or high-tech products….

**INTERSECTION: SIMULATION BUSINESSES SEE BRIGHT FUTURE UNDER TRUMP ADMINISTRATION**

Friday, December 2, 2016 by Matthew Peddie (WMFE)

http://www.wmfe.org/intersection-simulation-businesses-see-bright-future-under-trump-administration/67057

The military simulation industry has big presence in Orlando, and it’s banking on President Elect Trump funneling more money this way once he takes office. We visit the floor of I/ITSEC- a tradeshow for military simulation- and peek into the future of this industry in Central Florida.

A lot of the training that US military personnel do before they are deployed is now virtual. And with president elect Donald Trump pledging to rebuild the military, Orlando’s simulation businesses see an opportunity for more contracts and growth.

One the floor of the I/ITSEC conference you’ll see people clad in fatigues from all parts of the world strapping on visors and zipping through the digital skies on the latest fighter plane simulator, or testing their reflexes in virtual shooter simulations.

We speak to retired Lieutenant General Tom Baptiste who heads the National Center for Simulation in Orlando, and former US Air Force B52 pilot Jim Jardon, the CEO of Orlando based simulation company JHT.

**Homestead AFB**

**Jonathan Bogert Joins Florida Defense Alliance**

Posted: Friday, December 2, 2016 11:23 am

Bob Jensen


Redland resident Jonathan Bogert was recently appointed to the Florida Defense Alliance where he will serve with military community leaders from around the state of Florida. Jonathan has long been involved in advocating for Homestead Air Reserve Base and other South Florida military facilities.

The Florida Defense Alliance is a grass roots consortium of representatives of defense-related organizations including federal, state and local government as well as defense industry, economic development organizations and other interested parties.
Some FDA tasks are to foster federal military presence in Florida, expand defense-related industries, ensure all military members and their families receive continual improvement in their quality of life, preserve military areas to guarantee future availability for Armed Forces operations in Florida and ensure readiness of Armed Forces operations in Florida.

Bogert serves as the South Dade Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee chair on advocacy. He is a past MAC chairman who sits on the Executive Committee. He is the honorary commander of the 482nd Fighter Wing Operations Group.

Jonathan’s broad responsibilities require much time and travel. With base closure never far away we should thank him for his service to the State of Florida and to our South Florida communities.

**US Southern Command**

**Trump pick to head Homeland Security oversaw Guantánamo prison**

BY FRANCO ORDOÑEZ, fordonez@mclatchydc.com
DECEMBER 7, 2016 1:23 PM

HTTP://WWW.CHARLOTTEOBSERVER.COM/NEWS/POLITICS-OVERNMENT/ARTICLE119434493.HTML

President-elect Donald Trump’s choice to be secretary of the Department of Homeland Security is a retired Marine Corps general who clashed with reporters over what information could be released about suspected terrorists held at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

Retired Marine Gen. John Kelly is the third general Trump has named to a top national security post, raising concerns among some that the president-elect, who lacks defense and foreign policy experience, is ceding too much power to military figures instead of civilian advisers.

The move was immediately criticized by immigrant rights groups while praised by those advocating for stronger borders.

Kelly served three years as head of U.S. Southern Command before retiring early this year. He sometimes clashed with President Barack Obama over women in combat and whether to close Guantánamo. Kelly opposed closing the prison.

If confirmed, Kelly would be tasked with protecting U.S. borders and overseeing immigration policies, two centerpieces of Trump’s presidential campaign. Trump has vowed to boost deportations and build a huge wall along the Mexico-United States border….

**NAS Key West**

**Task Force Works to Stem Flow of Illicit Drug Trafficking and Dismantle Criminal Networks**

December 7, 2016

The tip came to an FBI agent in New Orleans from a source there involved with a violent Honduran street gang: A large shipment of cocaine ultimately bound for the U.S. was about to leave Costa Rica destined for Honduras.

That information was relayed to FBI personnel at the Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) in Key West, Florida, a multi-agency, international alliance whose mission is to cover 42 million square miles of territory primarily in Central and South America to stem the flow of illegal drugs and to disrupt and dismantle sophisticated narco-trafficking networks. Much of that work is carried out on the high seas.

The Honduran traffickers had set out from Limón, Costa Rica. Their “go-fast” boat—a small, low-profile vessel favored by smugglers—was packed with 300 kilos of cocaine and a cache of military-grade weapons, including M16 rifles and grenade launchers.

When intelligence sources confirmed that the boat was in the water, officers on the watch floor at JIATF-S requested that the U.S. Navy launch a P3 surveillance aircraft to locate the smugglers, who were making their way up the east coast of Nicaragua toward Honduras. Because there were no U.S. Coast Guard cutters in the vicinity to make an interdiction, the watch floor commander called the Honduran liaison officer assigned to JIATF-S and asked for assistance.

In a matter of hours, radar-equipped Honduran aircraft had taken over tracking the vessel and Honduran navy patrol boats were under way. As the navy interceptors closed in, the four smugglers beached their craft and ran into the jungle, firing on their pursuers as they fled. In the end, the criminals were apprehended, along with the drugs and weapons. The four are currently imprisoned in Honduras.....

**DoD Budget**

**Veto of defense authorization bill looks unlikely**

By: Leo Shane III, Military Times, December 2, 2016

http://www.militarytimes.com/articles/house-ndaa-vote-obama-veto

If President Barack Obama wants to block the 2017 defense authorization bill, he’ll have to do so without help from fellow Democrats on Capitol Hill.

On Friday, the annual defense policy measure overwhelmingly passed the House by a vote of 375 to 34, with most chamber Democrats backing the legislation despite the $619 billion price tag coming in several billion dollars over White House requests.

House Armed Services Committee Ranking Member Adam Smith, D-Wash., called the measure an “excellent bill” even though he has spoken against oversized defense budgets.

Before the vote, he noted that “we do not have an infinite amount of money” but added that “we're going to keep working hard to figure out how to make that money go as far as possible.”

Earlier this week, White House spokesman Josh Earnest would not say whether Obama will follow through on past threats to veto any defense budget measures that work around congressionally mandated spending caps on military and non-military spending.

At issue is $3.2 billion in extra funding that Republican lawmakers inserted into temporary war funding to get around those caps. Nearly all of the extra money is set aside for additional personnel costs, including a larger pay raise for troops and boosts to force end strengths in the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps.

House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, called those costs critical to the health of the force.
“(This bill) provides the full pay raise to which the troops are statutorily entitled for the first time in six years,” he said. “It stops the (drawdowns) of military personnel which have been going on and at least prevents it from getting any worse. It starts to stabilize the readiness problems that are making it more and more difficult for our troops to accomplish their mission.”

In Bashing Air Force One Costs, Trump Targets Defense Spending

POSTED BY: BRENDAN MCGARRY DECEMBER 6, 2016
HTTP://WWW.DODBUZZ.COM/2016/12/06/AIR-FORCE-ONE-TRUMP-DEFENSE-SPENDING/

In bashing plans for a potential $4 billion program to upgrade the Air Force One presidential aircraft, Republican President-elect Donald Trump on Tuesday seemed to signal a willingness to target excessive defense spending once in office.

“Boeing is building a brand new 747 Air Force One for future presidents, but costs are out of control, more than $4 billion,” he tweeted. “Cancel order!”

The remarks caught many industry observers by surprise. After all, he proposed a Reagan-like military buildup during his campaign.

And the timing of his comments are also noteworthy.

They came the day the Aerospace Industries Association — the defense lobby — was holding its annual holiday luncheon in Washington, D.C., and a day after The Washington Post broke a story about how Pentagon leaders downplayed a study that showed the department could save upwards of $125 billion over five years by reducing overhead and other wasteful spending.

The Chicago-based aerospace giant was quick to respond to Trump’s tweet, noting that it has only received a fraction of that amount for preliminary work on the program, which isn’t expected to deliver a new plane until 2023.

Report: Navy Refuses to Cut $17B in Shipbuilding Funds From FY 2018 Budget Plan

Jane Edwards December 8, 2016 Latest News

The U.S. Navy has declined to submit a fiscal year 2018 budget plan to the Defense Department that includes $17 billion in budget cuts to shipbuilding programs in the next five years, the Navy Times reported Wednesday.

David B. Larter writes Defense Secretary Ashton Carter asked the service branch to advance investments in aircraft and weapons systems through cuts to shipbuilding funds.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus has opposed such budget reductions to ship construction projects as he aims to increase the military branch’s fleet to 308 ships, Larter reports.
A senior defense official said service branches have until Thursday to submit their budget plans to the DoD secretary’s office, according to the report.

Peter Cook, a spokesman for the Pentagon, said Carter called on all service branches to create their specific budget plans as DoD works to develop a FY 2018 budget proposal for the incoming administration, the report added.

**Other Of Interest**

**Tia Mitchell: Veterans will have to push Jacksonville’s legislative agenda**

Tallahassee bureau chief/reporter Tia Mitchell in the TU studio on Tuesday Oct.11, 2016.

Posted December 3, 2016 09:36 pm

[http://jacksonville.com/reason/2016-12-03/tia-mitchell-veterans-will-have-push-jacksonville-s-legislative-agenda](http://jacksonville.com/reason/2016-12-03/tia-mitchell-veterans-will-have-push-jacksonville-s-legislative-agenda)

Now that the 2017 legislative class has been sworn in, it’s time to size up our Northeast Florida delegation.

The biggest thing to remember is that the group is full of newbies. Eight of its 15 members are freshmen in the Florida House. Rep. Jay Fant is starting his second term in the House; and Sen. Travis Hutson is in his first full term there after winning a 2015 special election.

That means the delegation will lean upon its longest-serving members: Sen. Aaron Bean, R-Fernandina Beach; Sen. Rob Bradley, R-Fleming Island; Sen. Audrey Gibson, D-Jacksonville; Rep. Travis Cummings, R-Fleming Island; and Rep. Elizabeth Porter, R-Lake City.

Gibson will serve as chairwoman of the Duval Legislative Delegation, and Hutson is chair of the larger, regional First Coast Legislative Delegation. Local officials will rely on them to make sure their priorities get attention in Tallahassee, such as Mayor Lenny Curry’s request for state transportation dollars to reconfigure the Hart Expressway. The project has a $50 million price tag.

All four Northeast Florida senators are in positions of authority, although in different ways.

Gibson is one of four Democrats selected to lead committees in the Republican-controlled Senate, a nod to President Joe Negron’s bipartisan approach. She is chairwoman of the Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee. That should benefit Northeast Florida, home to several military installations and lots of vets.

Hutson, R-Elkton, is chairman of the powerful Regulated Industries Committee that oversees gambling policy. With the Florida Supreme Court poised to rule on the slots-referendum issue any day and a need for the state to renegotiate its compact with the Seminole Indians, Hutson’s committee will be busy in 2017.

Bean and Bradley both were tapped to lead budget subcommittees. Bradley was assigned the subcommittee on the Environment and Natural Resources and Bean will be in charge of the group that oversees criminal and civil justice spending.

House Speaker Richard Corcoran has not yet announced who will chair most of his committees, and it is unlikely any freshman will be selected. However, we know that at least one delegation member is in the inner circle.
Reservists to Get Equal Death Benefits Under Bill

National Guard and Reserve members would receive the same death benefits as their active-duty counterparts under a bill expected to pass Congress this week.

As it stands now, family members of Guardsmen and Reservists killed during inactive training receive a much smaller monthly payment than those of active-duty members. For example, a survivor receives $1,036 a month if the spouse was killed on inactive training status, yet another receives $3,381 if the spouse was killed on active duty, according to a fact sheet from the Defense Department.

The benefits are paid out under Survivor Benefit Plan, or SBP, but how the amounts are calculated differ between those killed on active duty and on inactive training status -- even if they died side-by-side during the same accident.

For those on active duty, the amount is based on a simple percentage of what the troop's retirement payment would be. For those in the Guard or Reserve, the amount is based on a more complicated three-step formula that factors in Reserve points and years of service, among other items.

In addition, survivors of active-duty members qualify for an additional payment designed to get around a rule that blocks them from receiving full death benefit payouts from both the Defense Department and the Veterans Affairs Department. But the allowance doesn't extend to those of Guardsmen and reservists killed on in-active training.

The legislation includes language championed by Rep. Marc Veasey, a Texas Democrat, to fix this inequity. The bill was approved by the House and is expected to pass the Senate this week before heading to President Barack Obama's desk for his signature.

"A discrepancy between survivor benefits for fallen service members of differing active duty statuses was finally remedied," Veasey said in a statement. "This long overdue change will now make available equal survivor benefits for all who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our country and will hopefully alleviate some of the financial stress experienced by our military families."

Pentagon officials have struggled to make accurate payments due to the complexities of the existing policy…..
December 16

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – We will not have a meeting this month, **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!** The next Task Force meeting will be in person on **Thursday, 19 January 2017,** beginning at 9:00AM in Building 77 at Avon Park Air Force Range, FL. We will be staying at the Inn on the Lakes, Sebring, FL 33870. You should have received the Attendee Registration form from Michelle yesterday; **please RSVP to her NLT 31 December 2016.**

2. **Call In Numbers –**
   
   **Call In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 8784566

3. **Florida Legislative Committee Assignments Set** – This week was the first committee week for the Florida Senate prior to the 2017 Session. Chair for 2017 Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee is Senator Audrey Gibson from the Jacksonville area and Vice Chair is Senator Doug Broxson from the Panhandle (full committee list attached). The committee met briefly on December 13th to introduce the members. Bruce Grant and I attended the meeting which mentioned Florida F-35 basing as one of the many interests of the chair (to see article click on [HTTP://NEWS.WFSU.ORG/POST/SOME-FLORIDA-LAWMAKERS-NOT-TOO-HAPPY-TRUMP-TWEET-CRITICIZING-F-35-PROGRAM-COSTS]). Senator Dana Young of the Task Force will Chair the Health Policy Committee and Vice Chair the Appropriations Subcommittee on Pre-K - 12 Education, among other committee assignments. The Florida House announced committee assignments this week as well. Membership of the Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee which sits under the Government Accountability Committee should be the committee that handles military affairs as well as other federal issues. This subcommittee is chaired by Representative Scott Plakon from Longwood and the Vice Chair is Representative Colleen Burton from Lakeland (full committee list attached). The FDSTF Chair, Representative Clay Ingram, will Chair the Transportation & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee and was named Vice Chair of the Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee as well as the Select Committee on Triumph Gulf Coast, among other committee assignments including a seat on the Appropriations Committee.

4. **Tyndall AFB Hosts Checkered Flag Exercise** – Tyndall AFB is hosting squadrons from all over the country for this large scale exercise which began December 10th largely because it has access to the Gulf Range Complex. Participating units include F-22s, T-38 Talons and QF-16 aerial targets from Tyndall Air Force Base; F-35s, an F-15E Strike Eagle, F-15C Eagles, and F-16 Fighting Falcons from Eglin AFB, Florida; F-16s from Shaw AFB, South Carolina; B-52 Stratofortresses from Barksdale AFB, Louisiana; an E-3 Sentry (AWACS) from Tinker AFB, Oklahoma; and F-16s from Eielson AFB, Alaska. In an article covering the exercise, the 325th Fighter Wing Vice Commander stated "From north to south are in access of 120-130 miles and east west nearing 250 miles wide and that's the type and size of air space that we require to fully train to our capabilities" (See article below in the clips or click on [http://www.wjhg.com/content/news/Tyndall-Air-Force-Base-hosts-Checkered-Flag-training-exercise-406615725.html]).
5. Military/Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week –
   - **SB 0124 Relating to Homestead Tax Relief** (Steube)
     Homestead Tax Relief; Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to authorize the Legislature to provide, by general law, ad valorem tax relief on homestead property to the parent or parents of a veteran who died from service-connected causes while on active duty as a member of the United States Armed Forces, etc.
   - **SB 0152 Relating to Small Business Financial Assistance** (Garcia)
     Small Business Financial Assistance; Creating the Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program within the Department of Veterans’ Affairs; authorizing the corporation to accept and administer moneys appropriated for such grants; requiring a small business to apply to and enter into an agreement with the corporation to receive grants, etc. APPROPRIATION: $1,000,000.00 Effective Date: Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act and except for this section, which shall take effect July 1, 2017, this act shall take effect October 1, 2017

6. Attachments:
   - House Local, Federal and Veterans Affairs Committee Membership
   - Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee Membership
   - Team Orlando 10-4 - December 2016

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**Terry**  
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**News Clips of Interest:**

**NAS Pensacola**  
Environmental program targets toxic sites at Navy base
More than 20 years after Pensacola Naval Air Station started a massive program to find and address areas with hazardous contamination, base leaders say the work is largely complete.

Earlier this month, an advisory committee received its annual update on the program.

The cleanup effort took engineering and detective skills, said Greg Campbell, project manager for the environmental restoration program.

Engineers began by meeting with many former base employees to discover areas of potential contamination.

"Some of it goes way back as far as the 1930s," he said.

Issues included an old landfill site used to dispose construction materials that contained asbestos, the site of a now demolished building where radium was used to make dials for airplane gauges and another area where an industrial solvent used to wash airplanes was improperly disposed of in drains.

"A lot of the environmental regulations didn't come until the 1970s so there weren't many guidelines for using, collecting or disposing of hazardous materials before then," Campbell said.

In 1996, the Navy identified 46 sites with potential contamination on the base. Campbell said only four sites remain and those sites are being addressed.....

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**NAS Whiting Field**

**DEP honors Gulf Power and Whiting Field**

December 14, 2016

http://ricksblog.biz/dep-honors-gulf-power-and-whiting-field/

Yesterday, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Northwest District recognized the city of Tallahassee, Gulf Power and Naval Air Station Whiting Field for outstanding environmental stewardship.

“On behalf of DEP and the State of Florida, I am proud to recognize the city of Tallahassee, Gulf Power and NAS Whiting Field for their environmental stewardship,” said Shawn Hamilton, director of DEP’s Northwest District. “With such outstanding community partners working along side us, we can better accomplish our goal of safeguarding Florida’s natural resources.”

The awards were presented during the district’s annual open house aimed at growing the community’s awareness of the agency’s mission, increasing communication and developing collaborative relationships with the community. Guests were invited to meet the district’s staff and Director Shawn Hamilton. Permitting and compliance experts from each of the district’s regulatory programs – Waste, Air, Water and Environmental Resources – were on hand to answer questions and provide information about their respective programs.

The city of Tallahassee, Gulf Power and NAS Whiting Field are the first to be awarded under the Northwest District’s new Environmental Stewardship Awards Program. The program was developed to recognize those who are working alongside DEP to safeguard Florida’s natural resources.....
Six F-35A Lightning II from Eglin Air Force Base and more than 90 personnel are participating in the large-scale, total force Checkered Flag 17-1 exercise here Dec. 5-16.

The 33rd Fighter Wing’s F-35s bring another level of training and integration to the exercise, working alongside another fifth-generation fighter, the F-22 Raptor, as well as F-15E Strike Eagles, F-16 Fighting Falcons, HH-60G Pave Hawks and an E-3 Sentry. As a combat rehearsal for participating units, Checkered Flag is a unique opportunity for pilots, maintainers, air battle managers and intelligence to come together and practice in the same physical space.

“[We need to] train the way [we] fight. It’s good to get in there and start working as a team,” said Maj. Brad Zimmerman, 33rd Operations Support Squadron assistant chief of weapons. “I think the biggest pro of this exercise is [everyone] being part of the entire mission planning cycle from the briefing the day prior, to going out and flying, and then the debrief after. It’s been great to have that full circle experience and getting all the learning points out.”

When each of these units come together to practice flying combat sorties, they develop the relationships and tactics necessary to execute these mission sets successfully, as a team, in real-world engagements.

PANAMA CITY BEACH, Fla. – A ribbon cutting ceremony was held Dec. 14 for the new Naval Branch Health Clinic Panama City.

The new 5,300 square foot clinic will provide patient-centered care for active duty service members assigned to Naval Support Activity Panama City, retirees and their families in a modern and safe facility conducive to health care.

Naval Branch Health Clinic Panama City is one of 10 branch clinics assigned to Naval Hospital Pensacola. The old clinic aboard Naval Support Activity Panama City was originally built in 1957 as a Dispensary for the United States Navy Mine Defense Laboratory. The new clinic was built to meet modern health care standards and will provide patients with larger exam rooms.

“We are fortunate in Navy Medicine to have the responsibility of providing care to the men and women that have served our country and their families,” said Capt. Sarah Martin, commanding officer, Naval Hospital Pensacola. “Now we have a facility in Panama City suited for such worthy patients.”

The construction of the new clinic was part of a sharing agreement between the Navy and the Department of Veterans Affairs, which also opened a new clinic next to the Navy clinic. As part of the agreement, Navy staff will be working with VA staff to provide laboratory, radiology, pharmaceutical and dental services to both VA and Navy patients.
TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE - If the skies over Tyndall Air Force Base have seemed busier lately, you're not mistaken. F-35A Lightning IIs, F-22 Raptors, F-15E Strike Eagles, F-16 Fighting Falcons, HH-60G Pave Hawks, and command and control aircraft like the E-3 Sentry all are at the base this month as part of Checkered Flag 17-1 and Combat Archer 17-3, concurrent large-scale total force aerial integration exercises running Dec. 5-16.

Units will be evaluated on their ability to mobilize, integrate, deploy and employ combat air power assets on a much larger scale than most other exercises.

The exercise focuses on the tactical integration of three fighter squadrons and select units.

Air Combat Command established the 325th Air Expeditionary Wing for the duration of the exercise, which will operate from Tyndall.

"The nature of air power includes speed, surprise, maneuver and focused firepower. Units from greatly dispersed locations are able to rapidly assemble to form a formidable airpower team," said Col. Randall W. Cason, 44th Fighter Group and 325th Air Expeditionary Wing commander. "Rapid global mobility begets air and space superiority at a pace and place our adversaries are heavily challenged to adequately defend."

Participating airpower assets come from six Air Combat Command installations: Tyndall; Shaw AFB, South Carolina; Mountain Home AFB, Idaho; Moody AFB, Georgia; Eglin AFB; and Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. The Florida Air National Guard and Louisiana Air National Guard also are providing air assets during the exercise. …

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) - Fighter pilots from all over the country are taking off from Tyndall Air Force Base for the next couple weeks. For the second time, Tyndall is holding Checkered Flag exercises on base.

"The opportunity to train together is key because it builds teamwork and makes us integrated, efficient, effective and into an effective fighting force overall and far more lethal as a consequence, good for America," said Colonel Randy Cason, Commander, 44th Fighter Group, Tyndall Air Force Base.

Checkered Flag gives the Air Force the opportunity to train with fighter pilots from all across the nation. Colonel Cason says having the training at Tyndall offers a unique advantage.

"From north to south are in access of 120-130 miles and east west nearing 250 miles wide and that's the type and size of air space that we require to fully train to our capabilities," said Colonel Cason.
Colonel Cason tells NewsChannel 7 F22 Raptors take off they're going around 140 miles per hour. By the time they hit the clouds, they're going about 400 miles an hour.

Tyndall a finalist for MQ-9 drone unit

WASHINGTON - Tyndall Air Force Base is among the Air Force's candidates for a potential new MQ-9 Reaper wing.

The unmanned aerial vehicles will be controlled from one of two locations. The candidates for the first location are Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona; Moody AFB, Georgia; Mountain Home AFB, Idaho; Offutt AFB, Nebraska; and Shaw AFB, South Carolina. These locations have an active-duty flying wing or group that performs at least one core remotely piloted aircraft mission and/or is co-located with an active-duty distributed ground system. Once an installation is selected, MQ-9 crews will control the MQ-9 from that location, but no aircraft will be assigned to these units.

Candidates for a second location are Tyndall and Eglin in Florida; Vandenberg AFB, California; and Shaw AFB. The chosen location would include both a launch and recovery element and a mission control element, as well as a maintenance group and operations support personnel. That location is expected to have up to 24 MQ-9 aircraft assigned.

Air Combat Command now will conduct site surveys at all eight locations to assess each location against requirements, potential impacts to existing missions, infrastructure and manpower. They also will develop cost estimates to bed down the planned units.

Based on the results of these efforts, the Air Force plans to select the preferred alternatives as early as this month. Final basing decisions will be made by the secretary of the Air Force after the requisite environmental analysis is complete.

NAS Jacksonville

Scott tries to lure squadron amid Trump objections

Gov. Rick Scott's desire for Jacksonville to become a base for a squadron of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter could clash with a stance of President-elect Donald Trump. Scott tweeted Friday that the Florida Air National Guard 125th Fighter Wing at Jacksonville International Airport would make "a great home" for the jets. However, Trump reaffirmed his objection to the F-35 program in a tweet on Monday. "The F-35 program and cost is out of control. Billions of dollars can and will be saved on military (and other) purchases after January 20th," Trump tweeted. Trump had also criticized the jet during the presidential campaign. The jet was conceived in 1996 to replace other aircraft, but redesigns and other factors have driven up the costs. A report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office in 2014 pegged the operating costs of the fleet at 79 percent higher than the aircraft the F-35 is expected to replace. The Jacksonville base made the shortlist for the next squadron location, which last Wednesday was whittled from 18 to five. "Florida has the country's best national guardsmen and facilities and Jacksonville would be a great home for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter," Scott said in a tweet. While no timeline has been
announced to select the base, Jacksonville is up against facilities in Montgomery, Ala.; Boise, Idaho; Selfridge, Mich., and Dane County, Wis.

**Senators Look At Attracting F-35 Squadron**

December 14, 2016 4:35 PM


TALLAHASSEE (CBS Miami/NSF) – The Florida Senate is looking at how more jets can be based in the state, even with the president-elect’s criticism of the military’s F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

“The F-35 program and cost is out of control. Billions of dollars can and will be saved on military (and other) purchases after January 20th,” Donald Trump tweeted on Monday.

Sen. Audrey Gibson, a Jacksonville Democrat who chairs the Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee, said Tuesday she intends to hold panel discussions on the fighter.

“I definitely want to make sure we have a presentation on the possibility of getting some of the fighters in Jacksonville, in particular, and in the state of Florida in general,” Gibson said.

Gov. Rick Scott also has expressed support for bringing more of the aircraft to the state, saying Florida Air National Guard 125th Fighter Wing at Jacksonville International Airport would make “a great home” for the jets.

The Jacksonville base is on the shortlist for the next squadron location, with the list whittled last week from 18 to five.

The Integrated Training Center at Eglin Air Force Base in Okaloosa County is already home to training programs for the three variants of the F-35 Lightning II.

Also, Lockheed Martin, which produces the F-35, contends the fighter accounts for 14,700 jobs in Florida, with an annual economic impact just over $3 billion.

**New commissary offers more size, variety at Jacksonville Naval Air Station**

Posted December 15, 2016 06:15 pm , By Joe Daraskevich


The wait is almost over for active military, their dependants and retired military who have been pushing shopping carts through the cramped aisles of the commissary at Jacksonville Naval Air Station.

Construction is complete across the parking lot at the new commissary, and employees are working hard to put the finishing touches on the much larger facility.

“It’s great to see some products on the shelves now and some of the new aisles that have been put in, and we’re just real excited and ready for it to open,” said Capt. Sean Haley, commander of the base.

Haley toured the facility Thursday with about 25 other base officials ahead of the commissary’s opening Feb. 2. Shoppers can continue to do business at the old store until the new one opens because the last day of operation is Feb. 1.

There will be 30 days to transfer goods from the old store to the new one before demolition begins and a parking lot with 511 new spaces is built in its place.
“It’s going to be chaos,” store director Larry Bentley said of the limited parking during the transition. The new facility is 64,000 square feet, which is 18,000 square feet larger than the old one. Officials are projecting $6 million in sales each month in the store compared to $5.5 million in the old one.

MacDill AFB

MacDill Air Force Base Info: There’s An App For That

By Sherri Lonon (Patch Staff) - December 9, 2016 12:05 pm ET

TAMPA, FL — Tampa Bay area military families and community members who want to stay on top of news and information out of MacDill Air Force Base will find there’s now an app for that. The 927th Air Refueling Wing released its own mobile app this month.

The “927 ARW” app is available for Apple and Android devices. While it provides a lot of information geared toward service members, those in the general community may also find it useful.

"We designed this app with three distinct audiences in mind," Capt. Joe Simms of the 927th said in a statement. "We're targeting airmen and their families, local and national media outlets, and the civilian community looking for more information on MacDill AFB and the Air Force Reserve."

Airmen and their families will find the app offers information on organizations available to provide health and welfare support. In addition, information about the services provided at MacDill for current and retired military can also be found via the app.

Community members and media will find biographies available on wing leadership, along with news stories, photos and video. A “Learn More” tab also provides information about the Air Force and other branches of the military in addition to base-specific facts.

You Paid For It: Cross-Bay Ferry ridership — boom or bust?

By Mark DouglasPublished: December 12, 2016, 12:26 pm, Updated: December 12, 2016, 6:27 pm
http://wfla.com/2016/12/12/you-paid-for-it-cross-bay-ferry-ridership-boom-or-bust/

TAMPA, Fla. (WFLA) – Two people commuted to Tampa Monday morning on the Cross-Bay Ferry. The return trip was delayed due to fog. Last week, one passenger disembarked during a mid-morning run to St. Petersburg.

That draws a dismal picture for ferry critic Dan Liedtke, a Gulfport City Council member who took it upon himself to video record the lone passenger arriving in St. Pete last week as evidence of lacking ridership.

“I was surprised,” Liedtke said. “I expected to see at least two. I was hoping for 20 to 50. Liedtke believes the investment of $1.4 million by the Pinellas County, St. Petersburg, Hillsborough County and Tampa governments, that You Paid For, is money down the drain.

“I consider it a definite waste of taxpayer money and if you can’t save people time or money what’s the point,” Liedtke said.
But Ed Turanchik, a Tampa attorney who works as a consultant for HMS Ferries, believes that overall ridership numbers during the Cross-Bay Ferry’s first month have been a huge success…..

**Company, with new $3.8M contract, re-ups in Tampa**

BY: BUSINESS OBSERVER, December 13, 2016


TAMPA — Lukos LLC intends to add up to 10 technical and senior level jobs in the coming months in Tampa and expand its headquarters there, officials say.

A trio of other states attempted to lure Lukos’ headquarters away from Florida, according to a statement. But Enterprise Florida, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the City of Tampa, Hillsborough County and the Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corp. all worked together to retain Lukos and help with its expansion.

Lukos, which supports federal government and U.S. military acquisition programs with engineering and health care advice, training and operations support, logistics planning and other services, recently was awarded a $3.8 million, two-year contract to create a new system using a mobile application to help lower preventable battlefield casualties.

The new jobs, each of which are expected to pay a salary of at least $72,000 annually, are expected to help fulfill that contract.

Ultimately, the Medical Content Delivery Service is expected to be a centralized repository for Department of Defense medical data and knowledge that will, in turn, be published online and to individual mobile devices. The service’s software platforms are scheduled to begin operating in early spring 2017.

“Tampa has the access we need to the military and technology communities,” says Garth Arevalo, Lukos’ CEO, noting that company relationships with officials from local MacDill Air Force Base and the growing tech community in Hillsborough County have sparked its growth…..

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**POWERFUL USAF SATCOM PROPELLED TO ORBIT BY DELTA PROVIDES DINNERTIME LAUNCH DELIGHT**

Article Updated: 11 Dec, 2016, by Ken Kremer


CAPE CANAVERAL AIR FORCE STATION, FL – The most powerful US Air Force military communications satellite ever built was propelled to orbit by a ULA Delta IV rocket that provided a dinnertime launch delight Wednesday evening for the crowds of spectators gathered around America’s premier gateway to space.

Check out this expanding gallery of launch photos and videos from several space journalist colleagues and friends and myself- spread throughout the Florida Space Coast region – giving a comprehensive look
as the Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS-8) mission streaked to orbit atop a United Launch Alliance Delta IV rocket from Space Launch Complex 37 (SLC-37) on Cape Canaveral Air Force Station at 6:53 p.m. EST on Dec. 7, 2016.

The United Launch Alliance Delta IV Medium+ rocket successfully streaked to the heavens through nearly crystal clear skies to deliver WGS-8 to a supersynchronous transfer orbit.

Spectators were rewarded with a picture perfect view of the rocket as it ascended quickly and arced over to the African continent.....

**US Southern Command**

**Southcom Commander Stresses Need for Collaboration Against Threat Networks**

By Shannon Collins

DoD News, Defense Media Activity  
http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1025854/southcom-commander-stresses-need-for-collaboration-against-threat-networks

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9, 2016 — Trust, collaboration and innovation are necessary in fighting threat networks and their finances, the commander of U.S. Southern Command said Dec. 7 in opening remarks for the 15th Caribbean Nations Security Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Navy Adm. Kurt W. Tidd addressed some 120 leaders and delegates from 22 nations -- representatives of five nations attended as observers -- who met to examine threats to Caribbean stability and evaluate ideas to improve collaboration in support of regional security.

The two-day event featured discussions about transnational threat networks, informational sharing, regional security strategies, security synchronization, U.S. support to security in the Caribbean, disaster relief and multinational capacity-building exercises.....

**Maritime Synchronization Conference Wraps Up**

Wed, 12/14/2016 - 10:07am, By PO2 Michael Hendricks  
http://mayportmirror.jacksonville.com/military-mayport-mirror/2016-12-14/story/maritime-synchronization-conference-wraps#.WFKj2brLIU

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet (USNAVSO/FOURTHFLT) concluded a five-day Maritime Synchronization Conference (MSC) held at Naval Station Mayport, Dec. 9.

The conference brought together U.S. Navy Attachés and Section Chiefs from the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) area of responsibility, which encompasses the Caribbean, Central and South America. It also included other service surrogates and stakeholders from component, service, theater and national agencies to discuss common naval issues and concerns that developed innovative solutions.

The conference hosted representatives from Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panamá, Perú and Suriname.

“The challenges that we have addressed this week, along with the relationships we have developed, will be instrumental to our future success in this Hemisphere,” said Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet, Rear Adm. Sean Buck.
USNAVSO/FOURTHFLT supports SOUTHCOM’s joint and combined military operations by employing maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations in order to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships in order to enhance regional security and promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central, and South American regions.

**NAS Key West**

**Pilots in training buzz over Boca Chica**

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff, alinhardt@keysnews.com

http://keysnews.com/node/79520

Future Navy and Marine F/A-18 Super Hornet pilots are in Key West buzzing in and out of Boca Chica Field in trainer jets en route to the Florida Straits.

The T-45C Goshawk trainers are smaller than Hornets and are usually painted in red and orange.

The pilots are doing aircraft carrier qualifications by flying from Boca Chica Field to the 1,092-foot USS George Washington that is currently out in the Florida Straits.

The carrier training here is critical for the pilots. If they can’t carrier-qualify in the T-45C, they lose their shot at flying active duty fighter jets like the F/A-18 Super Hornet or the incoming gee-whiz, gadget-laden F-35C from carriers out with the fleet.

“Amazing that Naval Air Station Key West can host these student naval aviators as they train and make their first landings on an aircraft carrier,” said NAS Key West spokeswoman Trice Denny. “It’s going to be a memorable experience for them and they’ll never forget Key West as a result.”

The Goshawks were last in Key West in January. Typically, they are joined by an aircraft carrier out in the Florida Straits. In January, it was the 1,092-foot USS Dwight D. Eisenhower…..

**Defense Industry**

**Trump calls F-35 program 'out of control'**

By Tom McLaughlin, Posted Dec 12, 2016 at 3:56 PM, Updated Dec 12, 2016 at 4:17 PM


President-elect Donald Trump has turned his focus in recent days to the military's F-35 development program as an example of wasteful government spending.

"The F-35 program is out of control," Trump said in a tweet sent out Monday. "Billions of dollars can be saved on military (and other) purchases after Jan. 20."

He had said virtually the same thing the day before to Fox News reporter Chris Matthews.

"Look at the F-35 program, with the money, the 100s of billions of dollars," Trump said Sunday. "It's out of control."

His blast in the direction of Lockheed Martin, the company building the Joint Strike Fighter, follows an earlier slap at the aerospace industry - a threat to cancel Boeing's contract to build a new Air Force One.
An argument can be made for Trump's allegation of out-of-control spending in the F-35 program. A General Accountability Office report states the $379 billion F-35 fighter program exceeds by $111 billion, or nearly 50 percent, the original cost projection, Times.com reported.

But with F-35 pilots training at Northwest Florida's Eglin Air Force Base and hundreds of airplane components being manufactured by local defense contractors, Trump's latest rumblings are hitting close to home.

"I think it's a shot across the bow. But when you live where you and I live, you have to take all of this stuff seriously," said David Goetsch, an Okaloosa County economist and former chairman of the Florida's Defense Support Task Force.

Goetsch said he suspects Trump, through veiled threats, is trying to shake up the aerospace giants and work a better business deal for the government.

But cuts to the F-35 program could mean fewer pilots and mechanics training on the stealth fighter at Eglin. It could also mean fewer opportunities for profit for hundreds of defense contractors based in Northwest Florida.

"It's the old trickle down thing," Goetsch said. "Any reduction in the number of F-35s built is going to have a ripple affect."…..

**Trump attack on Lockheed Martin foreshadows war on defense industry**

Mon Dec 12, 2016 | 10:15pm EST, By Alwyn Scott | REUTERS, SEATTLE

Donald Trump on Monday widened his attack on defense contractors, slamming Lockheed Martin Corp's (LMT.N) F-35 fighter jet program as too expensive as aides to the president-elect said he intends to keep pushing to cut the costs of military hardware.

Trump's latest Twitter broadside sent defense shares tumbling and fanned concerns that the incoming administration will reduce defense contractors' profit margins and cut broader federal spending, threatening U.S. factory jobs even as Trump promises to boost manufacturing employment.

"The F-35 program and cost is out of control," Trump said on Twitter, echoing campaign promises to cut waste in federal spending. "Billions of dollars can and will be saved on military (and other) purchases after January 20th."

Last week, Trump targeted Boeing Co (BA.N) with tweets for "out of control" costs on new Air Force One planes, urging the federal government to "Cancel order!"

The new administration's focus is likely to be "wide-reaching and impact all of government as we look to come up with better deals," Trump transition spokesman Jason Miller said.

"We're going to look for opportunities to go back through and make sure that we're not getting taken advantage of."

Trump's F-35 tweet drew support from U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain, who has voiced support for the fighter jet in the past. While a president cannot cancel a program after funds have been allocated, it can purchase less.

"He can reduce the buy over time, next year, as we look at it again," McCain told Reuters.
But Trump's off-the-cuff remarks bristled others in Congress. Senator Richard Blumenthal, a Democrat from Connecticut, home to F-35 engine maker Pratt & Whitney, said the program supports 2,000 Pratt jobs and thousands more at suppliers.

"The suggestion that costs are out of control is just plain wrong," he said. Trump should "learn more about the facts" before discussing "arbitrary cuts in the program," he added. "He's the president-elect. What he says matters."

Lockheed shares fell 2.5 percent after being down 5.4 percent earlier. Shares of General Dynamics (GD.N), Northrop Grumman, BAE and Raytheon also fell, while United Technologies and Boeing shares were slightly higher.

**DoD Budget**

**Congress approves compromise FY2017 Defense Authorization bill**

Friday, December 9th, 2016


The Senate passed the final FY2017 Defense Authorization bill yesterday with broad bipartisan support, 92-7. The bill, which had been worked out by House and Senate committee negotiators, overwhelmingly passed the House (375-34) last week.

The bill authorizes force levels, programs, and policies (including military pay raises) for Department of Defense (DoD) budgets and the programs and policies for the Department of Energy (DoE) nuclear weapons program. Appropriations bills provide actual funding.

House Armed Services Committee Chair Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX) said the bill “focuses on our troops, America’s most important national defense resource. It provides them a full pay raise for the first time in four years, it stops layoffs of our military personnel and actually increases the end strength of our Armed Forces.”

The compromise bill authorizes a total of $619 billion, including $532 billion for the FY2017 DoD base budget and $19 billion for in discretionary budget authority for the Department of Energy (DoE) nuclear weapons program. The bill authorizes an additional $8 billion in mandatory spending and about $60 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO).

The legislation authorizes funding to support a 2.1 percent military pay raise, higher than the 1.6 percent raise proposed by the president. The bill does not make any changes to out-of-pocket expenses by servicemembers or military retirees and makes no changes to the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH).…..

**Largest Military In The World: Ranking Shows China, US, Russia, India And Saudi Arabia Competing For Most Powerful Army Title**

BY CRISTINA SILVA @CRISTYMSILVA ON 12/12/16 AT 7:07 PM

Military spending across the world grew to $1.57 trillion this year as India, China, Russia and the United States competed for the title of most powerful army. The global ranking released by IHS Markit Monday predicted defense spending would return in 2018 to pre-financial crisis levels, CNBC News reported.

The United States remains the world's biggest military spender, with $622 billion set aside for weapons and personnel in 2016, according to IHS Janes, which releases an annual Jane's Defense Budgets Report every December. That represents about 40 percent of global military expenses, a figure expected to soar under President-elect Donald Trump.

"Since 9/11, over $9.35 trillion has been allocated to the U.S. defense budget, with the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) accounting for $1.62 trillion or 17.3 percent of the total U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) budget," said Guy Eastman, senior analyst at IHS Jane's. "U.S. DoD investment levels going forward were to decrease by 1.1 percent in real terms, but with the election of Donald Trump, the expectation is that both investment and readiness will receive injections of much needed funds."

China, meanwhile, home to the world's largest military, continued to claim the second spot on the list. Beijing could double its defense budget by 2020 from from $123 billion in 2010, the report found. The United Kingdom was in third place with $53 billion in spending.


By: Joe Gould, December 13, 2016


**Other Of Interest**

**News Flash: SpaceX No Longer "Profitable and Cash-Flow Positive"

Rich Smith, Dec 11, 2016 at 10:13AM


On Sept. 1, a SpaceX rocket blew up on its launch pad while undergoing routine testing at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida. SpaceX hasn't launched one single rocket since the disaster, and now says it won't *resume* launching before January 2017 at the earliest.

If you think this sounds like bad news for SpaceX's business, you're right. In fact, it's probably even worse news than you know.
Secretive SpaceX

As a privately held company, SpaceX is not required to file financial disclosures of its revenue, its profits, or its losses with the SEC. Just because it isn't required to tell people how it's doing financially, however, doesn't mean that SpaceX won't voluntarily toot its own horn from time to time.

For example, back when things were going well for SpaceX -- say, circa June 2016 -- the company regularly tweeted out a string of announcements of successful rocket launches, rocket landings, and product improvements to its space fleet.

At the same time, front and center on its website, SpaceX boasted of how well its business was doing. SpaceX had "70 launches on its manifest," and was launching much more often than its rivals at United Launch Alliance (the Boeing (NYSE:BA) - Lockheed Martin (NYSE:LMT) joint venture) or Airbus (NASDAQOTH:EADSY) subsidiary Arianespace. SpaceX was moving steadily toward fulfilling "over $10 billion in contracts" over the next few years, and booking more of them all the time. Best of all, just like Ariane and ULA, SpaceX was "profitable and cash-flow positive."....

Senate OKs $2 billion for Glades, $74 million for Kennedy Space Center

Ledyard King, USA TODAY, 9:42 a.m. EST December 10, 2016

WASHINGTON – The Senate early Saturday morning authorized almost $2 billion for Everglades restoration and approve $74 million to fix Kennedy Space Center structures damaged by Hurricane Matthew.

The senators convened for the final time before leaving Capitol Hill for their holiday break.
Both allocations are in measures the House passed Thursday:

- a water bill to fund dozens of dredging, water-quality and environmental projects nationwide;
- a temporary spending bill to keep the lights on at federal agencies.

Both have been tied up in the Senate over unrelated disputes lawmakers were able to resolve before the midnight Friday deadline to avoid a government shutdown.

The water bill would authorize $1.95 billion for the Central Everglades Planning Project, as well as money for several other Florida projects, including $113 million for the Picayune Strand Restoration Project in Collier County and $323 million to dredge Port Everglades in Broward County.

The state is partnering with Washington on an ambitious effort to restore the Everglades and send Lake Okeechobee discharges toward Florida Bay, where it flowed before decades of development redirected the water east and west.

The bill would authorize federal aid for half the money. The other half would come from state and local sources.

The push for Everglades funding took on a new sense of urgency this year, after national attention on toxic algae blooms in the St. Lucie Rver and Indian River Lagoon on Florida’s east coast. Presidential candidates weighed in on the problem and members of Congress joined activists in delivering bottles of the contaminated water to Capitol Hill.....
Edward O'Sheehan selected as Florida Army National Guard's top military attorney

Russell Boniface Dec. 8, 2016, 7:45pm

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida – Shutts & Bowen attorney Edward O'Sheehan has been selected as the Florida Army National Guard's top military attorney.

O'Sheehan is a partner in the firm's Fort Lauderdale office. He will serve as the National Guard's staff judge advocate and legal adviser to Florida's adjutant general, Maj. General Michael Calhoun.

Under state law, the Army National Guard provides protection of life and property and preserves peace, order and public safety. When Army National Guard units are not mobilized or under federal control, they report to the governor through the state adjutant general.

A veteran of the Marine Corps, O'Sheehan is a lieutenant colonel who has served the Florida Army National Guard since 1993.

O'Sheehan recently served the Florida Army National Guard in St. Augustine as a judge advocate general (JAG) officer as the senior defense counsel with the 1565th trial defense team, offering free legal services to soldiers facing criminal or adverse administrative actions…..

China and India set to drive a 10-year global arms race

David Reid | @cnbcdavy, 12/12/2016

Emerging global powers China and India are set to drive stronger defense spending over the next decade, according to a new report released by IHS Markit.

Global military spending rose in 2016 to $1.57 trillion and annual budgets should return to pre-financial crisis levels by 2018.

There is now a risk of an arms race as Asia Pacific nations increase their military spending as they move their focus from territorial defense to power projection, analysts believe.

"This is new for the region and is likely to increase military-to-military contact between states," Craig Caffrey, principal analyst at IHS Jane's, said in a release Monday.

"Rising defense spending could therefore be indirectly responsible for increased tension within the region which in turn could spur faster budget growth," he said.

IHS said China's defense budget is on track to almost double within 10 years, from $123 billion in 2010 to $233 billion by 2020.

At that 2020 level, China's defense budget would be about four times bigger than the UK’s and more than the combined spending of Western Europe.

For its part India spent more than $50 billion on its military might in 2016, pushing Russia out of the top five biggest spenders.
The South Asian country is in the grip of a modernization drive and is tipped to leap past the U.K. into third spot by 2018, should sterling remain at relatively weak levels…..

Panhandle will lack clout in capitol

Will Isern, wisern@pnj.com, 4:03 p.m. CST December 10, 2016

The legislative delegation from Northwest Florida is preparing to enter one of the most important sessions in years with less political clout than it has wielded in decades, but lawmakers say they’re confident they can work together to ensure the Panhandle maintains a strong voice in Tallahassee.

From former Senate President Don Gaetz to the controversial Sen. W.D. Childers, Northwest Florida has long held a grasp on positions of power within the Legislature. But with two new representatives in the House and two new senators, the Panhandle will not have a presiding officer in either chamber this session, nor anyone in line for a senior position in the near future.

“I call it the post-Gaetz era,” said former politician and political power broker Jim Reeves. “It’s a scary time.”

Where there may be opportunity for optimism, politicos say, is in the quality of candidates like newly elected Reps. Frank White (R - Pensacola) and Jayer Williamson (R – Pace).

“I’d love to have president of the Senate and speaker of the House from Northwest Florida, but that’s not happening,” said influential Republican donor Lewis Bear, Jr. “We just have to give our new legislators an opportunity to grow, and I think they will. We've elected some good people to go over there and represent us.”

Most crucially, the upcoming state budget is projected to be among the tightest in years, at the same time as some $300 million in funds resulting from the BP oil spill and promised to Northwest Florida are set to be allocated. That worries U.S. Rep Matt Gaetz (R – Ft. Walton Beach), who most recently served as chairman of the Florida House Finance and Tax Committee before he was elected to Congress.

“It’s literally the first time in a generation that Northwest Florida has not had a presiding officer within its legislative stable,” Gaetz said. “And it couldn’t be happening at a worse time, because we are scratching and clawing for $300 million that is slated for our community according to the law.”

Military Spouses Struggle To Stay In Careers, Despite State Laws

By Jen Fifield, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 12/13/2016 09:51 am ET | Updated 23 hours ago
HTTP://WWW.HUFFINGTONPOST.COM/ENTRY/MILITARY-SPUSES-STRUGGLE-TO-STAY-IN-CAREERS-DESpite-US_58500A5CE4B0016E50430747

Patti Ruby is a rarity among military spouses. She has been able to stay in her chosen career, speech pathology, for nearly 13 years, through the birth of her three children and a cross-country move, from Virginia to California. Last week, the family moved again, to Florida.

Ruby said she thought a new Florida law that provides temporary occupational licenses to military spouses would make it easy for her to get back to work. But she realized last month that she may not be eligible. Soon, she may be among the 23 percent of military spouses who are unemployed.
Florida and all other states passed laws in the last five years meant to help military spouses like Ruby who already have occupational licenses to quickly get back on the job after crossing state lines. But it’s unclear if these laws have made a difference. States were selective about which privileges to provide: Some of the laws allow the state to recognize out-of-state licenses for military spouses, others allow the state to expedite the licensing process, and others allow the state to issue temporary licenses.

Military spouses report having problems. About one-third work in licensed or certified professions, and about 63 percent of them said they encountered difficulties this year with licensing because of a move, according to survey results released Thursday from Blue Star Families, a national nonprofit aimed at helping military families. That’s down 7 percentage points from 2014, when the organization first asked the question…..
December 22

Task Force members,

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US AT EFI!

1. Next Meeting – The next Task Force meeting will be in person on Thursday, 19 January 2017, beginning at 9:00AM in Building 77 at Avon Park Air Force Range, FL. We will be staying at the Inn on the Lakes, Sebring, FL 33870. You should have received the Attendee Registration form from Michelle; please remember to RSVP NLT 31 December 2016.

2. Call In Numbers –
   Call In Number: 800-501-8979    Access Code: 8784566

3. 2017 Sentinel Landscapes Application Window Opens – “The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is seeking applications for Sentinel Landscape designations in 2017. For more information on the application process and to download the 2017 Application, please visit the Apply Now page. Applications must be received by 8:00PM EDT on March 30, 2017.” Go to http://sentinellandscapes.org/ for more info and to submit an application.

4. Advocating for Homestead Air Reserve Base – According to Newsletter from Senator Nelson’s office (attached), “On December 9, Senator Nelson wrote to Secretary of the Air Force, Deborah James, in support of the Air Force selecting the 482nd Fighter Wing at Homestead Air Reserve Base for transition to the F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter. Senator Nelson praised the Homestead Air Reserve Base’s access to land and maritime training ranges that can support the full spectrum of F-35 training operations, as well as Florida’s excellent weather—preventing lost training days to inclement conditions—as reasons to select the 482nd for transition. Currently, the 482nd is one of four finalists in the running for selection. A final decision is scheduled for December 2016.” The letter to Secretary James is included in the attached newsletter.

5. DoD Business Reform – In a new report (attached), Robert Hale (former Comptroller and Chief Financial Officer at the Department of Defense), recommends that “During the next administration, DoD needs to continue to implement business reforms that save money and improve effectiveness” including consideration of another BRAC round. On BRAC, Mr Hale states that “Persuading a reluctant Congress to permit another round of base closures will require the personal involvement of the new secretary of defense and his or her senior staff. The president may have to help personally with Congress. DoD may also need to consider changes in new BRAC legislation, perhaps including a cap on upfront costs, in order to gain congressional approval.”

6. Florida Legislative Committees Meet in January – The Florida Legislature gets to work quickly in 2017. The Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee will meet on 10 January 2017 from 10:00AM-12:00PM. The House Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee will meet for the first time on 11 January 2017 from 9:00AM-11:00AM.
7. **Holiday Schedule** – EFI offices will be closed 23 & 26 December 2016 as well as 2 January 2017. This will be the final Task Force update for 2016 – see you next year!

8. **Attachments:**
   - Long and detailed letter from SecDef to OMB – Sec Ash Carter not thrilled with NDAA-17
   - Bi-weekly TPG Conference Call Memo
   - Senator Nelson Newsletter (From the desk of Shahra Anderson)
   - Business Reform in DoD – Robert Hale paper to the new Administration (CNAS Report)

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**NSA Panama City**

**Commission decides fate of land by Navy base**

By John Henderson | 522-5108 | @PCNHjohn | jhenderson@penh.com, December 20, 2016  

PANAMA CITY - Bay County commissioners are slated to decide Tuesday whether to force developers to buy back property from the county next to the Navy base at no loss to taxpayers or enter into a deal in which taxpayers could lose $855,000.

The commission at its 9 a.m. meeting at the Bay County Government Center, 840 W. 11th St., is scheduled to vote on tossing out a "buy provision" that would force the developers of Barefoot Palms property to pay the county back the $2.9 million it paid in May 2010 for 8.44 acres adjacent to Naval Support Activity Panama City.

County officials said at the time they bought the property so it wouldn't be developed for a townhouse community, which had already been started, and that having the land as buffer zone for the Navy base could help keep it off a closure list. Commissioners also said at the time the idea was the county would hold the property until the Navy could buy it, but that never happened.
What did happen is the state in recent years has offered significantly less for the property than what the county paid for it, and on Tuesday commissioners will be asked to vote on one of two options. One calls for entering into an agreement with the state in which it buys the property for $1.6 million, its latest appraised value of the land, and the county also would accept a donation of a small piece of Gulf-front property on Surf Drive from the Navy valued at $445,000.

The numbers show the county could be losing about $885,000 if it picks the latter option - a figure which does not include interest the county could have made if it deposited into a bank account the $2.9 million investment made on the land in 2010.

But Bay Defense Alliance President Tom Neubauer does not see it this way. He said he does not believe the county would be losing money if it accepts the state's offer to buy the Barefoot Palms property and the Navy's offer of the Gulf-front property.

As the result of having several military bases in the county, Neubauer said, the county has received millions of dollars in defense infrastructure grants in recent years that were spent on projects outside of the bases for the benefit of the county residents - everything from sidewalks to transportation improvements to intelligent traffic movement systems.

And, Neubauer said, the buffer zone to the base created by the Barefoot Palms property has helped keep the Navy base off a Base Realignment and Closure list….

State to buy Barefoot Palms for $1.6M

PANAMA CITY BEACH - A townhouse community won't be encroaching upon the perimeter of Naval Support Activity Panama City, but the buffer zone has ended up costing taxpayers $855,000 under an agreement approved Tuesday by the Bay County Commission.

The commission, in a unanimous vote but with commissioner Tommy Hamm expressing reservations, agreed to accept the state's $1.6 million to buy the property, which is $1.3 million less than what the county paid for the land in 2010.

"We have kicked this can down the road long enough," commissioner Guy Tunnell said.

The Navy also has agreed to give the county a 50-foot-wide piece of land on Surf Drive valued at $445,000 in county property tax records. The land is next to other county property, and the site could be used for beach access and parking, county officials said.

Christopher Moore, the former commander of the Navy base, said when recent comparable sales are evaluated, the actual value of the Gulf-front property the Navy is donating to the county is more in the $800,000 range, so the county would be made whole by this deal.

In approving the deal Tuesday, the commission agreed to toss out a "buy provision" that would force the developers of the Barefoot Palms property to pay the county back the full $2.9 million it paid for the property, plus expenses. The county bought the 8.44 acres adjacent to Naval Support Activity Panama City in May 2010…..

Tyndall AFB
Active duty, Guard, Reserve integrate during Checkered Flag 17-1

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) -- At Checkered Flag 17-1, legacy and fifth-generation fighter jet integration created aggressive and advanced training opportunities; but another integration happened just below the surface, which ensured multiple Air Force components received the same vital learning opportunities.

Active-duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard Airmen from around the country worked together through total force integration at Checkered Flag from Dec. 5-16. They prepared to rapidly respond to any current, real-world conflict, and trained for the future of air dominance.

“The Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard components bring the same capabilities to Checkered Flag that they do to the entire Air Force each and every day,” said Col. Randy Cason, the 44th Fighter Group commander and Checkered Flag 17-1 Air Expeditionary Wing commander. “They bring experience, continuity, and a high degree of technical and tactical expertise.”

During the exercise, numerous pilots and Tyndall’s maintenance team – which about 25 percent are reservists -- brought their knowledge, experience and proficiency to the fight.

“A lot of times these Airmen don’t even know whether someone working around them is a reservist or active duty. We are all just in the fight together,” said Capt. Matthew Goldey, the 44th Fighter Group maintenance operations officer and Checkered Flag 17-1 Air Expeditionary Maintenance Group commander. “We are all one team.”

Cape Canaveral AFS

45th SW supports successful Atlas V EchoStar XIX launch

The U.S. Air Force’s 45th Space Wing supported United Launch Alliance’s successful launch of the EchoStar XIX spacecraft aboard an Atlas V rocket from Launch Complex 41 here Dec. 18 at 2:13 p.m. ET.

EchoStar XIX was designed and built by Space Systems Loral, and will be the world’s highest capacity broadband satellite in orbit, dramatically increasing capacity for high-speed satellite internet service to homes and businesses in North America.

The launch is the 23rd major launch operation on the Eastern Range this year. Before any spacecraft can launch from CCAFS, a combined team of military, government civilians and contractors from across the 45th Space Wing provide the mission assurance to ensure a safe and successful lift-off for range customers.
“Congratulations to ULA and the entire integrated team who ensured the success of our last launch capping off what has been a very busy year,” said Col. Walt Jackim, 45th Space Wing vice commander and mission Launch Decision Authority. “This mission once again clearly demonstrates the successful collaboration we have with our mission partners as we continue to shape the future of America's space operations and showcase why the 45th Space Wing is the 'World's Premiere Gateway to Space.'”

Port CEO: Pursue cargo rail through Air Force station

Port Canaveral Chief Executive Officer John Murray is recommending that the port ask the federal Surface Transportation Board to restart its review of a proposal to run a cargo rail line to the mainland.

Murray wants the focus to be on a potential route from the port's cargo area through Cape Canaveral Air Force Station as the "preferred route."

The Surface Transportation Board has jurisdiction over the construction of rail routes.

Port commissioners will consider the proposal to restart the process, after hearing a report on the issue, at their meeting that begins at 9 a.m. Tuesday at the Canaveral Port Authority Maritime Center Commission Chambers, 445 Challenger Road, Port Canaveral.

Establishing a new cargo rail line to to port has been a controversial issue in the community for several years. Of particular concern was a proposal to build new rail tracks over the Banana River and through the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge — a plan which had been opposed by a coalition that included environmental advocates, fishing and ecotour operators, and Merritt Island residents. Another route that generated controversy was one that would go from the port to the mainland on a route that parallels State Road 528.

In October 2015, the Port Authority authorized port staff to request that the Surface Transportation Board pause its ongoing environmental review process while staff studied a potential route through Cape Canaveral Air Force Station to connect with existing rail line on Kennedy Space Center property, and then to the main line of the Florida East Coast Railway.

Two months later, port commissioners approved contracting with TranSystems Corp. to conduct a rail feasibility study of a proposed route through the Air Force station — a study that recently was completed.

A memo to port commissioners, prepared by port attorney Harold Bistline in advance of Tuesday's meeting, said port staff determined that a rail alignment through the Air Force station "is feasible and preferable to the other potential routes proposed, from both an economic and environmental basis."

Patrick AFB

Air Force Taps Battelle for Environmental Modeling & Simulation Support III Contract

Posted By: Jane Edwardson: December 16, 2016In: News, Products & Service

Battelle has received a potential five-year, $9.5 million contract for research and development, operation and maintenance support to the U.S. Air Force.

The service branch awarded the indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract through the Environmental Modeling and Simulation Support III program, according to a FedBizOpps notice published Wednesday.

The cost-plus-fixed-fee contract has a five-year ordering period and calls for the contractor to provide personnel to support the daily operations of the Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick Air Force Base in Florida as part of the Nuclear Treaty Monitoring Mission.

The contract also covers technical services such as chemical computer-aided design modeling system security, maintenance and use of government off-the-shelf and commercial off-the-shelf software, quality system standards and literature search capabilities.

Homestead AFB

VA Clinic Moving In A Different Direction

Posted: Friday, December 16, 2016 10:44 am, Bob Jensen | 0 comments

It is clear that the much needed expanded Veterans Administration Clinic will not be located at Homestead Air Reserve Base in the old Commissary/BX Mart building. The VA has been told that the Air Force will not make a decision on the reuse of the building for a year. The need for the clinic increases by nearly 10% every year. The VA funding is subject to time limitations.

The VA needs about 31,500 square feet of space for the clinic. A Request For Proposals (RFP) will be forthcoming in about the next thirty days soliciting proposals for lease of that amount of space within a five or ten mile radius of the existing facility on Krome Avenue and 10th Street. Homestead area veterans advocates are hoping for the five mile radius for the convenience of our veterans. Location, ease of access, parking and availability of public transportation will be important.

U.S. Representatives Ileana Ros Lehtinen and Representative Carlos Curbelo’s staff led a meeting of their Washington and local staffs with Miami VA officials, Florida State Representative Holly Raschein’s staff, local military advocates and 482nd Fighter Wing Commander Colonel David Garfield, USAF and his staff. Colonel Garfield hosted the Monday, December 12th meeting at Homestead Air Reserve Base…..

US Southern Command

The Importance of Diplomacy in United States Southern Command

by Christopher Cedros, Journal Article | December 18, 2016 - 10:23am
http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-importance-of-diplomacy-in-united-states-southern-command

Winston Churchill once famously stated that “Diplomacy is the art of telling people to go to hell in such a way that they ask for directions.” Although the former Prime Minister was incredibly satirical in this statement, diplomacy remains one of the most effective tools for militaries and governments to get other
nation-states to coordinate in both parties’ perceived best interests. Specifically, diplomacy is one instrument utilized by the U.S. Combatant Command (COCOM) United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) that deals specifically with the nation-states in the region of South and Central America. With the sequestration creating economic constraints on the COCOM, diplomacy is the most effective mechanism of coordination between the U.S. and the states in South and Central America. SOUTHCOM’s diplomatic actions are effective because the organization can operate at both ends of the spectrum within the realm of coercive diplomacy.

This paper is divided into three different sections. First, it defines and explains coercive diplomacy. Second, it delves into the current environment of the SOUTHCOM Theater, with an emphasis on countering transnational organized crime (CTOC) and its effect in the nation-states of Venezuela and Colombia. Lastly, the paper explains why diplomacy, on opposite ends of the diplomatic spectrum, is the most effective tool for tackling CTOC in both states. In the case of Venezuela, SOUTHCOM is able to exercise soft power by affecting the country’s assets and thus avoiding direct conflict with a socialist regime. In the case of Colombia, SOUTHCOM is able to facilitate the country’s acquisition of resources and military training, thereby ensuring another ally on the South American continent…..

**Dyess Bombers aide in SOUTHCOM drug interdiction**

12.20.2016, Story by Senior Airman Shannon Hall, 7th Bomb Wing  

The B-1B Lancer is well known for its capability of delivering massive weapon payloads to America’s adversaries, anywhere in the world, at any time, but this is not its only capability or mission.

The B-1, commonly referred to as the “Bone,” is exceptionally versatile and has a synthetic aperture radar that is capable of tracking, targeting and engaging moving vehicles as well as self-targeting and terrain-following modules. It was these reasons, and more, which made the “Bone” the perfect aircraft to assist Joint Interagency Task Force South’s mission to detect and monitor illicit drug trafficking in the air and maritime domains in Latin America.

“Dyess has participated in this operation multiple times in the past 14 months,” said Delta, 9th Bomb Squadron pilot. “The B-1 mission is to aide JIATF South, which is a U.S. Southern Command task force, to help counter illicit drug trafficking in the East Pacific and West Caribbean Ocean.”

In total, the 9th BS has dedicated more than 350 flight hours to this operation. Within those hours they have assisted in confiscating more than 5800 kilos of drugs, specifically cocaine, which totals out to more than $175 million. They have searched more than 3.2 million square miles of ocean and detained 27 people and 8 vessels.

“Some people might be able to understand why people do what they do over there, but that’s why we do what we do here,” said Clutch, 9th Bomb Squadron weapons officer. “We understand the impact drugs can have on a country and there’s a reason we are here to fly the B-1 and use it in a multitude of ways. This is just one of the ways we operate, and we do it well.”

For this particular mission, the B-1 crews use a Non-Traditional Surveillance and Reconnaissance platform that consists of utilizing sensors on the aircraft to locate and track suspected criminal vessels. The JIATF South’s Joint Operations Center at Naval Air Station Key West, Fla. assists with the illuminations of suspected vessels, and coordinates with B-1 operators and crew members for direct eye in the sky…..
NAS Key West

51 Cuban migrants make landfall in the Keys

DECEMBER 19, 2016 9:22 AM, BY LARRY KAHN, lkahn@keynoter.com

Fifty-one Cuban migrants landed in the Florida Keys Sunday, authorities say.
At 5:30 a.m. at mile marker 92.5 mile oceanside in Tavernier, 11 migrants (eight men, one woman and two girls) came ashore.
Twenty-two arrived at Naval Air Station Key West’s Boca Chica Field about 7 a.m. There were 20 men and two women. One man was taken to Lower Keys Medical Center for medical treatment.
Then at 7:40 a.m., 18 migrants landed Long Beach Road on Big Pine Key.
All the migrants will likely be able to stay under wet-foot, dry-foot, which allows Cuban migrants who make landfall in the U.S. to stay and apply for residency in a year. Those that are caught at sea are repatriated.

Defense Industry

Navy Wants to Grow Fleet to 355 Ships; 47 Hull Increase Adds Destroyers, Attacks Subs

By: Sam LaGrone and Megan Eckstein, December 16, 2016 8:41 AM
https://news.usni.org/2016/12/16/navy-wants-grow-fleet-355-ships-47-hull-increase-previous-goal

The Navy released a new fleet plan that calls for 355 ships, outlining a massive increase in the size of its high-end large surface combatant and attack submarine fleets but a modest increase in its planned amphibious ship fleet, according to a Dec. 14 summary of the assessment.
The findings of the latest Force Structure Assessment adds 47 ships to the Navy’s battle force over the 308-ship figure from a 2014 FSA.
According to the summary, the service determined the 355 total was the “minimum force structure to comply with [Pentagon] strategic guidance” and was not “the “desired” force size the Navy would pursue if resources were not a constraint, read the summary.
“Rather, this is the level that balances an acceptable level of warfighting risk to our equipment and personnel against available resources and achieves a force size that can reasonably achieve success,” according to the summary, which notes it would take a 653-ship force to meet all global requirements with minimal risk.
The largest change to the 2014 totals are in the high-end ships classes of attack submarines, large surface combatants – like guided-missile cruisers and destroyers – and aircraft carriers. The new total adds 16 large surface combatants, 18 attack submarines and an additional carrier over the 2014 plan…..

Trump Vows to Cut Costs of New Military Jets

Ken Schwartz, December 21, 2016 11:17 PM
WASHINGTON — President-elect Donald Trump met the heads of two major airplane builders, vowing to bring down the costs of multibillion-dollar government defense contracts.

The chief executive officers of Boeing and Lockheed Martin, along with several generals and admirals, met with Trump Wednesday at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida.

Trump had said last week that the cost of Lockheed's F-35 stealth fighter jets — one of the most technologically advanced aircraft ever built — is "out of control"— $379 billion for about 2,500 planes.

Talking costs with CEOs

He also threatened to cancel a Boeing order for replacing the presidential jet Air Force One, also complaining that it is too expensive — $4 billion for one plane.

Trump said the purpose of Wednesday's meetings were simply “trying to get the costs down.”

He called his talks with Lockheed CEO Marillyn Hewson “a little bit of a dance” and said he was “very impressed” with his conversation with Boeing's Dennis Muilenburg.

Although no conclusions were apparently reached Wednesday, all sides agreed that a deal must be struck — Trump does not want to spend so much money and the two companies do not want to lose those lucrative government contracts….

Industry makes appeal to DoD on research rule

By Scott Maucione | @smaucioneWFED, December 21, 2016 4:02 pm
http://federalnewsradio.com/defense/2016/12/industry-makes-appeal-dod-research-rule/

A handful of defense organizations are crying foul on a proposed regulation that may eat into funding the Defense Department gives to industry.

The Council of Defense and Space Industry Associations (CODSIA) is asking the Pentagon to suspend a rule that would take a harder look at independent research and development (IRAD) expenses when they are used to reduce the price of a contract.

A letter signed by leaders of the Professional Services Council, the National Defense Industrial Association and other groups, states the regulation is too serious for the amount of consideration it’s been given.

“Based on our review of the proposed rule, CODSIA believes that the industry comments … were not adequately considered, that the proposed rule is being unfairly rushed towards final implementation, and that the proposed rule does not comply with the due process requirements of the rulemaking process. The proposed rule represents a gigantic shift in IR&D policy and a break from procurement and oversight processes in place for many years,” the letter stated.

CODSIA asks DoD that the comment period for the rule be extended to Jan. 31, 2017.

IRAD funds are given to companies to incentivize them to invent new products for DoD.

The Pentagon funds defense companies for the research and development they do since some of the products those companies create only have one consumer: the government. At times those products never translate into products that can be put on the market for private consumption…..
Washington D.C. is all about politics, policy and procedure. The Department of Defense receives plenty of political and policy attention, but few care to look at the procedures. It’s not sexy. It doesn’t raise campaign funds. But that is precisely what needs fixing. The incoming Trump administration needs to begin shifting the defense budget away from baseline budgeting to a zero-based budgeting model.

Defense advisors recently voiced plans to rebuild the military with reallocated funds earned by cutting bureaucracy and wasteful spending within the DoD. But American Enterprise Institute defense analyst Mackenzie Eaglen rightly calls this plan a fantasy. There is simply not enough fraud, waste and abuse to yield the $55 to $60 billion per year in new money needed for Trump’s ambitious reinvestment plans, she argues. This historically inadequate snark-hunt approach to the budget process too often defines how elected officials try to balance a budget.

Zero-based budgeting is an alternative system proven to decrease expenditures and improve efficiency within private sector companies and public institutions. This budget method identifies wasteful spending and helps purge unnecessary expenses by obligating each department to justify its proposed spending each and every year. This method automatically eliminates the practice of carrying over the budget from the previous year. And that’s important since the current baseline budgeting system requires the government to set the previous year’s spending as the starting point for the next year’s budget.

Under the current system, preparers assume all of the same programs and operating procedures, and only adjust the following year’s expenditures to account for actual spending in the current year, inflation and population growth. Since inflation and population growth are almost always positive, the budget almost always rises…

Other Of Interest

Trump picks billionaire NHL owner to lead Army

BY REBECCA KHEEL - 12/19/16 09:48 AM EST 367

President-elect Donald Trump will nominate former infantry officer, billionaire businessman and National Hockey League team owner Vincent Viola as secretary of the Army, his transition team announced Monday.

Viola, who is reportedly worth $1.8 billion, is the founder of electronic trading firm Virtu Financial and was previously the chairman of the New York Mercantile Exchange from 2001 to 2004.

Viola, a Brooklyn native whose father was a truck driver, graduated from West Point in 1977 and went on to be an infantry officer in the Army’s 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell. After completing active duty, he remained in the Army Reserves.
In 1983, he graduated with a law degree from New York Law School. In 2003, Viola founded and helped fund the creation of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point.

“I am proud to have such an incredibly accomplished and selfless individual as Vincent Viola as our Secretary of the Army,” Trump said in a statement. “Whether it is his distinguished military service or highly impressive track record in the world of business, Vinnie has proved throughout his life that he knows how to be a leader and deliver major results in the face of any challenge.”

**No hotel for young Army private? State law makes a way**

LAURA RUANE, LRUANE@NEWS-PRESS.COM 5:42 p.m. EST December 20, 2016

He craved some private time and space while on leave, visiting family in Southwest Florida over the holidays.

But after booking lodgings online, 20-year-old Army Pvt. 2nd Class Mason Ritums got startling news with his reservation confirmation: The hotel does not rent rooms to people under 21.

No exceptions.

Ritums' stepmother, Evonn Peterson of Cape Coral, said she got the same answer when calling Crestwood Suites in south Fort Myers and its owner-operator, InTown Suites of Atlanta.

“I am so outraged,” Peterson said. “If our children can fight for this country then they should be able to get a hotel room.”

It turns out that state law happens to agree.

Florida Statute 509.095 waives any minimum age policy for people presenting valid military ID cards and who are on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, National Guard, Reserve Forces or Coast Guard.

**Bill: Businesses hiring vets would get tax breaks**

DREW WILSON, 20 December 2016

Republican state Sen. Rene Garcia and freshman Democratic state Rep. Daisy Baez have filed a bill that would give small businesses a tax credit for hiring veterans.

The legislation (SB 152) would establish the Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program, which would give a one-time $3,000 tax credit to businesses for each veteran hired, and a $5,000 credit for each disabled veteran hired.

The House version of the bill had not been filed as of Tuesday afternoon.

“This legislation would serve as a win for both Florida’s small businesses and its veterans,” Garcia said. “If we are going to call ourselves the most veteran-friendly state in the nation, we must give our armed servicemen and women every opportunity to succeed in their post-service life and in their careers.”

Baez, an Army veteran, said service members “give everything to serve this nation and deserve our support and commitment,” adding that the bill would also help small businesses and the state’s economy.
The bill caps the total amount of tax credits a business can receive from the program at $25,000 a year and doesn’t hand out the tax credit until the veteran has been working in the job for at least a year.

Additionally, the program requires the new hire’s pay to be at least 80 percent of the median income for Florida veterans.

Florida has the third-highest veteran population of any state behind California and Texas, with about 1.6 million veterans. More than a sixth of Florida veterans have a service connected disability.