January 6, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** – The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Task Force will be on Thursday, January 16, 2014 at the Doubletree Inn, 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee, FL beginning at 9:00 AM EST. Please confirm your attendance with me or Donna if you have not already done so.

2. **Task Force 2013 Annual Report** – Staff is preparing the annual report which is due on 1 February, and will distribute it for review by members prior to the January 16th meeting.

3. **Attachments:**

   - Notes from TPG Call
   - Letter to the Secretary of Defense from Congress
   - FAA announcement on UAV test sites

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget Cuts –
Lawmakers Order Long-Term Cost-Cutting Plan for DoD Headquarters Staff

By SEAN REILLY

Congress is pressing the Defense Department to adopt a more ambitious strategy for trimming headquarters bloat. Under the newly signed 2014 National Defense Authorization Act, the Pentagon has six months to come up with a plan for streamlining the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and a host of other leadership offices from 2015 through 2024. The plan is supposed to spell out the expected savings during that 10-year period, starting with its fiscal 2016 budget request. DoD must then provide annual rundowns of the spending reductions resulting from cuts to the ranks of military personnel, civilian employees and contractors, as well as other management changes………. 

Younger military veterans are angered by budget cuts to their pension benefits

By Lori Montgomery

After 25 years of service, including combat tours in Afghanistan and Iraq, Lt. Col. Stephen Preston retired from the Army and began collecting a pension of nearly $55,000 a year. The money made it possible for Preston to go back to college, get his MBA and embark on a second career in corporate strategy. So it happened that Preston was sitting in his new office shortly before Christmas when he heard on the radio that he had become the latest target in Washington’s war on spending. ……. 

Sequestration continues, but cuts not as deep
Year two of sequestration begins today, but Congress’ end-of-year budget deal lessened the effects of the cuts to the Defense Department. Military officials’ pleas to Congress to ease sequestration had some impact. Sequestration — the across-the-board cuts of the Budget Control Act of 2011 — were passed last year as a means to reduce the federal government’s deficit by $1.2 trillion over a decade. In 2014, sequestration cuts on the department were reduced to about $30 billion instead of last year’s hard-hitting $46 billion.

Defense Appropriations the Next Hurdle

Having pushed through Fiscal 2014 defense authorization legislation and a broader two-year budget deal prior to the Christmas break, congressional lawmakers now face the challenge of coming up with spending legislation to fund the Pentagon for the remainder of the fiscal year. H.R. 2775, the continuing resolution that currently appropriates funds for the federal government, expires on Jan. 15. House and Senate appropriators worked through the holidays to draft a $1 trillion-plus omnibus spending bill that would include the dollars for defense, reported Politico on Dec. 31. One issue for the lawmakers to harmonize in the spending bill is the Pentagon funding level.

Security Insiders: It’s Time to Reduce Military Health and Pension Benefits
The time has come: Military health and pension benefits, which have more than doubled in the past decade, should be reduced as the defense budget comes down, said a whopping 90 percent majority of National Journal's National Security Insiders. Pentagon leaders have been calling for changes to curb the skyrocketing compensation costs, which threaten to usurp other key priorities in the defense budget during austere times—even training for combat operations and weapons procurement. But reform efforts have been complicated in part because military-personnel issues are a political landmine on Capitol Hill. In the budget deal clinched by Sen. Patty Murray and Rep. Paul Ryan, however, members did take a step to cut benefits to military retirees, albeit slightly, decreasing the annual cost-of-living adjustment for working-age military retirees by 1 percent, which would cut roughly $6 billion in spending over the next decade……..

Triggering Another Sequester

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © January 3, 2014

Although the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2014 is now law, Congress must still act soon to reconcile its authorizations with its appropriations or risk once again getting slammed by sequestration's deep cuts, a leading budget expert notes. BBA advocates claim the nasty effects from the sequester will at least be stayed for the next two years, but Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments' expert Todd Harrison says it's a bit more complicated than that. The BBA merely raises sequester budget caps for Fiscal 2014 and Fiscal 2015, with the Pentagon’s piece rising from $475 billion to $497 billion........

How Sequestration Weakened the Defense Lobby


Defense One © January 3, 2014

By Sara Sorcher
The defense lobby was once both behemoth and bogeyman. It was the muscle behind the military-industrial complex, the puppeteer liberals blamed for moving money from food stamps to fighter jets. Above all, it was the Beltway powerhouse that made Congress cower. Nobody is afraid of defense lobbyists now. …….

**2014 Defense Forecast: Many Decisions, More Uncertainty**


Defense News © January 4, 2013

For the first time in nearly three years, the US Defense Department has some near-term budget certainty, but 2014 and beyond is still murky. Thanks to a compromise budget passed by Congress and signed by President Barack Obama in late December, the Pentagon has about $30 billion more spread across 2014 and 2015 than it would have had under sequestration. But those sequestration cuts are set to re-emerge in 2016……..

Space Coast –

**Florida soars in attracting the aviation industry**


Orlando Business Journal © December 31, 2013

By Salem Solomon

A study by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP ranked Florida the most attractive state in the nation for companies in the aviation industry. The factors used by PwC in making the determination included cost (taxes, business climate, energy), workforce (available aerospace technicians, engineers, mechanics, education attainment) and the number of aerospace companies operating…..
Drone research will continue in Florida

http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20140103/OPINION/140109876/0/MULTIMEDIA#gsc.tab=0

Daytona Beach News Journal © January 3, 2014

A decision by the Federal Aviation Administration not to choose Florida as a drone testing site is disappointing, but it won’t stop the region’s drive to lead in this emerging area of aviation. On Monday, the FAA named six sites nationally, from Alaska to Virginia Tech, to be part of Unmanned Aerial Systems, a test program mandated by Congress to prepare for as many as 10,000 drones flying for commercial uses by 2017.

KSC lands secret Air Force X-37B space plane, jobs


Florida Today © January 5, 2014

A secretive military space plane will move into a vacant former space shuttle hangar at Kennedy Space Center, potentially bringing hundreds of jobs, officials confirmed Friday. Use of the former shuttle hangar called Orbiter Processing Facility-1 will allow the Air Force’s classified X-37B program “to efficiently land, recover, refurbish and re-launch” the unmanned system in Florida, according to The Boeing Co., which built and supports the program’s two orbital vehicles.

MacDill AFB –

MacDill to keep foreign forces

http://tbo.com/list/military-news/macdill-to-keep-foreign-forces-20140103/

Tampa Tribune © January 3, 2013

By Howard Altman
The U.S. Central Command international coalition, formed after 9/11, will not leave MacDill Air Force Base at the end of this year with the scheduled departure of the bulk of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, according to the coalition’s current leader. With Iran, Syria, Pakistan, Egypt, Yemen and Iraq among the 20 nations in the Centcom region, there are no shortages of potential trouble spots and challenges beyond Afghanistan, said Swedish Rear Adm. Mats Fogelmark, chairman of the coalition. “Just open the newspaper today,” he said. “There are problems in almost every country today.”

MacDill Offers Special Needs Homes

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © January 3, 2014

MacDill AFB, Fla., recently unveiled 10 newly constructed base homes specifically designed to assist special needs families. The homes, which were constructed as part of a partnership between MacDill and Arlington, Va.-based Clark Realty Capital, include unique features such as sliding pocket doors, roll-in showers, widened hallways, removable cabinetry facings, and motion-sensor bathroom lighting, states a December base release. “The new [Americans with Disabilities Act] houses are just one way we are able to increase the overall quality of life that our service members deserve,” said Col. Scott DeThomas, commander of 6th Air Mobility Wing.

NAS Jacksonville --

Millions in aircraft work slated for Jacksonville Navy base


Jacksonville Business Journal © January 2, 2014

By Timothy Gibbons
Some $343.5 million worth of aircraft engine repair work will be done at the Fleet Readiness Center Southeast as part of a two-year contract awarded to General Electric. Work under the $572.5 million award will be split between the center located at Naval Air Station Jacksonville and Lynn, Mass. The job involves the repair and replacement of 17 F414 engines, which are used in F/A-18 and EA-18 aircraft.

Tyndall AFB –

**Long-awaited F-22s to begin arriving Monday**

http://www.newsherald.com/military/long-awaited-f-22s-to-begin-arriving-monday-1.257667

News Herald © January 3, 2014

Better late than never. Monday afternoon, the first of two dozen F-22 fighter jets will begin landing at Tyndall Air Force Base nearly a year after they were originally scheduled to arrive. Five jets will arrive Monday, and when the rest arrive Tyndall will be home to the largest single-base contingent of “the world’s most advanced aircraft” on Earth and 1,100 new positions.

Other Items of Interest –

**FAA names 6 sites for testing drones**


USA Today © December 30, 2013

By Bart Jansen, USA TODAY

The Federal Aviation Administration announced Monday the sites where researchers will develop and test drones to fly safely in the same skies as commercial airliners. Congress ordered the agency to establish the test sites as part of a goal to have unmanned aircraft share the skies with passenger planes by the end of 2015.
Florida will pursue drone business despite snub

http://www.floridatoday.com/article/20131231/NEWS01/312310014/Florida-will-pursue-drone-business-despite-snub

Florida Today © December 30, 2013

Florida will press ahead with efforts to attract the fast-growing drone industry despite a failed bid to become a federal test range for the developing technology. The state was not among six places the Federal Aviation Administration named Monday, from among 25 applicants, to research how to safely integrate unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace as soon as 2015. Space Florida said the $1.5 million it spent to lead a statewide proposal to the FAA would pay off over the long term..........
January 13, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Task Force Meeting This Week** – We look forward to seeing you at the meeting of the Task Force will on Thursday, January 16, 2014 at the Doubletree Inn, 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee, FL beginning at 9:00 AM EST.

2. **Call In Number for Task Force Meeting** –
   
   - Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachments:**
   
   - Agenda for Meeting
   - Notes from bi-monthly TPG Call

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget Cuts –
Five provisions in the new defense policy legislation for contractors to watch

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/capitalbusiness/five-provisions-in-the-new-defense-policy-legislation-for-contractors-to-watch/2014/01/03/f6dd00ec-6c10-11e3-a523-fc73f0ff6b8d_story.html

Washington Post © January 3, 2014

By Marjorie Censer

With the military policy legislation known as the National Defense Authorization Act signed by the president over the holidays, contractors are looking for the changes that matter to them. We’ve singled out five measures that will be of interest to companies that work with the federal government. Contractor compensation -- Contractor compensation caps have come under fire in recent months, as the government, Congress and private companies battle over the appropriate limits on executive pay………..

Sources: Shutdown-Averting Measure to Include Full DoD Funding Bill

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140106/DEFREG02/301060018/Sources-Shutdown-Averting-Measure-Include-Full-DoD-Funding-Bill

Defense News © January 6, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

Congressional appropriators intend to include a full fiscal 2014 Pentagon spending bill in a massive compromise measure that must pass before next Tuesday night to avert another government shutdown. Congressional sources said Monday the leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations committees intend to include budget blueprints for a dozen federal departments in the omnibus spending bill………..

2015 US Budget Proposal Not Likely Until Late February


Defense News © January 6, 2014
By MARCUS WEISGERBER
The US government is not likely to unveil its 2015 spending plan until late February at the earliest, according to budget experts. The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is preparing to send the Pentagon its 2015 “passback guidance” as soon as this week, according to DoD officials and defense observers. The guidance, which includes specific budget and policy marching orders, is one of the final steps before the Obama administration sends its 2015 spending plan to Congress…….

Policy Bill Calls for Plan to Reorganize Pentagon Headquarters

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/policy-bill-calls-for-plan-to-reorganize-pentagon-headquarters/

Defense Communities 360 © January 6, 2014

The Defense Department will need to craft a plan for reducing the number of personnel at top headquarters offices under the fiscal 2014 defense authorization bill recently signed into law. Last month, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel announced a series of austerity measures to streamline the department’s overhead, but the bill language goes further. Hagel must put together a plan for streamlining DOD headquarters…….

Congress seeks to wrap up budget; stopgap measure could be needed

http://www.militarytimes.com/article/20140107/NEWS05/301070003/Congress-seeks-wrap-up-budget-stopgap-measure-could-needed
Military Times © January 7, 2014

By Patricia Kime

Congressional negotiators working on an omnibus spending bill expect an agreement by Friday, but debate over some parts of the legislation — including defense spending — could force lawmakers to green-light a stopgap funding measure as they wrap up loose ends. Senate staffiers said the goal is to present a bipartisan bill to House and Senate leaders by Friday. Senate Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., said agreements were reached over the holidays on many portions of
the bill, including budgets for the Department of Veterans Affairs and Military Construction……..

White House’s FY’15 Budget Request behind Schedule

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/white-houses-fy15-budget-request-behind-schedule/#

Defense Communities 360 © January 8, 2014

President Obama likely will not deliver his fiscal 2015 budget request to Congress until late February at the earliest, according to budget experts. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will send its “passback guidance” — the White House’s response to an agency’s draft budget — to the Pentagon shortly, reported Defense News. Passbacks, which are followed by one or more rounds of negotiations, usually occur in late November. Because last month’s bipartisan budget deal caps spending on defense programs at $521 billion in FY 2015, any dispute between OMB and DOD likely would not center on the topline spending figure for the department…….

After Nearly Killing NDAA, Senate Amendments Flap Erupts Again


Defense News © January 8, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

Seven weeks after a fight over Republican amendments nearly ended a five-decade streak of passing a national defense authorization act (NDAA), the battle is still raging and shows no signs of receding. The upper chamber on Nov. 21 killed the Senate Armed Services Committee’s version of the 2014 NDAA on a chaotic day in which Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., altered filibuster rules and rejected new GOP amendments……..

CBO suggests tough defense spending cuts
The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has proposed six ways to reduce defense spending ranging from deep cuts to the military services to controversial reductions in pay and benefits. In a presentation Tuesday before a group of retired and current government personnel and federal budget experts, CBO senior analyst Carla Tighe Murray delivered options for defense savings that would total between $10 billion and $495 billion through 2023.

Military Benefits Likely to Remain Sacred to Congress

For Washington lawmakers who measure the national debt in trillions, $6 billion is a pittance. But for many military veterans—and key lobbying groups—the $6 billion in pension cuts contained in December's budget compromise meant a broken promise. And it's not a breach they're willing to let Washington forget. In a Twitter town hall Tuesday night with the theme #KeepYourPromise, service members and their families expressed their outrage. Alia Reese, a military spouse, tweeted a picture of a little boy pressed to a computer screen. "This is how Daddy has read to him for over half his life," she wrote. "We have upheld our end now you do yours."

Pentagon Seeks To Protect R&D Funding in '15 Budget

For Washington lawmakers who measure the national debt in trillions, $6 billion is a pittance. But for many military veterans—and key lobbying groups—the $6 billion in pension cuts contained in December's budget compromise meant a broken promise. And it's not a breach they're willing to let Washington forget. In a Twitter town hall Tuesday night with the theme #KeepYourPromise, service members and their families expressed their outrage. Alia Reese, a military spouse, tweeted a picture of a little boy pressed to a computer screen. "This is how Daddy has read to him for over half his life," she wrote. "We have upheld our end now you do yours."
Senior Pentagon leaders are trying to protect vulnerable research and development (R&D) funding in the fiscal 2015 budget plan, despite desires within the military services to put money toward other near-term initiatives, according to Defense Department officials and sources. While DoD’s 2015 budget plan is still in flux, the tension over R&D funding has arisen at different points through the arduous process of building the spending plan and has been on the radar of top DoD officials, these sources said……..

Analysts: Pentagon Needs To Get Strategic on Budget, Likely Won’t

Defense News © January 10, 2014

By ZACHARY FRYER-BIGGS

Now that it appears cuts to US defense spending won’t be removed any time soon, analysts are urging the Defense Department to start making critical strategic choices to live within its means. But while such tough decisions are increasingly necessary to ward off looming financial challenges, such as sharp increases in personnel costs, the analysts expect little to change. Speaking in a series of panels at the Bank of America Merrill Lynch/Defense News 2014 Defense Outlook Forum, analysts from a broad range of political backgrounds described a defense environment that has radically changed following the recent signing of a federal budget deal by Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash……..

Congress to Pass Three-Day Spending Bill To Avoid Shutdown


Government Executive © January

By Eric Katz
Congress is poised to pass another stopgap spending measure to avoid a government shutdown, though it will only fund agencies for three additional days to give lawmakers more time to strike a deal on a full-year appropriations bill. The current continuing resolution will expire Jan. 15, and congressional appropriators have said they are close to reaching an agreement on an omnibus bill that would allocate more than $1 trillion in federal government spending for the remainder of fiscal 2014. The three-day CR would give negotiators -- led by Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., and Rep. Hal Rogers, R-Ky., who head the Senate and House Appropriations Committees, respectively -- through Saturday, Jan. 18, to finalize and pass through Congress the spending levels for each government agency......

Space Coast –

**Area drone makers not troubled by FAA snub of Florida**


Gainesville Sun © January 7, 2013
By Anthony Clark

It would have been nice had Florida landed an FAA drone-testing site, but the unmanned aircraft industry is building momentum in the state anyway, said Bryan da Frota, CEO of Gainesville-based Prioria Robotics. The Federal Aviation Administration announced last week that it had selected six testing sites around the nation to determine how to safely integrate unmanned aircraft systems into national airspace over the next several years. The application by Space Florida to use the Kennedy Space Center was not among those selected........

**Drone industry in Florida sees FAA decision as only slight setback**

http://www.orlandosentinel.com/business/os-drone-industry-florida- 20140110,0,5253323.story

Orlando Sentinel © January 10, 2014
The drone invasion of Florida has been postponed, but probably not for long. Although the state lost a bid last week to become a federal testing ground for drones, Florida officials spun the loss as only a temporary setback and said the Sunshine State already is on its way to becoming a hub for unmanned aircraft, better known as drones. "Florida is committed to developing the capabilities and the environment for this industry to come here, operate here and thrive here," said Frank DiBello, president of Space Florida.

45th SW Supports SpaceX Launch

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © January 10, 2014

The 45th Space Wing at Patrick AFB, Fla., recently supported the successful launch of a Space Explorations Technologies communications satellite at nearby Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, announced base officials. The Thaicom 6 satellite—SpaceX’s second commercial launch—took off in a Falcon 9 launch vehicle on Jan 6, according to a base release. “I am immensely proud of the work of the wing and our mission partners,” said Col. Robert Pavelko, 45th SW vice commander.

MacDill AFB –

Bureaucracy, communication stall memorial to Tampa veteran


Tampa Tribune © January 12, 2014

Hillsborough Commissioner Mark Sharpe didn’t expect any problems when he proposed a memorial on Bayshore Boulevard dedicated to Paul R. Smith, Congressional Medal of Honor recipient. Who would object to honoring only the second Hillsborough County service member to be awarded the nation’s highest military honor? Smith paid the ultimate sacrifice while manning a .50-caliber machine gun under murderous enemy fire at Baghdad International Airport in Iraq on April 4, 2003. He left a widow and two children.
Tyndall AFB –

**F-22s arrive at Tyndall**


News Herald © January 6, 2014


Long-term plans became reality Monday afternoon when Lt. Col. Erick Gilbert landed the first of five cutting-edge fighter jets at the new home of the 95th Fighter Squadron. Efforts to create the largest single-base contingent of F-22 Raptors, which the Air Force touts as the most advanced fighter jet in the world, at Tyndall began 10 years ago, said Col. David Graff, commander of the 325th Fighter Wing...........

**Tyndall Preps for Combat Raptors**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © January 8, 2014

Tyndall AFB, Fla., is ramping up maintenance assets to receive additional F-22 Raptors that will transfer from Holloman AFB, N.M., over the next few months, base officials announced. More than $65 million in tools and F-22 support equipment is pouring into Tyndall, and the base’s 95th Aircraft Maintenance Unit is set to more than double by July, according to a Jan. 6 release. About 30 percent of the equipment and supplies are already in place, and the 95th AMU is set to grow from 99 Active Duty personnel to 192 Active and 30 full-time Air Force Reserve Command technicians, officials said........

**First Combat Raptors Arrive to Tyndall**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx
The first five combat-coded F-22 Raptors transferring from Holloman AFB, N.M., to Tyndall AFB, Fla., landed at their new home on Jan. 6. "The 95th Fighter Squadron showing up represents a new era," said 325th Fighter Wing Commander Col. David Graff. "No combat aviation unit has ever deployed out of Tyndall. . . . Now, we will have the largest collection of F-22s in the world and [we] will stand ready to project air power and defend our nation’s freedom.”

NSA Panama City –

**NSWC Panama City Provides Emergency Lighting to Marine Corps Assault Amphibious Vehicles**


News Herald © January 6, 2014

By Jacqui Barker, Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division Public Affairs

Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Panama City scientists and engineers recently delivered an emergency egress lighting system to the U.S. Marine Corps' assault amphibious vehicles (AAV), the Navy announced Dec. 12. AAVs are capable of functioning on land or in water and are used to transport Marines and cargo. They provide increased survivability to warfighters operating in amphibious environments, rough terrain and other hostile environments.

Florida National Guard –

**Spartans in Orange**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © January 9, 2014
The US Coast Guard will receive all 14 of the Air National Guard’s C-27J Spartans remaining in storage at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., manufacturer Alenia announced this week. Congress approved the intra-service transfer deal in the 2014 defense authorization bill, which President Obama signed late last month. "The C-27J will provide the USCG with greater range, endurance, speed, and payload capacity than other twin turboprops in its inventory, and the capability to perform both medium and long-range missions," said Alenia North America President and CEO Benjamin Stone. The aircraft will enter service in the maritime patrol, counter narcotics, and search roles within six months to a year.

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**Gen. Grass: Budget Deal Gives Guard, Army Time To Compromise**

Breaking Defense © January 10, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

As budgets tighten, will the National Guard and the regular Army go to war? Not if Gen. Frank Grass, chief of the National Guard Bureau, can help it. Peppered with questions about the conflict today at the National Press Club, Grass carefully redirected almost every one. In fact, he said, December’s last-ditch budget deal to delay sequestration gives the two components time to resolve the potential conflict with a painful but rationally agreed-on compromise.

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**Air Force to hire contractors for cyber training**

C4ISRNet © January 3, 2014
The Air Force is seeking contractor support to augment personnel at its premier cyber operations and information training unit. Specifically, the 39th Information Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla., wants nearly three dozen contractors to serve as subject matter expert instructors, course developers and student mission training systems administrators, network system administrators, and hardware and infrastructure maintenance personnel, according to a request for proposal on fbo.gov. Contractors will play a role in planning, designing, and administering course materials……

Hurlburt general fired amid probe of inappropriate relationship


Northwest Florida Daily News © January 10, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

A high-level special operations commander has been fired amid an investigation into an alleged inappropriate personal relationship. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jon Weeks was relieved Thursday as commander of the Air Force Special Operations Warfare Center. Gen. Eric Fiel, head of Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field, said he made the decision based on preliminary information from the ongoing investigation into allegations about the inappropriate relationship……

Other Items of Interest –

Time to abolish Air Force

http://www.boston.com/opinion/2014/01/06/time-abolish-the-air-force/B1BQF31AkNjl0GcQS8msHO/story.html
THE PENTAGON was built to wage wars abroad, but much of its war-making has been inside the building. Inter-service rivalry is a hackneyed phrase that fails to convey either the brutality of the bureaucratic in-fighting over budgets and resources that has always defined the place, or the actual cost in blood, treasure, and a succession of shaming military defeats that have resulted from the Pentagon’s endemic in-house competitiveness. For more than 70 years, the very structure of America’s military establishment has been tragically misaligned, and you don’t have to be a peacenik to think it’s time for a major reform……..

Cyberwar: What People Keep Missing About The Threat

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

“Cyber” is the buzzword of the decade in the defense world, so overhyped and overused it has lost almost all meaning. Intelligent discussion of cyber threats is a rare gem indeed. But even experts who shed real light on the dark corners of cyberspace consistently miss a crucial dimension of both the threats and the opportunities it holds for the US military……

North Carolina Commission Requests Information for Study of State’s Bases


Defense Communities 360 © January 7, 2014

The North Carolina Military Affairs Commission is interested in learning about consulting companies who may be able to assist the commission with determining the status of its military installations in regard to withstanding additional budget cuts; to be better prepared for another
Army Embraces GAO Recommendation to Solicit Community Input for Basing Decisions


Defense Communities 360 © January 8, 2014

The Army plans to develop guidance governing when community meetings should be used to gather public input prior to making basing decisions, according to a new report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The Army’s comments come in response to a recommendation the congressional watchdog agency made regarding the service’s extensive process to determine how it would restructure its forces to shrink its active component end strength by 80,000 soldiers, a decision which resulted in a plan announced last June to inactivate 10 brigade combat teams (BCTs). In addition to conducting quantitative and qualitative analyses and assessing a variety of strategic and other factors, Army officials opted to hold community listening sessions at the 15 installations considered as part of the BCT inactivation decision and 15 other installations……..

Army Looking at Options for Speeding Drawdown, Odierno Says

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/army-looking-at-options-for-speeding-drawdown-odierno-says/#

Defense Communities 360 © January 8, 2014

After previously accelerating its plan to cut 80,000 soldiers and eliminate brigade combat teams (BCTs) at 10 U.S. posts to meet budget constraints, Army officials now are studying if the service’s forces can be cut further in a short timeframe. “We’re taking out about 20,000 a year. If
I go higher than that, it costs me more to take them out, and so we start reducing the savings that we’re gaining from the people,” Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno said during a speech at the National Press Club Tuesday……..

**Commission May Recommend Relaxing Barriers between Air Force Components**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/commission-may-recommend-relaxing-barriers-between-air-force-components/#

Defense Communities 360 © January 9, 2014

In addition to the Obama administration’s fiscal 2015 budget request, another indicator early this year of possible changes in military force structure will be the final report of the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force. The commission, charged with reviewing the appropriate balance between the Air Force’s regular and reserve components, has held numerous hearings and listened to suggestions such as combining the National Guard and Reserve, and moving much of the service’s infrastructure to the reserve component, reports Air Force Times. Its final report is due Feb. 1……..

**Sabbaticals may help military keep women in ranks**


Florida Times-Union © January 13, 2014

By LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press

Navy Cmdr. Valerie Overstreet wanted to start a family. But her job as a Navy pilot and the fact that she and her husband, also a naval officer, were stationed in different parts of the country made it complicated. So she decided to take advantage of a fledgling Navy program that allowed her to take a year off and return to duty without risking her career or future commands……..
January 28, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **February Task Force Meeting Cancelled** – The February Task Force meeting has been cancelled due to minimal quorum availability and minimal new substantive content.

2. **Date Change for Next Task Force Meeting in March** – The next Task Force will be on the afternoon of Tuesday, March 11, 2014 in Tallahassee. This day is scheduled to be Military Day at The Capitol and is being held with Florida National Guard military displays and an event with the Governor and Legislators in the courtyard at noon. The legislature is currently planning to act upon military and veteran initiatives Tuesday morning. We are still working the details on this meeting, but members should plan on arriving in Tallahassee Monday afternoon, March 10th. More details to follow in the next two weeks.

3. **Attachments:**
   - Defense Reinvestment Grants (DRG) and Defense Infrastructure Grant (DIG) Announcements
   - FY 14 Federal Budget Information
   - Breakdown of omnibus spending bill
   - Notes from TPG Call

Regards, BG.

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Two Weeks Worth of Articles of Interest:
Omnibus Funding for BRAC Cleanup Matches DOD's Budget Request

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/omnibus-funding-for-brac-clean-up-matches-dods-budget-request/

Defense Communities 360 © January 15, 2014

Cleanup at previously closed bases would receive $451.4 million under the omnibus spending package unveiled Monday, matching the Pentagon’s fiscal 2014 budget request. Both the House and Senate appropriations committees also recommended $451.4 million for BRAC cleanup in their earlier spending bills. This is the first year the two accounts funding cleanup at BRAC installations have been merged. Overall, the omnibus would allocate $9.8 billion for military construction and family housing programs in fiscal 2014, an increase of about $1 billion from last year’s available spending level. DOD only had an estimated $8.8 billion available for military construction activities in FY 2013 due to sequestration……..

Inside the Air Force - 01/17/2014
FY-15 BRAC request TBD

USAF Consolidating Excess Infrastructure But Still Calling For Base Closures
Inside Defense © January 17, 2014
By Courtney Albon

The Air Force is making strides in its efforts to reduce its facilities footprint, but a top Air Force logistics official said this week that in order to make the most efficient use of its existing infrastructure, the Air Force needs the authority from Congress to close its excess installations.

The Air Force is more than halfway to reaching its goal of reducing its installation footprint and cost by 80 million square feet, or 20 percent, by 2020, according to Lt. Gen. Judith Fedder, the Air Force’s deputy chief of staff for logistics, installations and mission support. The effort, known as 20/20 by 2020, was launched in 2006. Fedder told Inside the Air Force in a January 15 interview that while consolidating infrastructure to this degree has been an important exercise for the service, greater efficiencies are to be had through closing bases.

"We have a lot of excess infrastructure," Fedder said. "We have multiple excess installations where we could make better use of infrastructure if we could close installations because we're already working on the infrastructure piece as best as we can within the bases that we have."

The services must receive congressional authority in order to close a base, and that usually comes through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. Requests for BRAC rounds are made by the Defense Department to the president and then to Congress through the president's budget. Fedder said there is constant talk about whether the department will request a BRAC, and she said "it's still to be determined" whether such a request will be made in the fiscal year 2015 budget.
"The Air Force's position, though, is that we have excess installations and infrastructure and we could really make better use of our dollars if we could address that," Fedder said.

Without pointing to specific bases or geographic locations -- that's best left for the experts, she said -- Fedder said the service has some installations that contain multiple missions and host multiple services, and for some of those installations, the missions are not driven by the actual location of the base. What the Air Force would like to be able to do, she said, is to make use of the bases that are strategically located near some sort of specialized population hub, or a natural resource or a test or training range -- the bases that give the service the greatest value. That, she said, should be a strong factor in determining which bases are most essential to the service.

"I think what we would like to be able to do and what would be the most effective for the American taxpayer is to make use of those installations that give us the biggest bang for our buck," she said. "We need to be able to look at installations and say, 'How can we use all of these factors and make the best possible use of our installations to the taxpayers' benefit?'"

DOD Budget Cuts –

**Federal spending bill calls for $572B for Pentagon**


Defense News © January 13, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

Congressional appropriators on Monday evening unveiled a massive federal spending bill that includes a full 2014 Pentagon appropriations measure that would provide nearly $93 billion to buy new weapons. The Defense Department would get $63 billion for research and development (R&D) projects, an area senior officials have warned isn't funded enough. That is almost $7 billion less than the department got in 2013……

**DOD Spending Remains Flat under FY’14 Spending Bill**


Defense Communities 360 © January 14, 2014
Topline DOD spending would be $486.9 billion in fiscal 2014 under the $1.012 trillion omnibus spending bill unveiled Monday, providing almost the same amount of funding the department was allocated last year after sequestration. The base budget recommended for the Pentagon in the omnibus, however, is $29 billion below the administration’s FY 2014 request. Still, the department is much better off than if sequestration had been imposed in the absence of the recent budget deal that eliminated $22 billion in automatic defense cuts for FY 2014……..

War Funding Climbs in Omnibus Bill for First Time Since 2010

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140114/DEFREG02/301140032/War-Funding-Climbs-Omnibus-Bill-First-Time-Since-2010

Defense News © January 14, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

A massive US government spending bill introduced Monday evening would ramp up war spending for the first time in four years, and it includes billions for new weapon systems. A trillion-dollar, government-wide omnibus spending measure crafted by the Republican and Democratic leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations committees includes $5 billion more for America’s overseas conflicts than requested by the White House……..

House Passes Three Day Continuing Resolution

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © January 15, 2014

The House on Tuesday passed a three day continuing resolution by voice vote, giving lawmakers until Saturday to reach an agreement on the pending omnibus bill. The Senate was expected to vote by unanimous consent on the stop-gap measure by Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning. If approved by the Senate, the new continuing resolution will reduce the threat of another government shutdown or any other disruptions when the current spending authority runs out on Wednesday. Sen. Barbara Mikulski [D-Md.] and Rep. Hal Rogers [R-Ky.], chairs of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees, released a $1.012 trillion omnibus appropriations package on Jan. 13, providing the discretionary funding necessary for the federal government to continue operating the remainder of the fiscal year…..
Air Force Warns Against Further Cuts to Readiness


Defense One © January 14, 2014

By Sara Sorcher

While Congress races to reverse cuts to veterans’ benefits, Eric Fanning is fretting over where the ax will fall next. A bipartisan budget deal brokered by Democratic Sen. Patty Murray and Republican Rep. Paul Ryan gave the Pentagon some respite from its looming budget woes. But the $6 billion cut to military pensions has proved politically unpalatable—although relatively small compared with the nearly half-trillion-dollar reduction facing the department over the decade—leaving Fanning, the undersecretary of the Air Force, worried the military will have to hack into other important priorities, such as training for combat operations……..

Cyber Command Budget More Than Doubles


Defense One © January 14, 2014

By Aliya Sternstein

The House approved a fiscal 2014 spending package late Monday that includes $447 million for the Pentagon component that launches cyber weapons and deflects hacks against civilian and military networks. That’s more than a two-fold increase over Cyber Command's fiscal 2013 budget of $191 million. The Senate was expected to clear the bill shortly. The funding jump is mostly attributed to the growth of cyber mission forces, Pentagon officials told Nextgov on Tuesday. In March 2013, about 834 active duty military and civilian personnel were on staff, Cyber Command chief Gen. Keith Alexander told lawmakers at the time……..

Military Pension Fight Rages On


Government Executive © January 15, 2014
Some military retirees scored a small victory this week. The omnibus spending bill introduced this week to set the funding levels for all federal agencies would repeal cuts to military pensions for some working-age retirees. While the “fix” would keep in place the less generous cost-of-living adjustments for most military retirees younger than 62 years old, it would restore full COLAs for disability retirements and survivor benefits. The fight for a full repeal, however, goes on………

**Senate Sends Omnibus, Pentagon-Funding Measure to Obama's Desk**

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140116/DEFREG02/301160044/Senate-Sends-Omnibus-Pentagon-Funding-Measure-Obama-s-Desk

Defense News © January 16, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The US Senate on Thursday evening passed a government-wide spending measure that would give the Pentagon nearly $600 billion to buy new weapons, address readiness problems and fight America’s wars. The final vote tally was 72-26. The omnibus spending measure passed the upper chamber easily, despite a sometimes-contentious floor debate. President Barack Obama says he will sign the bill, which will give the Defense Department $572 billion in total spending, and another $85 billion in war funds………

**DoD Finalizing 2015 Budget Proposal**


Defense News © January 16, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER
US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel huddled with his top military and civilian leaders Thursday as the Defense Department puts the finishing touches on its 2015 budget proposal. Senior defense officials also discussed the upcoming Quadrennial Defense Review, Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby said during a briefing Thursday. Secretary of State John Kerry also attended the meeting to offer “his perspectives on the global challenges confronting both the Department of State and the Department of Defense,” ...........

Omnibus Still Leaves Deep Spending Cuts Looming, DOD Official Says

Defense Communities 360 © January 16, 2014

The fiscal 2014 omnibus spending bill provides the military a measure of relief from deep sequester cuts but still leaves defense officials “to face some tough decisions about the future of our force,” Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby told reporters Thursday. “We are still absorbing nearly $30 billion over the next 10 years that were not accounted for in the presidential budget submission,” Kirby said in reference to the gap between the funding allocated for defense in the omnibus and the administration’s original budget request........

Hard decisions await new House Defense Appropriations chair

Stars and Stripes © January 20, 2014

By J. Taylor Rushing

The man at the center of the new defense spending bill never intended to be there. But the death of an iconic congressman left open a coveted spot in the Capitol Hill hierarchy. After 18 years in Congress, Rodney Frelinghuysen has taken on the chairmanship of the powerful House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, the purse strings of the Defense Department........
After FY14 Budget Agreement, Congress Turns to Debt Ceiling

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140118/DEFSECT05/301180023/After-FY14-Budget-Agreement-Congress-Turns-Debt-Ceiling

Defense News © January 18, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

Congressional defense hawks, written off months ago by some as having lost their political punch, are gearing up for a showdown that might prove those proclamations were premature. Lawmakers fought hard in December to secure relief from across-the-board Pentagon cuts. And they won. Weeks later, an omnibus budget containing a 2014 defense appropriations bill that some analysts calculate will pour over $600 billion — including almost $100 billion for new weapon systems — into the Defense Department’s coffers made it through both chambers of Congress……..

US Dominance, Major Programs At Risk In 2015 Budget


Breaking Defense © January 21, 2014

By MACKENZIE EAGLEN

As Washington prepares for another defense budget submission and another new strategy document, lawmakers and policymakers would be wise to step back and attempt to glean the collective impact that “change fatigue” and four years of defense budget reductions and uncertainty have caused for the US military. The budget relief provided in the recent omnibus spending bill was simply a Band-Aid. Unfortunately, all the trend lines appear to be moving in the wrong direction……..

White House fiscal 2015 budget coming March 4


Federal Times © January 23, 2014

By SEAN REILLY
The Obama administration will release its fiscal 2015 budget request on March 4, about a month past its legally required due date, the Office of Management and Budget announced Thursday. In a statement, OMB spokesman Steve Posner attributed the delay to Congress’s belated wrap-up of fiscal 2014 appropriations legislation, completed only last week, saying that the administration can now finalize next year’s budget. “We are moving to complete the budget as quickly as possible to help Congress return to regular order in the annual budget process,” Posner said.

Omnibus Retains Restriction on Underutilized Facilities

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/omnibus-retains-restriction-on-underutilized-facilities/#

Defense Communities 360 © January 23, 2014

The Defense Department is barred from spending fiscal 2014 funds maintaining facilities it no longer uses, according to the omnibus spending bill signed into law last week. The language — originally added on the House floor last July to that chamber’s version of the defense spending bill — is intended to eliminate wasteful spending by the department and is not targeted at installations closed through BRAC, according to the office of Florida Rep. Patrick Murphy (D), who sponsored the amendment.

Long-Term DOD Budget Would Ignore Sequester Spending Caps


Defense Communities 360 © January 26, 2014

The White House draft of the Pentagon’s fiscal 2015 budget request allows defense spending to exceed the caps included in the 2011 Budget Control Act starting in FY 2016, reports Bloomberg. The topline spending level for the department in FY 2015 — not including war spending, military construction or Energy Department programs — is about $498 billion as called for under last month’s bipartisan budget deal. That deal reversed $9 billion in FY 2015 sequester cuts.

Space Coast –

Air Force expects more Cape Canaveral launches in 2014
The Space Coast could see as many as 21 launches this year, the Air Force's 45th Space Wing reported today. That would be a 50 percent increase over last year, which saw 14 launches of spacecraft on Atlas V, Delta IV and Falcon 9 rockets, plus submarine-launched Trident missile tests. United Launch Alliance is preparing an Atlas V rocket for a Jan. 23 launch of a NASA Tracking and Data Relay satellite, the first of its 10 local launches planned this year.

**SpaceX Drives Sharp Increase in Projected Launches at Cape**

The busiest U.S. spaceport is planning to support up to 21 rocket launches in 2014, a 50 percent increase from 2013, the commander of the 45th Space Wing at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., said Jan. 14. The planned uptick in activity comes as the Air Force contends with personnel and financial cutbacks at the facility. “With fewer resources, it’s time to change the way we do things. We cannot continue to throw money at our problems,” Air Force Brig. Gen. Nina Armagno said during a meeting of the National Space Club’s Florida Committee.
Defense Communities 360 © January 22, 2014

Central Florida leaders plan to ask state lawmakers for funding to expand an Orlando research park that is home to key components of the region’s defense simulation cluster, as part of an effort to stave off a possible move by DOD to realign those assets to other locations with simulation and training specialties. A coalition of political, education and business leaders is hoping to add a $60 million complex to the Central Florida Research Park that would be leased at no cost to the military…….

Gov. Scott awards $2.45M in Florida defense grants

By Cindy Barth

Florida Gov. Rick Scott on Friday announced that $2.45 million in defense grant will be awarded to 14 communities hosting military installations, including Orange and Brevard counties. Florida Gov. Rick Scott on Friday announced that $2.45 million in defense grant will be awarded to 14 communities hosting military installations, including Orange and Brevard counties. The grants have been used for more than 15 years to help Florida maintain its reputation as military-friendly……

Less dependence on defense work

By Richard Burnett, Orlando Sentinel

From military training contractors to commercial web app developers, many players in Central Florida's high-tech sector expect to make 2014 a year of thinking outside the box. The region's training and simulation industry — considered the largest in the country — is venturing outside its historic comfort zone of warfare training. A number of simulation companies have found creative new ways to ply their trade, including virtual
surgery, auto maintenance, transportation, video games and theme-park attractions……

NS Mayport –

**Congressman vows to fight to keep full fleet at Mayport Naval Station**

http://www.beachesleader.com/article_d620d11a-8445-11e3-9232-001a4bcf887a.html

Beaches Leader © January 23, 2014

By Kathleen Bailey, Senior Editor

The Beaches Leader, Inc.

Three existing cruisers now at Mayport Naval Station will be modernized, under appropriations included in an omnibus spending bill, but a new class of ships scheduled to come to the base is facing scrutiny. Last week, Congressman Ander Crenshaw, member of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, announced that the fiscal year 2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill includes funds to operate, maintain and modernize three Mayport-based Ticonderoga-class Cruisers……

**Ander Crenshaw: Bill Helps Mayport, Will 'Hold the Line on Spending'**

http://www.sunshinestatenews.com/blog/ander-crenshaw-omnibus-helps-mayport-will-hold-line-spending

Sunshine State News © January 16, 2014

BY: KEVIN DERBY

U.S. Rep. Ander Crenshaw, R-Fla., the chairman of the House Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee, voted to support the 2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill which passed the U.S. House on Wednesday. Crenshaw pointed toward the bill’s inclusion of funds to help three cruisers based in Mayport on the First Coast. “Tough choices are part of the job on Capitol Hill, but I will not sacrifice ships that still have years of life left in them for short-term budget cuts,” Crenshaw said……
NAS Jacksonville --

Three Jacksonville facilities awarded multi-million-dollar contracts this week


Florida Times-Union © January 24, 2014

By Clifford Davis

The Department of Defense announced that three Jacksonville facilities won multi-million-dollar government contracts this week. The Boeing Company received a $17.8 million contract to upgrade F/A-18 Hornet airplanes, with 92 percent of the work coming to Boeing’s Cecil Airport facility. The facility began performing upgrades on the planes in 1999 and recently became the national center of component structural repair for the planes………..

Tyndall AFB –

Tyndall to hold second waterway town hall


News Herald © January 16, 2014

Local residents will have another chance to speak out about Tyndall Air Force Base’s proposal that it be allowed to shut down access to within 500 feet of its property to boaters during times of heightened security. A public outcry followed the release of the initial proposal in May, which led to a slight revision of the plan and the scheduling of two town hall meetings to explain it. Officials will hold the second town hall on Jan. 30, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Mexico Beach Civic Center........

Tyndall: War Day exercise increases lethality

http://www.newsherald.com/military/tyndall-air-force-base/tyndall-war-day-exercise-increases-lethality-1.264764
Team Tyndall recently came together for a 'war day' to increase the lethality of the 43rd Fighter Squadron and 95th Fighter Squadron's F-22 Raptor pilots in a simulated air combat mission Jan. 16, here. "The goal is to try to increase the knowledge of the base and give them an idea of what having a fighter squadron that could deploy means and what type of mission they will be training on," said Capt. Daniel Dickinson, 43rd F-22 Raptor instructor pilot and Bravo Flight commander.

Tyndall’s F-22s are flying high again


The 95th Fighter Squadron took flight for the first time Jan. 21, since its reactivation here in October 2013. With the first group of F-22 Raptors delivered Jan. 6 from Holloman Air Force Base, N.M., Tyndall is becoming the world's largest F-22 contingent and preparing the "Boneheads" for the new combat mission. "I felt extremely proud to be part of the first flight," said Capt. David Ruiz, 95th FS fighter pilot. "There have been a lot of people working together to achieve this milestone and resurrect 'Mr. Bones'."

Florida National Guard –

Trouble Brewing Between US Army's Active Duty and Guard Forces


Defense News © January 13, 2014
By PAUL McLEARY
In a sharply worded statement released Jan. 13, the president of the National Guard Association called remarks by US Army chief Gen. Ray Odierno “disrespectful and simply not true” while complaining that “the Army chief of staff disparaged the Army National Guard last week by telling reporters in Washington, D.C., that, essentially, the Army National Guard just isn’t good enough to be relied upon more in the future.”

**Leadership: The U.S. Air Force Wins One Over The Army**

Strategy Page © January 16, 2014

The sad saga of the C-27Js the U.S. Army wanted (but that the U.S. Air Force was determined to prevent) has come to a conclusion. The upshot of it all is that the army gets none of the C-27J twin engine transports and the air force gives seven of the 21 it has to SOCOM (Special Operations Command) and 14 to the Coast Guard. As part of the deal the Coast Guard will give the air force its seven older C-130s, which will be modified so they can serve as firefighting aircraft for the U.S. Forestry Service (which also wanted C-27Js but was willing to shut up and take the converted C-130s instead.)

**Budgets & ‘Betrayal’: National Guard Fights To Keep Apache Gunships**

Breaking Defense © January 23, 2014

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

“To be honest, we feel betrayed.” That’s what one National Guard gunship pilot told me when I asked him about the Army’s plan to strip the Guard of all its AH-64 Apache attack helicopters. That plan — still awaiting approval by President Obama before he includes it in his budget request for fiscal year 2015 — is just one part of a radical overhaul that includes complex downsizing and reshuffling of the Army’s entire helicopter force. All told, the Army is losing 898 helicopters, 215 of them (24 percent) from the Guard. Driven by the cold realities of budget cuts, the plan has stirred fiery emotions that push the Army leadership and the National Guard community closer to all-out political war......

**Governors Urge Administration to Protect Air Guard from Budget Cuts**
The nation’s governors are calling on the Pentagon to shield the Air National Guard from “disproportionate and damaging” cuts as it prepares its fiscal 2015 budget request. “Reductions in personnel and equipment are inevitable as we transition from war to peace, but they should not adversely affect states nor come at the expense of lost capabilities,” Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper said last week during the National Governors Association’s State of the States address in Washington, D.C.

Eglin AFB --

Air Force wants to train in Panhandle state forest


Miami Herald © January 19, 2014

The Associated Press

The Air Force is planning to ask the Florida Forest Service to allow special operation troops to train in a Panhandle forest. The Air Force wants to use Tate's Hell State Forest in Franklin County to train troops stationed at Eglin Air Force Base. According to The Tallahassee Democrat officials say such plans are from final. The training may never be allowed if it will harm the environment or compromise forest management plans. A draft environmental impact statement is in the works.

Naval Air Station Pensacola –

Picture of change: New headquarters embodies Pensacola NAS

http://www.pnj.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2014301120016&nclck_check=1

Pensacola News-Journal © January 10, 2014

By Rob Johnson
The newly renovated Command Headquarters building at Pensacola Naval Air Station underscores the 100-year-old base’s changing culture and close ties to the community. “Building 1500 is a microcosm of Pensacola Naval Air Station,” said Art Giberson, a retired chief petty officer and former director of photojournalism in the base’s training program. Graduates of the Naval School of Photography, located in the headquarters building from 1950 to 1998, recorded combat from Korea to Kuwait………

**Navy base kicks off centennial celebration**


Pensacola News Journal © January 17, 2014

By Rob Johnson

If ever a Navy base could stand at attention like a sailor and pass scrupulous inspection by the brass, then the gleaming white Command Headquarters building at Pensacola Naval Air Station did just that on Friday. In addition, Building 1500 had to measure up to the sentimental scrutiny of about 100 retired Navy photographers who attended the kick-off of the base’s centennial celebration. ………

**Pensacola Naval Air Station building renamed for icon**


Pensacola News Journal © January 18, 2014

By Rob Johnson

If ever a Navy building could stand at attention like a sailor and pass scrupulous inspection by the brass, then the gleaming white Command Headquarters at Pensacola Naval Air Station did just that Friday. In addition, Building 1500 had to measure up to the sentimental scrutiny of about 100 retired Navy photographers who attended the kick-off of the base’s centennial celebration. For 48 years, the recently renovated
headquarters housed the photography school that launched the visitors on history-recording careers from Korea to Kuwait……..

Blue Angels plan October comeback at Jacksonville NAS


Florida Times-Union © January 21, 2014

By Clifford Davis

Blue Angel #7 sits on the runway at Jacksonville Naval Air Station Tuesday. A P-3 Orion readies for take off in the background. The bird approached from the east, through the clouds with wings of blue and gold. She was returning home to the place of her birth, something she does every year that is witnessed by hundreds of thousands of people. But last year, a financial drought of sorts kept the famous bird grounded. Now she’s back……..

White to command Pensacola Naval Education and Training Command


Pensacola News-Journal © January 24, 2014

By Haley Chouinard

Rear Adm. Mike White took over command of the Naval Education and Training Command during a change of command ceremony Friday at the National Naval Aviation Museum. White, 55, succeeds Rear Adm. Don Quinn, 57, who is retiring after more than 34 years of service. “For nearly 35 years, I have been blessed to serve our republic alongside men and women who shared a common belief in the importance of upholding and defending a single document — the Constitution of the United States of America,” Quinn said. “In every command to which I was assigned, I was surrounded by patriots who did not turn away from hard missions or the burden of making tough, often life-threatening decisions.”…….
**Whiting Field –**

**Santa Rosa gets $280K in defense grants**


Pensacola News-Journal © January 24, 2014

By Rob Johnson

Another $280,000 in the defense-related grants for economic development that Florida Gov. Rick Scott occasionally announces was awarded Friday to Santa Rosa County. Like many of the previous defense grants, $200,000 of the total in Friday’s awards are, according to a news release, intended for land acquisition near Whiting Field Naval Air Station. Santa Rosa County Commissioner Don Salter was quoted in the release from Scott’s office as saying the land purchase would be for conservation easements and to “prevent encroachment.”……..

**NAS Key West –**

**Navy: Key West needs to be a more cooperative neighbor to military facilities**

[http://www.keysnet.com/2014/01/25/494245/navy-key-west-needs-to-be-a-more.html](http://www.keysnet.com/2014/01/25/494245/navy-key-west-needs-to-be-a-more.html)

Keys Info Net © January 25, 2014

By SEAN KINNEY

As the Key West City Commission continues to reprioritize components of the Truman Waterfront development master plan, officials with Naval Air Station Key West have expressed mounting frustration. The U.S. Navy deeded the 33-acre Old Town parcel to the city in 2002 as an "economic development conveyance. "The plan for the park, which sits next to NAS Truman Annex and the Navy’s Outer Mole Pier, needs review from local Navy officials, with particular emphasis on security and other operational concerns…….
Patrick AFB –

**Major AFTAC project nears completion at Patrick AFB**

http://www.floridatoday.com/article/20140112/NEWS01/301120027/Major-AFTAC-project-nears-completion-Patrick-AFB?nclick_check=1

Florida Today © January 12, 2014

By R. Norman Moody, FLORIDA TODAY

A buzz of about 250 workers are in the final stage of the largest construction project in the U.S. Air Force, the new $158 million headquarters complex of the Air Force Technical Application Center. With a backup utility center capable of supplying half the electrical power needs of Cocoa Beach, dozens of laboratory bays installed and a main building that is 93 percent complete, AFTAC will soon move into its new headquarters…….

**Treaty Monitoring Center introduces new Innovation Lab**


Patrick AFB AFTAC Public Affairs © January 16, 2014

by Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs

Tough fiscal times have placed heavy burdens on senior Department of Defense officials as they struggle to balance budget cuts, sequestration, furloughs and force shaping initiatives. One organization is working to mitigate the discomfort of the budget ax by finding ways to accomplish its mission while working better, faster and cheaper. In August 2013, the Air Force Technical Applications Center here stood up an Innovation Lab dedicated to developing technologies at a lower cost to reduce operations maintenance and overhead while leveraging its greatest asset - its people…….

Other Items of Interest –
Veterans’ tuition bill advances
http://www.newsherald.com/military/veterans-tuition-bill-advances-1.261854?page=1

News Herald © January 13, 2014

By MATTHEW BEATON / The News Herald

The measure would no longer require active military’s spouses to renew their driver’s license when the service member is deployed out of the state. The exemption applies to service members and their dependents. The bill breezed through the House Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee on Monday, roundly supported by its members. Chairman Ronald “Doc” Renuart, R-Ponte Vedra Beach, said the bill would keep Florida as the country’s “most-veteran friendly state.”……

Littoral Ship Production: Full Speed Ahead
http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140113/DEFREG02/301130040/Littoral-Ship-Production-Full-Speed-Ahead

Defense News © January 13, 2014

By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

The US capital’s politics are a mess, the Pentagon is muddled and observers might be excused for thinking that naval development is stalled. But out in the manufacturing yards that supply the US Navy with ships, the atmosphere is anything but quiet. Quite the contrary, from New England to Virginia to the Gulf Coast and elsewhere, shipyards have hired workers, expanded and improved facilities and — at least for now — are humming at near-full-rate production……

Structural Implications
http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © January 14, 2014
The commission established to study how the Air Force could improve its structure will unveil its recommendations to the President and Congress on Jan. 30. Commission members will distribute their study report to House lawmakers and take questions from them during an hour-long public meeting on Capitol Hill that morning, followed by a similar meeting with senators later in the day, according to a posting at the commission's website. "The report will contain a detailed statement of the findings and conclusions of the commission, together with its recommendations for such legislation and administrative actions it may consider appropriate in light of the results of the study," states a notice issued on Jan. 13 by Barry Willey, commission spokesman.

Texas Gubernatorial Candidate Offers Plan to Protect State’s Military Bases


Defense Communities 360 © January 14, 2014

A Republican candidate for Texas governor is calling for a three-step plan to help the state prepare for the next round of base closures. “In 2012 the total annual economic output of Texas’ 15 military installations was almost $150 billion. Most of Texas’ military installations are located in rural or low-population areas. The economic impact the military has on these communities is extraordinary,” Greg Abbott, the state’s attorney general, said in a guest column in the Waco Tribune-Herald.

3-star: Sailor Shortage Threatens Surface Navy's Readiness

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140114/DEFREG02/301140038/3-star-Sailor-Shortage-Threatens-Surface-Navy's-Readiness?odyssey=mod|newswell|text|FRONTPAGE|p

Defense News © January 14, 2014

By SAM FELLMAN
The largest challenge facing the surface fleet is continuing to maintain and deploy ready warships amid a shortage of 8,000 sailors, the surface Navy’s top boss said Tuesday. Vice Adm. Tom Copeman said the gaps, which amount to 15 percent of the fleet’s billets, have compelled officials to take last-ditch manning actions, such as swapping sailors onto deploying ships to fill critical gaps.

**Pentagon Cuts LCS Buy to 32 Ships**

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140115/DEFREG02/301150037/Pentagon-Cuts-LCS-Buy-32-Ships

Defense News © January 15, 2014

By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

The office of the secretary of defense (OSD) has directed the US Navy to limit its overall buy of littoral combat ships to a total of 32 ships, foregoing 20 more of the small, fast and controversial warships, Pentagon sources have confirmed. The decision, in a Jan. 6 memo from Acting Deputy Defense Secretary Christine Fox, came after the Pentagon received its final 2015 budget guidance from the White House. Several major acquisition decisions, including direction on what to do with the LCS program, were awaiting the numbers from the Office of Management and Budget.

**Navy’s Holy Grail: Low-Maintenance Ships, Highly Skilled Sailors**

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=1379

National Defense Magazine © January 15, 2014

By Sandra I. Erwin

In his guidance to sailors and civilians, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert drives the point home that being ready to deploy and fight wars is the “essence of why we have a Navy.” A decade of nonstop combat deployments and a budget crunch that began in 2010 have tested the Navy’s ability to stay ready, and its leaders worry that the fleet will have a tough time keeping up with future challenges. Force size is not the issue. The Navy employs 450,000 sailors (active and reservists), 200,000 civilians, and owns a fleet of 283 ships and 3,700 aircraft. But the future Navy
needs to think differently about how it buys ships and crews are trained, senior officials said…….

**US Navy, OSD Battle Over LCS Future**


Defense News © January 19, 2014

By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

The contentious question of how many littoral combat ships to build has been batted back and forth this year between the US Navy’s top leadership and senior Pentagon leaders. By the end of the day on Jan. 17, a certain kind of standoff appears to have been reached, foregoing — for the moment — a final decision. The result could be a compromise…….

**Littoral Combat Ship Cut Plan Reopens Navy Riff: Build ‘Em Fast Or Rugged**


Breaking Defense © January 17, 2014

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

The Littoral Combat Ship was supposed to be one of the fastest things in the fleet, but it seems like the skeptics – and the sequester – have caught up with it. The question is, what’s next? After a Pentagon memo recommended slashing the program by more than a third — from 52 ships to 32 — its backers came out swinging. “We have heard for the past 12 years about the importance of the LCS to our future Navy,” House seapower subcommittee chairman Rep. Randy Forbes said in a press release Thursday afternoon. “Although this platform has had its share of development difficulties, I believe it has a necessary role to play in the future fleet.”……

**DOD on Course to Meet Renewable Energy Targets, Researchers Find**
Defense Communities 360 © January 16, 2014

The military’s reliance on clean energy technologies is accelerating across its installations, keeping it on track to meet its goal of deploying 3 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2025, according to a new report by the Pew Charitable Trusts. The number of renewable energy projects across DOD rose 54 percent from 454 in fiscal 2010 to 700 in FY 2012, according to the study, Power Surge. According to Navigant Research, Pew’s research partner, 384 megawatts of installed renewable energy capacity existed at DOD installations in mid-2013. By the end of 2018, the study estimated that renewable energy capacity on bases could increase more than fivefold, to 2.1 gigawatts, positioning each of the services to deploy 1 gigawatt of renewable energy by 2025…….

Defense contractor L-3 lays off workers

Northwest Florida Daily News © January 20, 2014

By DUSTY RICKETTS / Daily News

One of Okaloosa County’s largest employers has laid off more than 10 percent of its staff. L-3 Crestview Aerospace confirmed Monday that it had reduced its workforce by about 100 positions late last week and early this week. The company still employs more than 850 people at its Crestview location. “L-3 Crestview Aerospace made this difficult, but necessary, decision after exhausting all other options to ensure the long-term health and competitiveness of our business,” wrote Lance Martin, public relations manager for L-3’s integrated systems group…….
The Pentagon was declared the big winner of the massive federal budget bill that Congress passed for fiscal year 2014. The spending bill approves $497 billion for the Defense Department, or about the same as in 2013. The Pentagon gets an additional $85.2 billion for war expenses — about $5 billion more than it requested. Weapons manufacturers are not celebrating, though. An immediate reprieve from steep cuts is good news but there is still considerable anxiety among CEOs about their companies’ future.

US Army Studying Replacing Thousands of Grunts with Robots


By PAUL McLEARY
The postwar, sequestration-era US Army is working on becoming “a smaller, more lethal, deployable and agile force,” according to Gen. Robert Cone, head of the service’s Training and Doctrine Command. But just how much smaller might come as a surprise. During remarks at the Army Aviation Symposium in Arlington, Va., on Jan. 15, Cone quietly dropped a bomb.

Navy Acquisition Chief Insists Need For 52 LCSs Is Firm

http://www.defensedaily.com/navy-acquisition-chief-insists-need-for-52-lcss-is-firm/

By Mike McCarthy
The Navy’s top acquisition official said Thursday the service’s requirement for 52 Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) is “firm,” and would not comment on reports a day earlier saying the Office of the Secretary of Defense has instructed the Navy to reduce the number to 32 vessels. Sean Stackley, the Navy’s assistant secretary for research, development and acquisition, also refused to comment on whether the service has been told to cut the purchase by 20 ships, saying he cannot discuss the fiscal 2015 budget planning process before a proposal is submitted to Congress. His remarks, however, suggested the Navy would not readily accept any attempt to reduce the current program of record……..

R&D Being Eroded By Budget Cuts


Sat News © January 19, 2014

The decline in research and development brought on by budget cuts is contributing to the erosion of the U.S. military's technological superiority at an alarming rate, the undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics said. "Technological superiority is not assured," Frank Kendall told a conference yesterday sponsored by the Center for a New American Society. "The United States came out of the Cold War, and demonstrated in the first Persian Gulf War, a very significant superiority in military technology and the application of those technologies……..

Services Overcoming Hurdles to Expand Partnering with Industry on Energy Development

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/services-overcoming-hurdles-to-expand-partnering-with-industry-on-energy-development/#

Defense Communities 360 © January 20, 2014

The military’s efforts to rely on the private sector to finance the development of renewable energy are advancing and should allow DOD to meet its objectives for enhancing energy security at its installations, according to a report released last week. Expectations surrounding the service’s clean energy initiatives, however, should be set to reflect the complexity of renewable energy projects, concluded Power Surge, a new study from the Pew Charitable Trusts. “It will take time to forge public-private partnerships and conclude the complex contracts associated with advanced energy projects,” the report stated…….
Reducing Army End Strength to 420,000 an Option, Senior Official Says

The pressure of long-term budget constraints is forcing Army officials to consider difficult tradeoffs as they try to balance force structure, readiness and modernization, with a decision to shrink the service’s active-duty force to 420,000 one distinct possibility. “We’re on a glide path, and the monies are laid out to give us a 420,000 Army by 2019,” Lt. Gen. James Barclay III, the Army’s deputy chief of staff, G-8, told attendees at the Association of the U.S. Army’s Aviation Symposium & Exposition last week……….

Smaller military plans for a nimble, expeditionary future

By Tom Vanden Brook, USA TODAY
What would a smaller military look like and how would it fight? USA TODAY reported over the weekend that the Army has been told to plan to lop off 100,000 soldiers if the automatic budget cuts known as sequestration continue until the end of the decade. Army brass are coming to terms with what a force of 420,000 could and could not do. It has about 530,000 soldiers now…….

Think Tank: Tighter Defense Budgets Could Drive Shift to Robotic Warfare

By MARCUS WEISGERBER
Rapidly rising personnel costs combined with a decline in defense spending could drive the Pentagon to expand its robotic arsenal, replacing humans with autonomous systems, a prominent think tank says. The Center for a New American Security (CNAS) report: “20YY: Preparing for War in the Robotic Age”, written by CEO Robert Work and
Shawn Brimley, executive vice president and director of studies, says the increased cost of manned combat systems could lead to this shift……..

Navy Seeks to Increase Pay for Sailors at Sea


Government Executive © January 22, 2014

By Eric Katz

The U.S. Navy is having a hard time filling at-sea positions, and it has a simple solution to the problem: Pay enlisted sailors more money. When sailors are deployed on a ship, the Navy pays them a stipend called career sea pay. The Navy soon will increase that stipend for the first time in 10 years, Vice Adm. Bill Moran announced Tuesday……..

DOD Considers $1B Cut to Commissary Budget

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/dod-considers-1b-cut-to-commissary-budget/#

Defense Communities 360 © January 23, 2014

The Pentagon is considering recommending that funding for military grocery stores drop by $1 billion, or 71 percent, over three years as part of its fiscal 2015 budget request, reported Military.com. A cut of that magnitude likely would lead to the widespread closure of commissaries, with stateside stores bearing the brunt of the impact. The recommendation under discussion would reduce the Defense Commissary Agency’s (DeCA) current budget from $1.4 billion to $400 million by FY 2017..
Navy Still Expects to Build 52 Ship LCS Fleet


DOD Buzz © January 16, 2014

By Kris Osborn

The Navy’s acquisition executive said the service’s Littoral Combat Ship request for a 52 ship fleet is “solid” and on track despite recent media reports that the Pentagon has directed a reduction in fleet size to 32 ships. Navy acquisition chief Sean Stackley would not address specifics about the LCS program contained in reports on the issue, choosing to highlight the programs merits and not comment ahead of the anticipated 2015 budget drop expected next month…….

Carrier Cut Could Be Back on Table

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140126/DEFREG02/301270019/Carrier-Cut-Could-Back-Table

Defense News © January 26, 2014

By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

The reality of finalizing the fiscal 2015 budget submission is driving top US defense officials and the White House to quickly make major decisions, and indications are growing that the elimination of one carrier and one carrier air wing could be among the defense request’s key features. Pentagon officials would not confirm or deny the matter, citing the fluid nature of budget discussions. But numerous sources — in the Pentagon, on Capitol Hill, in the defense industry — agreed that the prospect is picking up steam…….

SecDef Should Crack Whip On Cyber, Drones, & Training Foreigners

Yesterday, four mid-grade military officers — one from each armed service – made a remarkable public recommendation to their boss, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel: It’s time to force the four services back into clearly demarcated “lanes” and reduce overlap between them as budgets shrink and competition escalates. They focused on three high-priority areas: 

State Funding Could Bolster Ft. Bragg’s Standing in Next BRAC Round

Fort Bragg most likely isn’t in danger of suffering the loss of any significant mission in a future BRAC, but installation leadership and the Fort Bragg Regional Alliance wants to shore up several weaknesses that could prevent the post from benefiting from the next base closure round. One shortcoming is the poor road infrastructure of the Fayetteville, N.C., post, garrison commander Col. Jeffrey Sanborn said at the alliance’s annual meeting Friday. Of Fort Bragg’s 57 major intersections, 42 are considered failed or failing, reported the Fayetteville Observer. Sanborn is pushing for the state to reinvest at Fort Bragg the $8 million it generates each year from gas taxes earned on the installation.
FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting on March 11**-- The next Task Force will be on the afternoon of **Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 316 W. Tennessee Ave. Tallahassee, FL 32301 beginning at 1:30 PM and ending approximately 5:00 PM.** This day is scheduled to be Military Day at The Capitol and is being held with Florida National Guard military displays and an event with the Governor and Legislators in the courtyard at noon. The legislature is currently planning to act upon military and veteran initiatives Tuesday morning. We are still working the details on this meeting, but members should plan on arriving in Tallahassee Monday afternoon, March 10th. Please confirm you attendance with me or Donna.

2. **New, Improved Task Force Web Site** –Enterprise Florida has updated the Task Force web site and it looks great! Please note the new URL for our web site. The web site can be found at: [http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/the-florida-defense-support-task-force/](http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/the-florida-defense-support-task-force/)

3. **Attachments:**

   - TPG Monthly Report

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:
FDSTF –

**Fla. GI Bill aims to make state more 'military friendly'**


Daytona Beach News Journal © January 30, 2014

**By Jim Turner, The News Service of Florida**

Pitching an aggressive state "GI Bill," Republican legislative leaders want to attract more military veterans to the Sunshine State and attract more people to the Florida National Guard. The hefty proposals (HB 7015 and SPB 7020), which include spending $14.5 million a year for an expansion of free tuition for members of the National Guard, would create a nonprofit to market Florida to former members of the U.S. military. Also, they would upgrade state armories, ease professional licensing for veterans and offer a waiver for all honorably discharged veterans from having to pay out-of-state tuition charges at state colleges and universities……..

DOD Budget Cuts –

**HASC Lawmakers Urge DOD to Retain Carriers**


Defense Communities 360 © January 28, 2014

A bipartisan group of 11 House Armed Services Committee lawmakers wrote Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel Tuesday urging the Pentagon not to retire any of the Navy’s 11 aircraft carriers as part of its fiscal 2015 budget request. “There is no doubt that there is enduring bipartisan support for a robust Navy supporting a capital fleet of 11 nuclear aircraft carriers,” stated the letter headed up by Seapower Subcommittee Chairman Randy Forbes (R-Va.). Committee Chairman Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) also signed the letter……..
Dempsey: No Plans to Close Military Commissaries

Defense Gov © January 28, 2014
By Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

Contrary to some news reports, there are no plans to close military commissaries, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said. But Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey added that the budget environment is forcing the department to look for savings anywhere possible. The chairman first addressed this issue during his Facebook town hall meeting last month. The Joint Staff did not ask the Defense Commissary Agency to come up with a contingency plan to close 100 percent of U.S. commissaries, senior military officials said.

Space Coast –

EDC awarded $270K in defense grants

Florida Today © January 28, 2014
By Wayne T. Price

The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast announced this afternoon that it had been awarded $270,000 in Florida defense grants for fiscal year 2013-14. The award was part of Gov. Rick Scott's announcement of $2.45 million in defense grants going to communities and organizations that support Florida military installations.

Eglin AFB –
AFMC commander discusses challenges and successes


Air Force Materiel Command Public Affairs © January 24, 2014

Challenges that lie ahead and a recap of recent successes highlighted Air Force Materiel Command commander Gen. Janet Wolfenbarger's commander's call here Jan. 23. It was the first of what will be several workforce communication engagements for the general. In the coming months, Wolfenbarger will hold a commander's call at each AFMC base. Speaking to a packed base theater crowd, the general acknowledged that 2013 had many challenges. Top among those challenges were budget issues, sequestration and furloughs, all of which in turn had great impacts on mission, quality of life and force management……..

Assessing the F-35

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © January 30, 2014

While Pentagon testers gave high marks to the F-35 program for matching or exceeding flight test goals through October 2013, despite lost productivity connected to the sequester and government shutdown, they hit the program for falling behind in testing mission systems and weapons integration testing, according to the Fiscal 2013 Director of Operational Test and Evaluation’s annual report. The F-35 program office should ensure flight test timeline estimates for remaining systems demonstration flight testing “faithfully account” for the historic growth in F-35 testing, especially mission systems and weapons integration, states the report. The office also wants low observable repair times tracked in monthly performance metrics, and track and publish metrics on overall software stability in flight-testing……..

Pentagon: F-35 Software Remains Seriously Flawed


Defense One © January 30, 2014

By Bob Brewin
The $397 billion F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program suffers from such severe software problems that aircraft could not conduct operational missions today, the Pentagon’s chief tester said in his annual report to Congress, which was released to the public yesterday. Contractor Lockheed Martin Corp. develops the F-35 software in three blocks. The first is designed to support training, followed by a second block for initial combat operations. The final block for full combat operations is expected in 2019, 23 years after the Pentagon signed the contract to acquire just under 2,500 of the aircraft for all four services………

1st Luke F-35 pilot training at Eglin


Northwest Florida Daily News © January 31, 2014

By STAFF SGT. TIMOTHY BOYER AND AIRMAN 1ST CLASS PEDRO MOTA / 56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Flying is a concept that captures the imagination of some people at a very young age; hence the success of characters like Peter Pan, Superman and even a flying house in the 2009 movie “Up.” Few get to realize that dream, but Capt. Joshua Arki, a 61st Fighter Squadron instructor pilot and chief of weapons and tactics, realized his dream by first mastering flight in an F-16 Fighting Falcon and has now been selected as the first Luke Air Force Base F-16 pilot to transition to the F-35 Lightning II joint strike fighter, scheduled to arrive at Luke early this year………

Clearwater –

Pinellas receives $200,000 defense grant

http://www.tbnweekly.com/pinellas_county/content_articles/020214_pco-04.txt
TBN Weekly © February 2, 2014

Gov. Rick Scott announced Jan. 24 that local defense partners in Pinellas County were awarded $200,000 through Florida’s Defense Infrastructure Grant.
Pinellas County was one of eight counties to receive a Defense Infrastructure Grant, which allotted $1.6 million to eight governments statewide.

NS Mayport –

**Charlie Wharf 1 Opens For Business**


Mayport Mirror © January 29, 2014

Representatives from Naval Station Mayport’s Surface community joined Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) and construction company, Orion Marine, in a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of Charlie Wharf 1 on Jan. 27 and a groundbreaking for Charlie Wharf 2 only a couple of days later. The projects are part of funded improvements to the aging Charlie Pier.

NAS Jacksonville --

**Three Jacksonville facilities awarded multi-million-dollar contracts this week**


Florida Times-Union © January 24, 2014

By Clifford Davis

The Department of Defense announced that three Jacksonville facilities won multi-million-dollar government contracts this week. The Boeing Company received a $17.8 million contract to upgrade F/A-18 Hornet airplanes, with 92 percent of the work coming to Boeing’s Cecil Airport facility. The facility began performing upgrades on the planes in 1999 and recently became the national center of component structural repair for the planes.
Duval, Clay receive almost half million in defense grants


Jacksonville Business Journal © January 27, 2014

By Timothy Gibbons

Duval and Clay counties have received $475,000 for military-related projects, including $125,000 to support military-community relations. The money comes from the Florida Defense Grants Programs, which is administered by Enterprise Florida. The biggest chunk of the money will be used by Jacksonville to buy up development rights around Outlying Landing Field Whitehouse, a nearby landing strip where Navy pilots practice nighttime landings……

Homestead ARB –

Army Parachute Team moves into its winter home: Golden Knights operate from Homestead until March

http://www.keysnet.com/2014/01/30/494374/army-parachute-team-moves-into.html

Keys Net © January 30, 2014

By DAVID GOODHUE

From now until March, if you're driving through south Miami-Dade County, black and gold parachutes might be a common sight in the skies over Homestead Air Reserve Base. The United States Army's Golden Knights Parachute Team has moved to its winter home at the base. The team is stationed at Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, N.C., but has made its annual trek to South Florida, where its skydivers are able to jump most days in clear skies, calmer winds and warm weather……

Tyndall AFB –
Air Force engineering units headed to Florida
http://www.greatfallstribune.com/article/20140131/NEWS01/301310016/Air-Force-engineering-units-headed-Florida?nclick_check=1

Great Falls Tribune © January 30, 2014

By Jenn Rowell

Some military engineers from the Great Falls area are headed to Florida today. They’ll be leaving the snow and bitter cold behind, but they won’t be hitting the beach. Airmen from the 341st Civil Engineering Squadron, 219th RED HORSE and 120th Civil Engineering Squadron are headed to Tyndall Air Force Base for a training exercise known as Silver Flag……..

Florida National Guard –

Pentagon cuts could cost Florida National Guard 1,000 troops

Miami Herald © January 30, 2014

BY CAROL ROSENBERG
A current Pentagon plan to reduce the size of the Army would lose the Florida National Guard about 1,000 troops, or about a 10th of the force, the FNG said in a said Wednesday. The statement noted that the so-called force-structure realignment is still under discussion, and no decision has been made. But the state drew up the projection based on a proposed across-the-board reduction in Army National Guard forces to 315,000 in coming budget years……..

Proposed Army plan would cut Florida Guard, Reserve by 10 percent
By Clifford Davis

The Florida National Guard is speaking out against a plan they say the U.S. Army is floating that would slash the state’s Guard personnel by 10 percent. The plan would cut the entire National Guard from 350,000 soldiers to 315,000, according to Lt. Col. James Evans, director of public affairs for the Florida National Guard. The cuts would mean a reduction in force for the Florida arm of the Guard from roughly 10,000 to 9,000 soldiers, as well as a loss of helicopters often used for rescue missions……..

Commission: Move Manpower Into Air Reserve, National Guard Components

By AARON MEHTA

The US Air Force should look at moving as much manpower into the Reserve and Air National Guard components as possible, according to a new report from a congressionally mandated panel. The National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force delivered its long-awaited report Thursday, and as expected, the eight-member committee believes that moving more force structure into the part-time components could save billions of dollars annually that could instead be used for readiness and modernization……..

The USAF Rebalance
http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

By Air Force-Magazine © January 31, 2014

If the Air Force rebalances its end strength and resourcing across the Active Duty and reserve components, it stands to save valuable dollars in areas where Congress is offering little relief, according to the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force report. Specifically, increased operational integration will lead to “significant” savings in military personnel accounts
without appreciably increasing operational risk, states the report, which was released Thursday on Capitol Hill. By utilizing the Air Reserve Component on a routine basis, its readiness rates will increase, serving as an added benefit to the Total Force.

**Commission: Disestablish AFRC**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © February 3, 2014

The National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force recommended disestablishing Air Force Reserve Command and its numbered Air Forces in an effort to realign Air Force headquarters functions and rebalance the Total Force. “As the Air Force progresses toward fuller integration at the unit level, the need for an (AFRC) as a ‘force providing’ headquarters declines, as does the need for its subordinate (NAFs),” states the commission's report. Commission Chairman Dennis McCarthy said the report, released last week, recommends the position of Chief of the Air Force Reserve be retained, and along with the Director of the Air National Guard, will still have direct access to the USAF Chief of Staff.

Other Items of Interest –

**US Air Force Commission Readies Report to Congress**


Defense News © January 29, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force will deliver its recommendations to Congress this Thursday, putting an end-note on one of the most tumultuous periods in US Air Force history. The Jan. 30 appearances — 10:00 a.m. in the Russell Senate Office Building and 1:30 p.m. in the Rayburn House Office Building
— will mark the formal end of work for the eight commissioners, who began the process of tackling deep divides among the active, Guard and Reserve components of the Air Force roughly nine months ago.

Rogers Nominated To Helm NSA/Cyber Command

Defense News © January 30, 2014

By ZACHARY FRYER-BIGGS

President Obama has nominated Vice Adm. Michael Rogers, the US Navy’s cyber chief and long viewed as the likely successor to US Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) and National Security Agency (NSA) head Gen. Keith Alexander, to take over for Alexander when he retires later this year, the Defense Department announced late Thursday. Rogers, who became commander of US Fleet Cyber Command in 2011, served as the director of intelligence for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and US Pacific Command.

Robyn to Write about Obstacles to Achieving Agencies’ Infrastructure, Energy Goals


Defense Communities 360 © January 31, 2014

Dorothy Robyn, who previously held the Pentagon’s top installations slot, this week said she would step down in March as commissioner of the General Services Administration’s (GSA) Public Buildings Service. In an interview with the Washington Post, Robyn said she next will write about shortcomings in the government preventing effective management of federal infrastructure and improvements in energy conservation. “I’ve been a part of some tremendous work both here at GSA and at DOD and I want to go write about that and also write about the impediments to GSA and DOD doing it better,” she told the paper.
FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** -- The next Task Force will be on the **afternoon** of **Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 316 W. Tennessee Ave. Tallahassee, FL 32301 beginning at 1:30 PM and ending approximately 5:00 PM.** This day is scheduled to be Military Day at The Capitol and is being held with Florida National Guard military displays and an event with the Governor and Legislators in the courtyard at noon. The legislature is currently planning to act upon military and veteran initiatives Tuesday morning. We are still working the details on this meeting, but members should plan on arriving in Tallahassee Monday afternoon, March 10th. Please confirm you attendance with me or Donna if you have not already done so.

2. **New, Improved Task Force Web Site** – Please note the new URL for our web site. The web site can be found at: [http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/the-florida-defense-support-task-force/](http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/the-florida-defense-support-task-force/)

3. **Attachments:**
   - Air Force Chief of Staff Letter on Force Management
   - Legislative Update

Regards, BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**
Army to push for new BRAC round in 2017


Army Times © February 5, 2014

Army officials will begin a public push for a new round of base closures that could take place as early as 2017, according to an Army spokesperson. Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary of the Army for installations, energy and environment, and other Army officials will make the case for a new round of base realignment and closures in line with the administration’s goals to create a more efficient Defense Department at the Association of Defense Communities Installation Innovation Forum Feb. 10.........

DOD Budget Cuts –

Reid readies bill repealing pension cuts

http://thehill.com/blogs/defcon-hill/policy-strategy/197298-senate-dems-teeing-up-bill-to-repeal-military-pension-cuts#ixzz2sIx8E28g

The Hill © February 3, 2014

By Jeremy Herb

The Senate is gearing up to vote on a bill as early as next week that would repeal the $6 billion cut to military pensions as part of a larger veterans package, according to Senate aides. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) is likely to file cloture Thursdasy on the bill, authored by Veterans Affairs Chairman Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.). That would set up a procedural vote next Monday, a Senate Democratic leadership aide said.......
Defense Communities 360 © February 3, 2013

The Air Force should consider, with congressional authorization, closing or “warm basing” some installations, so that scarce budget dollars can be more efficiently allocated to readiness accounts, according to a congressionally created commission that focused on how to balance the service’s force structure between its active and reserve components. “Warm basing may, in some cases, be a better, more cost-effective option than closing bases as it can save in conversion costs while also leaving infrastructure available for future contingencies,” according to the final report of the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force.

Platform, personnel cuts likely in FY ’15 Air Force budget

Air Force Times © February 2, 2014

By Aaron Mehta

This close to the March 4 submission of the fiscal 2015 budget request, getting specifics from service officials can be like pulling teeth. But a number of statements, both in public appearances and during interviews, provide a sense of direction for the Air Force’s plans. The message: Expect to see big cuts to personnel and platforms. The overall theme of the budget is the question of capability today or capability tomorrow. It’s a tricky path for the service, which has cut readiness in order to keep modernization programs — most notably the KC-46A tanker, F-35 joint strike fighter and new long-range strike bomber — moving forward.

Congress Must Make ‘Unimaginable’ Defense Budget Choices: HASC’s Adam Smith

Breaking Defense © February 6, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

“We are going to have to do some series of things that previously were unimaginable, OK? So we’re going to have to re-adjust our imagination. We’ve simply chosen not to,” Rep. Adam Smith, the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, said today. “We need a
strategic response in Congress other than just ‘no, don’t cut that.’” The detailed packages of potential cuts rolled out yesterday by four think tanks are a model for the painful program choices Congress and the Pentagon have to confront, Smith told reporters at a Defense Writers’ Group breakfast this morning.

Eglin AFB –

**Local leaders worry about proposed Air Force cuts**


Northwest Florida Daily News © February 5, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

The Air Force plans to cut about 22,500 airmen, or 7 percent of its active-duty force, this year, according to recent reports from the Air Force Personnel Center. About 14,000 active-duty airmen are stationed locally at Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field. Base officials say the number that could be cut locally has not yet been determined, but the wide-reaching force management program is not likely to leave Northwest Florida untouched.

**Navy’s F-35 Tailhook Passes Initial Tests; Carrier Flights In October**


Breaking Defense © February 5, 2014

By COLIN CLARK

The F-35C, the Navy version of the Joint Strike Fighter and the plane most in danger of being cut or reduced by its service, has passed the first round of critical tests of its tail hook, the part of the plane that makes traditional carrier landings possible. “All flight test objectives were met,” Joe DellaVedova, F-35 program spokesman, said in an email. “We’re not declaring victory but
last month (9 to 16 Jan) the F-35 team accomplished 36 successful roll-in arrestment tests at Lakehurst with the redesigned F-35C arresting hook system on CF-3.”

Tyndall AFB –

**Tyndall leads Super Bowl air defense**


By Rod Duren

Fighter jets under command of the Continental United States North American Aerospace Defense Command Region (CONR) – and under the direction of Tyndall Air Force Base’s 1st Air Force leadership – have been preparing this week along with with interagency partners to protect the skies above Super Bowl XLVII today at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey. CONR, a component of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), conducted air defense exercise flights over the stadium Wednesday to provide partners practice in responding to airspace violations.

**Tyndall Air Force Base waterways town hall now set for Feb. 12**


The second town hall on a controversial waterways proposal from Tyndall Air Force Base is now set for Feb. 12 at the Mexico Beach Civic Center. The town hall had been scheduled for Jan. 30 but was rescheduled because of the ice storm. “Tyndall remains committed to involving all members of the local community throughout the entire process. The plan to hold the second town hall in Mexico Beach allows Tyndall officials
to reach out to community members that were unable to attend the town hall held at Gulf Coast State College,” Tyndall officials wrote in a news release........

Florida National Guard –

**Lawmaker tries to block transfer of Guard Apaches and personnel cuts**


Army Times © February 3, 2014

In what is likely the opening shot in a looming battle between Congress and the Army, Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., has introduced a bill that would freeze the Army’s plans to transfer all of the National Guard’s AH-64 Apache helicopters to the active-duty force and prevent most of the proposed Guard personnel cuts. Introduced on Jan. 27, the bill is meant to stop a repeat of the 1990s, when the Army’s active component, Guard and Reserve all had to compete for scarce resources, said Caroline Delleney, a spokeswoman for Wilson...........

**National Guard Fights For Cyber Role In 2015 Budget**


Breaking Defense © February 5, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Chinese and Russian hackers have everybody running scared. So whatever else happens with the president’s budget request for fiscal year 2015, we know it will include more money for things cyber, from purely defensive network security to black-budget “offensive cyber weapons” such as the Stuxnet worm. But one big thing remains in doubt: the role of the National Guard. Cyber Command wants the Guard to help.........
Army National Guard Recruiters Collected $29M in Fraudulent ‘Bounties’


Defense One © February 4, 2014

By Charles S. Clark

Undeserved “bounties” collected by recruiters under contract with the Army National Guard added up to fraud totaling at least $29 million in a program designed to boost troop strength during the Iraq war and after Hurricane Katrina, a Senate panel learned on Tuesday. The state-administered Guard Recruiting Assistance Program, or G-RAP, launched in 2005 but cancelled in 2012 when the fraud came to light, paid thousands of dollars in fees to National Guard members, retirees, and civilians to recruit friends and family, and was considered successful enough to use in Army and Army Reserve recruiting………

Legislation Calls for Commission to Study Army Force Structure

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/legislation-calls-for-commission-to-study-army-force-structure/#

Defense Communities 360 © February 4, 2014

Rep. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.) has introduced a bill that would form a commission to make recommendations about how the Army’s force structure should be allocated between the service’s active and reserve components. The commission, which would be similar to the one that just released a report recommending changes to the Air Force, would help address the growing dispute between the active-duty Army, and the National Guard and Reserve……

Other Items of Interest –

House approves bill to ease in-state tuition rules for veterans


Military Times © February 3, 2014
A bill that would require schools to ease in-state tuition rules for veterans — or lose eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill entirely — sailed through the House today, with support from a broad, bipartisan majority of lawmakers. The legislation must still pass the Senate and be signed by the president to become law. But a similar bill in that chamber has also attracted bipartisan support, so even as the vast majority of other bills have died in a deeply divided Congress, the prospects for this proposal to become law appear relatively strong.

US Army Faces Massive Recruiting Fraud Scandal

Criminal investigators suspect hundreds of US Army soldiers exploited a recruitment program to receive illegal kickbacks worth more than $29 million, lawmakers and officials said Tuesday. The scale of the potential fraud was “astounding” and ranks as one of the largest criminal probes in the Army’s history, said Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., who held a hearing on the scandal. An Army audit has found that more than 1,200 recruiters had received payments that were potentially fraudulent, defense officials said.

Hagel Says Ethical Scandals Are a ‘Growing Problem’ in the Military

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel is worried that after more than a decade of fighting two wars, the nation’s military is under a different kind of stress that’s leading to a loss of “moral character.” One scandal after another has popped up in the news. An Air Force general was fired for drinking and misconduct during a trip to Russia. An officer in charge of the Air Force’s
sexual assault prevention program was arrested for attacking a woman outside an Arlington, Va., strip club. A group of nuclear missile operators were suspended for cheating on proficiency exams. Now the Navy is investigating several trainers at its nuclear propulsion program for cheating ......
FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** -- The next Task Force will be on the afternoon of **Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 316 W. Tennessee Ave. Tallahassee, FL 32301** beginning at 1:30 PM and ending approximately 5:00 PM. This day is scheduled to be Military Day at The Capitol and is being held with Florida National Guard military displays and an event with the Governor and Legislators in the courtyard at noon. The legislature is currently planning to act upon military and veteran initiatives Tuesday morning. We are still working the details on this meeting, but members should plan on arriving in Tallahassee Monday afternoon, March 10th. Please confirm you attendance with me or Donna and let us know if you need lodging if you have not already done so.

2. **New, Improved Task Force Web Site** – Please note the new URL for our web site. The web site can be found at: [http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/the-florida-defense-support-task-force/](http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/the-florida-defense-support-task-force/)

3. **Attachments:**

   - Letters of support from FDSTF

Regards,  BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**

**BRAC –**
DoD pushing Congress, communities for 2017 base closures


Federal Times © February 6, 2014

By ANDY MEDICI

The Defense Department is preparing to ask for a round of base closures in 2017 and is making the case to defense communities and lawmakers, according to Army officials. Paul Cramer, deputy assistant secretary for installations and partnerships, said the Army is also working with the rest of the Defense Department on the possibility to include a BRAC authorization in the upcoming 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). It is not yet decided whether DoD will officially ask for its inclusion in the legislation, but there are indications that it will be part of the DoD budget request to be announced in March……

Up(Capitol)hill Battle Remains for DOD to Secure New BRAC Authorization

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/upcapitolhill-battle-remains-for-dod-to-secure-new-brac-authorization/

Defense Communities 360 © February 13, 2014

Little has changed in the battle between Congress and the Pentagon over whether lawmakers will authorize a new BRAC in the two years since the Obama administration first asked to hold additional rounds of base closure, with DOD still needing to overcome significant opposition in both chambers. If DOD wants lawmakers to approve a new round, the department will need to counter past arguments against it and, possibly, surmount an even higher hurdle — defend the momentum leading toward a much smaller military — according to discussions led by installation officials and Capitol Hill staff at this week’s 2014 Installation Innovation Forum……

DOD Budget Cuts –

White House Pushes Budget Hike
Defense News © February 9, 2014

The White House and Pentagon, after weeks of back-and-forth debate, appear ready to expand the Defense Department’s budget starting in 2016. Administration officials are contemplating a $535 billion DoD budget in 2016, one source said, which is about $36 billion over the sequester cap. The administration would offset the defense increase in other areas of the federal budget, sources said……..

At Pentagon, pre-emptive budget strikes

The Hill © February 9, 2014

By Jeremy Herb

Lawmakers are trying to strong-arm the Pentagon into saving favored programs and pet projects ahead of the release of its 2015 budget next month. Projects on the do-not-touch list include the Navy’s 11-carrier fleet — defended by Rep. Randy Forbes (R) and others in Virginia where carriers are built — and the Air Force’s A-10 “Warthog” aircraft, long a favorite of Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.) and Rep. Ron Barber (D-Ariz.)……..

Before budget rollout, Pentagon official says military must shrink
http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/11/us-usa-defense-budget-idUSBREA1A27Q20140211

Reuters © February 11, 2014

BY DAVID ALEXANDER

The U.S. military must shrink in coming years as it tries to balance less spending with investments to stay ahead of potential Asian rivals, a leading Pentagon official said just weeks before a new defense budget is rolled out. Acting Deputy Defense Secretary Christine Fox, speaking to a naval conference in San Diego, said the U.S. military could not risk falling
behind in a race for technological superiority as China and other countries increase defense spending at a time of declining Pentagon budgets......

A bad omen for Pentagon budget?
http://thehill.com/blogs/defcon-hill/budget-appropriations/198469-pension-repeal-bad-omen-for-pentagon-budget-analysts#ixzz2tX41ya9A

The Hill © February 16, 2014
By Jeremy Herb

The swift work in Congress to repeal $6 billion in cuts to military pensions that passed just two months earlier is a bad omen for future efforts to curb military personnel costs, budget analysts say. Congress included the reductions in military retirement pay as part of the December budget deal, but it quickly reversed course amid a major backlash from veterans groups. “It is definitely a step backwards and is going to make future efforts much more difficult,” said Ed Lorenzen, a senior adviser to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget........

US Navy Would Receive Largest Piece of Fiscal '16 Budget Boost
Defense News © February 16, 2014
By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The US Navy would get the largest chunk of the additional $36 billion the White House is considering giving to the Pentagon for fiscal 2016, according to defense sources. The revelation comes as the Pentagon and White House finalize the Defense Department’s fiscal 2015 budget proposal, which includes the increased 2016 projection. But without a repeal or modification to the Budget Control Act, the increased funds would be subject to sequestration to bring them in line with existing budget caps, perhaps forcing cuts in other areas........

Space Coast –
45th Force Support Squadron gives Airmen tools necessary for FY 14 Force Management Program


Patrick AFB © February 11, 2014

By 45th Space Wing Public Affairs

The Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force have announced a robust FY14 Force Management Program that will cut about 25,000 Airmen over the next several years, and will affect all grades - officer and enlisted. To address questions and concerns that will arise from the announcement, the 45th Force Support Squadron's Military Personnel Section is doing their best to provide up-to-date information to Airmen by briefing their units and hosting weekly Town Hall Meetings…….

Busy year planned at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station


Bay News 9 © February 9, 2014

By Jerry Hume

It's promising to be one of the busiest years at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. There is new leadership at the 45th Space Wing, which oversees operations at the Air Force station. They want people to know it’s not NASA, but the Air Force launching these 21 planned missions this year. It’s one of the big misconceptions that people mistakenly think the launches are happening at the Kennedy Space Center. But it’s actually on the Cape where United Launch Alliance, SpaceX and even NASA missions will all launch this year…….

MacDill AFB –

Hundreds at MacDill may lose jobs from Air Force cuts


Tampa Tribune © February 13, 2014
Nearly 900 airmen at MacDill Air Force Base have been notified they may potentially lose their jobs as part of an Air Force move to trim 25,000 jobs over the next five years. About 880 airmen from the 6th Air Mobility Wing, the base host unit, have been notified that they are part of “non-voluntary force management programs,” said 2nd Lt. Patrick Gargan, a wing spokesman. With the Pentagon seeking to trim about $1 trillion over the next decade, the services are being forced to reduce troop levels. The Air Force has nearly 330,000 active duty airmen and is seeking to cut about 8 percent……..

NAS Jacksonville –

**War prepared them to save lives in Jacksonville**


Florida Times-Union © February 9, 2014

By Clifford Davis

On a dusty road in the middle of nowhere, Afghanistan, an IED explodes under a U.S. Humvee. It’s an ambush: rocket-propelled grenades, rifle and machine-gun fire rain down from the nearby hills. U.S. troops fight off the attack, but several are wounded. Medics tie tourniquets; buddies apply bandages and radio ahead as they speed to the closest coalition hospital……..

Tyndall AFB –

**Many unhappy after Tyndall security meeting**


News Herald © February 12, 2014
Representatives of more than 50 local businesses that depend on access to Shell Island and Crooked Island have signed a letter asking Air Force officials to remove language from a draft waterway security plan that would restrict access to those islands. Tom Adams read the letter on behalf of the group calling itself the Friends of Shell Island Wednesday evening during a town hall meeting to discuss the plan. About 50 people — including officials from Tyndall Air Force Base, Mexico Beach and Panama City — attended the town hall to ask questions and hear the revisions base officials made based on feedback from a similar meeting in Panama City in December.

**Air Force plans cuts; impact on Tyndall unknown**


News Herald © February 6, 2014

By **CHRIS OLWELL** and **LAUREN SAGE REINLIE**

Local officials said Thursday they don’t know what impact, if any, the Air Force’s plans to cut about 22,500 airmen from its active duty force would have on airmen stationed at Tyndall Air Force Base. The cuts are expected to come over the course of about a year, and many, if not all, of the positions will be cut through attrition, said Tyndall spokesman Herman Bell and Bay Defense Alliance President Tom Neubauer. Bell suggested the Air Force might first target airmen with problems in their background if too few positions are cut through attrition or offer early retirement to airmen with less than 20 years.

**Florida National Guard –**

**NGAUS Head Knocks Senior Pentagon Leaders On Army Budget Battle**

http://breakingdefense.com/2014/02/ngaus-head-knocks-senior-pentagon-leaders-on-army-budget-battle/

Breaking Defense © February 10, 2014

By **SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.**

When the armed services come here to make their case to Congress, the Army tends to be the elephant: huge, grey, and kind of clumsy. But this year, as the regular Army heads into what will likely be a bitter battle over fiscal 2015 funding with the Army National Guard, the service’s
leadership is showing some style and unaccustomed savvy — according to no less an authority than its chief opponent, the powerful National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS)……

Naval Air Station Pensacola –

**Economist: Region won't escape cuts**


Pensacola News-Journal © February 16, 2014

University of West Florida’s economic development director and professor, Dr. Rick Harper, says the Air Force’s proposed aggressive down-sizing of as many as 22,500 personnel service-wide will likely have some negative effects on Northwest Florida. The region — from Pensacola to Panama City — has more than half of all Air Force active-duty military personnel based in Florida. The UWF economist believes the effects of the proposed reductions will likely make it difficult for Northwest Florida to escape unscathed, according to a Feb. 7 report on the WUWF-FM website……..

NAS Whiting Field –

**More Buffer Land for NAS Whiting Field**


WUWF.org © February 11, 2014

**BY** [DAVE DUNWOODY](http://www.pnj.com/article/20140216/NEWS12/302160015/Quick-hits-Sunday-Feb-16-2014?nclick_check=1)

Naval Air Station Whiting Field has secured more than 490 acres, as part of its double mission of conservation and mission buffering. That brings to roughly 3,500 acres the
amount of land adjacent to the base that’s been purchased. Whiting Field worked on the transaction with Santa Rosa County, Navy Region Southeast and the Naval Facilities Command Southeast..........

Other Items of Interest –

**US Shelves Combatant Command Proposals**


Defense News © February 9, 2014
By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The Pentagon is dismissing proposals to merge some regional warfighting commands and will instead push forward with efforts to shrink the sizes of these headquarters, sources said. In the end, the proposed mergers of combatant commands (COCOMs) proved too controversial and hard to complete, one source said. A proposal to combine Northern and Southern command into an "Americas" or "Western" command would have been particularly difficult since NORTHCOM, which oversees security within the continental United States, Alaska, Canada and Mexico, heavily involves the National Guard........

**Is the F-35 Worth It? (60 Minutes Story)**


*The following script is from "The F-35" which aired on Feb. 16, 2014. David Martin is the correspondent. Mary Walsh, producer.*

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter is the Pentagon's newest warplane and its most expensive weapons system ever -- nearly $400 billion to buy 2,400 aircraft. To put that in perspective, that's about twice as much as it cost to put a man on the moon -- this at a time when the White House and Congress are fighting over ways to reduce the federal...
deficit and cuts in defense spending are forcing the Pentagon to shrink the size of the military.

NAUS WASHINGTON REPORT

Congress Repeals Military COLA-Cut
NAUS is pleased to see the House and Senate act with speed and in unison to ensure veterans receive all the benefits they have been promised and have earned while fighting in the uniform of our country. First the House on Tuesday and then the Senate on Wednesday approved legislation (S. 25) that would undo the cuts to military retirement pay enacted under the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA), otherwise known as the Ryan-Murray budget deal. Passage in both chambers was overwhelming; 326 to 90 in the House and 95 to 3 in the Senate. The bill now goes to the President for his signature.

House Passes In-State Tuition Bill for Veterans
One thing the House can agree on is that veterans shouldn’t be stuck with out-of-state tuition costs at public universities. The House approved Veterans’ Affairs Chairman Jeff Miller’s bill (HR 357) without a single dissenting vote, 390-0. The bill would require schools to ease residency rules for vets — or lose GI Bill eligibility entirely. The measure must still pass the Senate and be signed by the president to become law, and a more expansive veterans bill in the Senate, which covers many issues in addition to in-state tuition, appears to lack the broad, bipartisan support of the House bill. But such a show of support in the House likely means the chances are good that some version of the in-state tuition proposal will become law by the end of the year.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill covers the full cost of tuition at public universities at the in-state rate but does not pay for the extra fees charged to students designated as out-of-state. This can often be a problem for vets, who have been ordered by Uncle Sam to move around the country or the world. The cost difference is substantial. The average cost of in-state tuition at public schools in the 2012-13 school year was $8,655, according to the College Board. For out-of-state students, it was $21,706. Under H.R. 357, dubbed the GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act, any school that doesn’t offer in-state tuition to vets when the bill becomes effective in summer 2016 would be prohibited from accepting any GI Bill benefits.
FDSTF Members –

1. **March Task Force Meeting** -- The next Task Force will be on the afternoon of Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 316 W. Tennessee St. Tallahassee, FL 32301 beginning at 1:30 PM and ending approximately 5:00 PM. This day is scheduled to be Military Day at The Capitol and is being held with Florida National Guard military displays and an event with the Governor and Legislators in the courtyard at noon. The legislature is currently planning to act upon military and veteran initiatives Tuesday morning. **Note: Task Force members no longer need to plan to arrive on March 10th.** Please confirm your attendance and room reservation if needed with me or Donna if you have not already done so.

2. **Attachments:**
   - Legislative Update
   - FL GI Bill Legislation – Staff analyses of major Senate and House bills

Regards, BG.

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**Task Force web site:**  

**Articles of Interest:**
Poll: It’s Time for Congress to Agree to Close Military Bases


Defense One © February 18, 2014

By Sara Sorcher

It’s high time for Congress to agree to the Pentagon’s request to close military bases, a whopping 91 percent of National Journal’s National Security Insiders said. Lawmakers, even as they search for ways to cut spending, have rebuffed the Defense Department’s requests to close military installations it no longer needs as the military downsizes after long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan—to the dismay of the pool of national security experts. “Enough already,” one Insider said…………

Congress Should OK Pentagon’s BRAC Request, Defense Experts Say

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/congress-should-ok-pentagons-brac-request-defense-experts-say/#

Defense Communities 360 © February 18, 2014

Ninety-one percent of the defense and foreign policy experts responding to a survey conducted by the National Journal believe that Congress should approve the Defense Department’s request to hold a new round of base closures. “Excess capacity exists across all the military services. Congress and communities face either a slow decline at every base, with little hope for any economic relief anywhere, or selective closures that bolster needed bases and let other areas start on the road to recovery and life after closure,” according to one of the publication’s National Security Insiders, a group of more than 100 defense and foreign policy experts………

Military Can Close Bases WITHOUT Congress’s OK: ‘Take Your Chances,’ Says Hill Staffer
Fear is in the air. “The commercial base will disappear,” Boeing executive James Moran believes. It’s not just sequestration, the retired brigadier general said this morning at the Association of the US Army’s winter conference. There is real anxiety among defense contractors that as budgets tighten, the Army will starve private sector companies of work to keep feeding its in-house government facilities, the depots and arsenals whose employees are so popular with Congress. But maybe it’s Congress that should be worried. Yes, the Hill has consistently blocked a new Base Realignment And Closure round, the process that has governed cutbacks in military facilities throughout the post-Cold War era.

Lawmakers Preempt Pentagon on BRAC

With DOD’s fiscal 2015 budget proposal scheduled to be released in less than two weeks, questions from reporters as to how Congress would respond to an expected request for a new round of base closures are on the rise. In recent weeks, several lawmakers, including two Democrats on the Senate Armed Services Committee, responded that it is unlikely Congress would agree to a new round. When asked last week how a BRAC would affect Central Florida, Sen. Bill Nelson (Fla.) told the reporter, “I’m a senior member of the Armed Services Committee from which it would come, and we’re not having a BRAC any time soon.”

Rep. Smith Warns Congress: Close Bases Or DoD May Do It Without Us

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR. and COLIN CLARK
Yesterday, Hill staffer Vickie Plunkett made some mid-sized waves at the Association of the US Army’s winter conference when she noted that the military can legally close bases and arsenals without seeking congressional approval — and publicly urged the Army to “take your chances” and try it. This afternoon, we got this remarkably supportive reaction from the office of Rep. Adam Smith, the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, which Plunkett happens to work for……..

DOD Budget Cuts –

Pentagon Budget Stuck in Last Century as Warfare Changes

Bloomberg News © February 19, 2014

By Gopal Ratnam

Uncertainty has proven painful for defense contractors, especially smaller companies that don’t have deals locked in for months or years to come. Pentagon contracts plunged to $12.1 billion in January, a 67 percent decrease from December. The Obama administration foresees 21st century wars fought with fewer boots on the ground and more drones in the air, while the Pentagon continues buying weapons from the last century. In his Feb. 12 State of the Union address, President Barack Obama said America no longer needs to deploy tens of thousands of troops to occupy nations or meet the evolving threat from new extremist groups. Cyber-attacks are the “rapidly growing threat,” he said……..

Air Force Launches Major New Strategy, Budget Looks; Start Work On Sixth Gen Fighter: CSAF Welsh

Breaking Defense © February 20, 2014
The Air Force has launched a major effort to craft a new strategy and new efforts to better plan how it will spend its money, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh said today. “The question for us now is, what is next? Is it strategic agility, cyber-centric operations, blended deterrence, all the above or some combination? I don’t know. Whatever it is, we’ve got to figure it out, and we’ve got to figure it out quick,” Welsh said, during a presentation to some 500 people attending the Air Force Association’s winter conference. New Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James was seated in the front row, listening to Welsh’s speech.

5 Things You Need to Know About the Next Defense Budget


By Sara Sorcher

March 4 is the date to watch for Washington’s defense wonks. That’s when the Pentagon plans to release its budget request for next year. And when the document drops, it will sound the starting gun for a slew of battles over military spending. The budget deal Congress passed in December eased some of the Pentagon’s pain from the sequester, which was intended to slice $500 billion from defense accounts over a decade.

Wish List Could Encourage Lawmakers to Tinker with DOD’s Budget Request

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/wish-list-could-encourage-lawmakers-to-tinker-with-dods-budget-request/

Defense Communities 360 © February 20, 2014

The Defense Department’s intent to attach a $26 billion list of unfunded requirements to its fiscal 2015 budget request could have unintended consequences, as appropriators swap out programs included in the administration’s proposal for favored programs that failed to make the cut. Including a list of second-tier priorities with the budget request also could embolden service chiefs to push Congress to fund programs that were left out of DOD’s baseline spending plan, reported CQ.
Space Notebook: Launch Complex 46 to receive upgrade


Florida Today © February 15, 2014

By James Dean

Space Florida has awarded ATK contracts worth $2.6 million to upgrade communications systems at Launch Complex 46 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, one of two state-operated pads. The work is the third phase of a refurbishment and modernization project begun in 2010 with a $500,000 grant.........

CO, master chief fired after raising funds from strip clubs

http://www.navytimes.com/article/20140218/NEWS/302180022

Navy Times © February 18, 2014

By Meghann Myers

The commanding officer and senior enlisted leader of a Florida-based ordnance testing unit have been fired after determining their command sought Submarine Birthday Ball funds from local strip clubs, the Navy said Tuesday. Capt. John Heatherington, the CO of Naval Ordnance Test Unit in Cape Canaveral, Fla., was relieved of duty Tuesday by Vice Adm. Terry Benedict, the director of Strategic Systems Programs, SSP spokesman John Daniels told Navy Times..........
Defense News © February 18, 2014

By AARON MEHTA
Starting Wednesday, US Air Force leadership will descend on the Orlando, Fla., area for the annual Air Force Association Air Warfare Symposium. In recent years AFA Orlando, as it’s commonly referred to, has been one of the many defense shows hit hard by sequestration. While the major industry players will have booths there, expect them to be relatively small, with few, if any, major announcements.

Delta IV Scheduled To Launch GPS IIF Feb. 20


Aviation Week © February 14, 2014

By Jen DiMascio

The U.S. Air Force and the United Launch Alliance are scheduled to launch GPS IIF satellite 5 Feb. 20 on a Delta IV rocket from Space Launch Complex 37 Cape Canaveral, Fla., the first of three planned launches through July 2014. The launch comes before final reports have been filed regarding an investigation into the 2012 Delta IV launch in which an upper stage RL10B-2 engine experienced low thrust. Final reports from the Air Force and ULA, as well as an accident investigation board report directed by Air Force Space Command Commander Gen. William Shelton, are anticipated in April, says Col. William Hodgkiss, launch systems director.

Team Orlando –

Team Orlando Supporting STEM Day at the Capitol

http://www.teamorlando.org/team-orlando-supporting-floridas-stem-day/

Team Orlando © February 18, 2014

By Dolly Rairigh Glass

Team Orlando STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) Advocate, Benn Aaronson, will take part in the first ever STEM Day at the Capitol, March 5, at the Capitol Building in Tallahassee. The Orlando Science Center, which partners with Team
Orlando on various STEM efforts, is coordinating the group that will travel to the state’s capital for the event, as a means of communicating to Florida’s lawmakers the many impactful ways that the excitement and opportunity of STEM are being presented to our youth........

MacDill AFB –

**KC-46A Tanker Gets New Name: Pegasus**


Defense News © February 20, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The Air Force’s next-generation tanker has a new name, the service’s chief of staff announced Thursday. Gen. Mark Welsh announced that the KC-46A has been dubbed “Pegasus” during his keynote address at the Air Force Association’s Air Warfare Symposium in Orlando, Fla. “It’s a proud name,” Welsh said. “I had a chance to see the first airplane on the assembly line a few weeks back. It will be flying in June. It’s a real thing now.”........

**MacDill turns to community to help fund AirFest**


Tampa Tribune © February 20, 2014

By [Howard Altman | Tribune Staff](mailto:Howard.Melton@tbo.com)

In the Random House Webster’s College Dictionary, the word “challenge” is on page 220, in between “challah,” a leavened white bread made with eggs and “challis,” a soft weave fabric in wool, cotton or rayon. But you won’t find that word in Col. Scott DeThomas’ vocabulary. Little more than a month away from having more than 200,000 guests swarm MacDill Air Force Base to watch the first AirFest in two years, DeThomas, the base commander, prefers another word to describe the mad dash of cramming six to 12 months of planning into 90 days.........
Eglin AFB –

**Welsh thanks Team Eglin Airmen, families**


Northwest Florida Daily News © February 7, 2014

By **SARA VIDONI**

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III visited Team Eglin Jan. 26 to 28 to thank Airmen and their families for their service and sacrifice, discuss current challenges and opportunities facing the service. Though the general’s second visit to the base as chief of staff included his birthday celebration, the focus was truly on the Airmen. “On behalf of the Secretary and on behalf of myself, I want to say thank you for what you’ve been doing not just for the last year, but for your entire careers,” Welsh said........

**Pentagon Trims Planned JSF Buy By 8; 60 Minutes’ F-35 Piece Not Bad**


Breaking Defense © February 17, 2014

By **COLIN CLARK**

Breaking Defense pretty much ignored the error-ridden piece that Vanity Fair ran about the F-35. We yawned when the Washington Post spent six months investigating the program and came up with a decent summary of the program and not much more. So when 60 Minutes, still the biggest name in TV news, finally ran its piece on the F-35 (after six months of reporting, filming and editing) we had to take a peek, especially when a first look led me to conclude producer Mary Walsh and reporter David Martin had actually done their homework and gotten the basics right. They even broke a bit of news.........
NS Mayport –

**USS New York Holds Change of Command**

Mayport Mirror © February 19, 2014

By MC3 Angus Beckles, *USS New York Public Affairs*

Amphibious transport dock USS New York held the ship's third change of command ceremony on Feb. 14. Capt. Christopher Brunett, New York's outgoing executive officer, relieved Capt. Jon Kreitz as commanding officer. “Thank you for being the best executive officer I could have asked for, you have been a great sidekick, trusted advisor and a good friend. Relinquishing command to you is akin to being the father of the bride and giving someone you love away,” said Kreitz.

Tyndall AFB –

**Faulty Component Doomed QF-4**
http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © February 18, 2014

A defective pitch-rate controller led to the crash of a QF-4 remotely piloted aircraft at Tyndall AFB, Fla., last July, announced Air Combat Command. The airplane went down just eight seconds after takeoff on July 17, 2013, according to ACC's accident investigation board report, released on Feb. 12. The QF-4's Attitude Heading Reference System, which controls the aircraft's up and down movement, sent incorrect inputs for the airplane's horizontal pitch to the autopilot system, causing the QF-4 to pitch up and down rapidly, states ACC's release.

Reserve squadron brings flagship to Tyndall
Air Force Reserve Command’s 44th Fighter Group and Air Combat Command’s 49th Fighter Wing, both from Holloman Air Force Base, N.M., delivered five F-22 Raptors to Tyndall AFB on Feb. 5. The Raptors are now assigned to Tyndall to be operated by the integrated 301st Fighter Squadron and 95th FS. The 301st FS is a detachment of the 44th FG.

Air Force and answers

Officials at Tyndall Air Force Base should be commended for engaging the public in discussion and debate about proposed security measures for the surrounding waterways. Holding town hall meetings to inform stakeholders, listen to their concerns and seek their input is not just appropriate, but necessary, and a vast improvement from when news of the proposal first broke last year, when many residents felt blindsided. Transparency and talking are vital. But so is action. And it’s becoming clearer that the Air Force is not satisfying many of the public’s worries that the security plan remains too vague and could be subject to abuse — and that ultimately the federal government, like it so often does, is going to do what it wants to do.

Florida National Guard –

Battle Brewing Over Future of Army Aviation Programs
By Valerie Insinna

The approved 2014 Defense Department budget contained mostly good news and few surprises for Army aviation, but this may be the calm before the storm. The fiscal year 2015 budget is likely to spur a massive brawl between the Army and its National Guard component. Army aviation leaders in January announced a proposal to mothball two of its helicopter fleets, replacing them with aircraft from the Army National Guard. The initiative has yet to be approved by President Barack Obama for inclusion in the Pentagon’s 2015 budget, but Congress and advocacy organizations for the National Guard are already formulating ways to block it.

NAS Whiting Field –

**NAS Whiting Field Secures Additional Land Buffer**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/nas-whiting-field-secures-additional-land-buffer/#

Defense Communities 360 © February 18, 2014

Naval Air Station Whiting Field recently secured a 490-acre buffer adjacent to the base, bringing the total protected area surrounding the installation located on the Florida Panhandle to about 3,500 acres. DOD and the state of Florida provided $1.2 million to secure the site. While the project achieves two important goals — protecting the installation from encroachment and supporting conservation — Santa Rosa County Commissioner Don Salter told WUWF that an additional buffer around the field will help protect it during a future BRAC round.

Patrick AFB –

**Communities, Patrick Air Force Base exploring new partnerships**

http://www.floridatoday.com/article/20140217/NEWS01/302170026/Communities-Patrick-Air-Force-Base-exploring-new-partnerships?nclick_check=1

Florida Today © February 17, 2014
By Dave Berman

Brevard County and five of its cities are looking for ways to work more closely with Patrick Air Force Base. County Manager Howard Tipton said the Brevard County Commission is likely to consider formation of a Patrick Regional Executive Steering Committee, which would elevate informal discussions that have been going on since August involving Patrick command staff, county and city officials, and the Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast……..

Avon Park –

State Grant to Protect Central Florida Bombing Range from Encroachment

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/state-grant-to-protect-central-florida-bombing-range-from-encroachment/#

Defense Communities 360 © February 21, 2014

Polk County will use a $200,000 state grant to buffer Avon Park Air Force Range in central Florida from future development. The county will use the grant, awarded through Enterprise Florida, to provide a local match for $800,000 it received from DOD’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program, reported the Ledger. The funds will be used to acquire a portion of two tracts totaling 4,480 acres located a mile north of the bombing range, or to purchase a conservation easement………..

Other Items of Interest –

Army Looking at Excess Space at Installations

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/army-looking-at-excess-space-at-installations/#

Defense Communities 360 © February 17, 2014
The Army is taking an inventory of its facilities to assess how much excess infrastructure it maintains, ahead of a recommendation to the office of the secretary of defense (OSD) about the need for a new round of base closures. The Army maintains a lot of space and facilities that are not being utilized or are just partially utilized, Paul Cramer, deputy assistant secretary for installations, housing and partnerships, told the Army News Service.

National Veterans Affairs national simulation center close to breaking ground in Florida

http://www.greenfieldreporter.com/view/story/f9f0ae4715dc4ec1b8a03ca0f442595c/FL--Veterans-Medical-Center

Greenfield Daily Reporter © February 16, 2014

Veterans Affairs officials have told U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson that they're ready to break ground on a national simulation center to train doctors and nurses in the latest procedures for veterans' illnesses and injuries. Nelson's office said in a statement that the $20 million facility would be near the Orlando VA Medical Center, which is currently three years behind in opening. It will provide medical professionals anywhere in the world with access to research and training.

Getting There Faster: US Army Emphasizes Speed as It Plans for an Uncertain Future

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140218/DEFREG02/302180037

Defense News © February 18, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY

There was a singular moment late last year during a briefing for senior US Army leaders on the service’s just-concluded yearly war game when one general laid out the future challenges facing the force. “Let’s assume we’re not going to get a significant investment in joint strategic power projection,” he said, interrupting two officers who were explaining how they intended to move troops to future battlefields.
The Air Force is reorganizing how the Air Staff handles operations, the service’s top officer announced Thursday. The reorganization splits both Operations, Plans and Requirements (A3/5) and Strategic Plans and Programs (A8). The new Operations (A3) directorate will stand alone, while the planning staffs will form a new A5/8 directorate. Additionally, the current budget responsibilities from A8 will be merged with the service’s financial management arm.........
March 3, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Task Force Meeting Next Week** – The next Task Force will be on the **afternoon** of Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 316 W. Tennessee St. Tallahassee, FL 32301 beginning at 1:30 PM and ending approximately 5:00 PM. **Please note new location!** This day is scheduled to be Military Day at The Capitol and is being held with Florida National Guard military displays and an event with the Governor and Legislators in the courtyard at noon.

2. **Meeting Books** – We will be mailing out read-ahead meeting books this Wednesday, so members should receive them prior to the weekend

3. **Call In Number for Task Force Meeting** –
   - Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 8784566

4. **Attachments:**
   - [Agenda for Meeting](#)

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**Winnefeld: A Brave Congress Needs to Accept Base Closings**

[http://www.seapowermagazine.org/stories/20140226-winnefeld.html](http://www.seapowermagazine.org/stories/20140226-winnefeld.html)

Seapower Magazine © February 26, 2014

By JOHN C. MARCARIO, Associate Editor

The Pentagon announced this week that it’s fiscal 2015 budget submission would include another round of base closures and a significant force reduction. Lawmakers have voiced their opposition to this plan, saying the cuts outlined by Secretary Chuck Hagel on Feb. 24 are draconian. ADM James Winnefeld Jr., vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Congress needs to be brave in accepting these closings as a reality as the department looks for savings mandated by the Budget Control Act (BCA) of 2011 and sequestration........

**BRAC Round Would Allow DOD to Downsize Civilian Workforce, Official Says**


Defense Communities 360 © February 26, 2014

The Defense Department has trimmed its civilian and contractor workforce as part an initiative to streamline its headquarters, but a significant reduction in the number of its civilian workers will require a new round of base closures, Acting Deputy Secretary Christine Fox said Tuesday. This year officials cut operating costs by 20 percent at headquarters offices across all services, agencies and combatant commands, saving about $5 billion. Much of the civilian workforce is employed outside Washington at installations, depots and shipyards, though, Fox said........
DoD Has a Detailed Sequester Back-Up Plan


Defense News © February 26, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The Pentagon has a detailed five-year spending plan that adheres to federal defense spending caps should sequestration return in 2016. Just don’t expect to see it anytime soon. US Defense Department officials will instead send Congress on March 4 a five-year budget plan that busts existing defense spending caps by $115 billion. That plan will include a “description” of what DoD’s five-year sequester plan looks like, but not the plan itself, Christine Fox, the acting deputy defense secretary, said Wednesday at the American Enterprise Institute think tank........

Secretary expects personnel cuts to be less severe than previously estimated

http://www.airforcetimes.com/article/20140226/NEWS/302260031/Secretary-expects-personnel-cuts-less-severe-than-previously-estimated

Air Force Times © February 26, 2014

By Brian Everstine.

The Defense Department’s 2015 budget request, to be unveiled next week, will propose cutting fewer than the previously estimated 25,000 airmen over five years, and the majority of those cuts will come from the active duty, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James said Wednesday. Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh told lawmakers in September that the service would likely have to cut 25,000 airmen, about 5 percent of the force, over the next five years because of budget restrictions........
Pentagon budget proposal raises questions


Northwest Florida Daily News © February 26, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

As the war in Afghanistan is set to wind down, the Pentagon has proposed a post-war defense budget that almost certainly will affect military-rich areas such as Northwest Florida. The extent is unclear, though, as the budget appears headed for a heated battle in Congress. The Pentagon presented a proposal Monday that calls for drawing down the Army by as many as 82,000 soldiers, shrinking it to its smallest since before World War II.

McKeon sees little hope of overturning sequestration


The Hill © February 27, 2014

By Kristina Wong

The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee is not optimistic that defense cuts known as sequestration will be overturned. “Right now looking forward I don’t see any possibility of overturning it,” Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) told a group of defense reporters on Thursday. ADVERTISEMENT

“There are people that have bought into it that think it’s doing a good job, that it’s cutting our spending, and so I personally don’t just see that that’s going to end until a lot of pain is felt by a lot of people,” he said. The cuts of about $52 billion per year through 2023 were triggered in 2013 when lawmakers failed to agree on how to reduce a $1 trillion federal deficit. The cuts have been partially relieved through 2015, but defense officials warn that the cuts will hit in full beginning 2016. .........

Senior defense official: 'We don't want to cut.' Blame Congress.

http://www.armytimes.com/article/20140227/NEWS05/302270030/Senior-defense-official-We-don-t-want-cut-Blame-Congress-

Army Times © February 27, 2014

By Michelle Tan
A senior defense official says the Army and Defense Department are being unfairly vilified in the media over military budget cuts when Congress is really to blame. “Congress is the one that passed the law that put sequestration into place,” the senior official told Army Times. The official requested anonymity in order to speak candidly. “Sequestration is bad. We’ve got to get rid of sequestration. What the Army and DoD leadership is trying to do, within the constraints, is give you the best [military] we can. We don’t want to cut.” ……

U.S. military should shrink to match the times

http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/03/01/5727076/us-military-should-shrink-to-match.html

HeraldOnLine.com © March 1, 2014

2014-03-01T00:43:29Z

By CAROLYN KASTER — AP

The proposed 2015 military budget unveiled last week by Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel acknowledges that, with the end of 13 years of war, the United States’ global mission has changed. Hagel’s $496 billion budget would trim more than 100,000 troops from today’s active duty force, retire hundreds of aging aircraft and warships, potentially close some military bases and other facilities, and cut some benefits for military personnel and retirees. The cuts might also entail reductions to National Guard units around the country, a move that has been criticized by Gov. Nikki Haley………

No defense for military cuts

http://triblive.com/opinion/qanda/5640063-74/defense-military-army#axzz2uuX3MAbp

Pittsburgh Tribune Review © March 1, 2014

By Eric Heyl

Steven P. Bucci, a former U.S. Army Special Forces officer and onetime military assistant to former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, is director of foreign policy studies at The Heritage Foundation. He spoke to the Trib about proposed Defense Department downsizing that would include shrinking the Army to pre-World War II levels. Q: Are you flabbergasted by the level of the proposed military cutbacks? A: Not flabbergasted in that we knew they were going to come up to some purely budget-driven solution to this. Everyone involved in the QDR (Quadrennial Defense Review) said it didn't have any strategy involved in it this year — it was just purely budget……
Chuck Hagel, with his first budget plan as US defense secretary, has managed to do the unthinkable: He has united Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill. In short, they hate it. Limited by spending caps erected by Congress, Hagel’s budget proposes large cuts to America’s ground combat forces, a number of controversial troop-benefits changes, retiring aircraft fleets and a round of politically white-hot base closures.

Hawk vs. hawk on Pentagon

By Jeremy Herb

It's hawk vs. hawk when it comes to the new defense budget cuts. Defense hawks are decrying reductions in Pentagon spending, but their budget hawk brethren see more fat to be trimmed. Both sides are gearing themselves up for a prolonged fight over the size and shape of the military as the war in Afghanistan winds down and more sequester cuts loom. ADVERTISEMENT

The intra-party fight among Republican factions will play out in the coming months as lawmakers decide whether to try to boost the Pentagon’s budget this year.

Eglin AFB –

Air Force releases final F-35 supplemental impact study

Northwest Florida Daily News © February 28, 2014
The Air Force, through Eglin Air Force Base, has released a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement that analyzes the environmental impacts associated with where the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter aircraft will bed down on Eglin reservation and how they might be operated. The Final SEIS contains analyses of operational alternatives and presents mitigations for the F-35 aircraft at Eglin under the February 2009 Record of Decision.

**Harper: Proposed Military Budget Includes Positives For Northwest Florida**


WUWF © February 28, 2014

**BY SANDRA AVERHART**

In this week’s Economic Report, Dr. Rick Harper discusses the proposed cuts to the U.S. Department of Defense announced by Sec. of Defense Chuck Hagel. The plan asks for $522 billion. Harper says, “If you look over time the draw down is substantial and a lot of it falls on the Army. We’re looking at moving from an Army of 520,000 troops down to one of about 450,000 troops.” That would take American military forces to the lowest level since before World War II.

**Air Force recommends F-35s stay at Eglin, despite noise**


Pensacola News Journal © February 28, 2014

**By Rob Johnson**

The Air Force has studied the public's complaints about noise from the F-35s that are using Eglin Air Force Base and the possible effect on the value of nearby properties but recommends that the training operations continue just about as they are now. In a report of more than 500 pages, the Air Force Environmental Impact Statement analyzed eight plans for future F-35 operations, including moving many of them from Eglin to the more remote Choctaw and Duke fields.
Chief of Navy Reserve meets with Jacksonville-area Sailors


Jax Air News © February 26, 2014

By MCC Elizabeth Thompson

The Chief of Navy Reserve spoke with Sailors about issues facing the reserves and recognized personnel for their accomplishments during a Feb. 20-22 visit to Jacksonville. During her visit, Vice Adm. Robin Braun met with commanding officers from Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) Jacksonville, held an all-hands call and visited different commands to learn about the needs of locally drilling Sailors..........

First Coast military contractors try to stay prepared for military downsizing


Florida Times-Union © February 27, 2014

By Drew Dixon

While U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced Monday that there will be a return of Base Realignment and Closure, many associated with the defense industry on the First Coast say contractors should have been prepared for military downsizing well before the most recent development. Exactly what will be closed and when is yet to be determined. But Hagel made it clear military cuts are coming in a BRAC set for 2017.........
Crenshaw: Proposed military cuts creating worry, concern


WOKV © February 26, 2014

By Matt Augustine

We're hearing from one of your local representatives about how proposed cuts to the military could affect Northeast Florida. "We'll look at what [President Obama] has to say but I can tell you with confidence what we end up doing is not going to be a direct reflection of what he has proposed," Congressman Ander Crenshaw tells Jacksonville's Morning News.........

Florida National Guard –

State governors fight back against National Guard cuts

http://www.armytimes.com/article/20140301/NEWS02/303010009/State-governors-fight-back-against-National-Guard-cuts

Army Times © March 1, 2014

By Michelle Tan

The nation’s governors have banded together to oppose cuts to the Army National Guard as outlined in the Army’s 2015 budget proposal. In a letter to President Obama, signed by 50 governors, the state leaders also are calling for the president to keep the Guard’s end-strength at 350,000. "For more than a decade, our National Guard has demonstrated it is a cost-effective, operational force that is critical to our national security at home and abroad," the letter states. "As commanders-in-chief, we appreciate the need to reorganize, restructure and modernize the military to meet new threats and economic realities.........

50 Governors Sign Letter Protesting Planned Cuts to Army National Guard
The nation’s 50 governors on Friday sent a letter to President Obama opposing planned cuts to the Army National Guard included in the Army’s soon-to-be-released fiscal 2015 budget request. “We respectfully request that you reconsider proposed cuts to the Army National Guard and changes to the Guard’s combat aviation capabilities and that you work with us to fashion solutions that provide a scalable, cost-effective force that best serves the interests of our nation,” the letter states. 

Hurlburt Field –

**Warrior research lab launched at Hurlburt**


Pensacola News Journal © March 1, 2014

By Rod Duren

The University of Pittsburgh recently launched its fifth Warrior Human Performance Research Center to conduct performance-optimization and injury-prevention at Hurlburt Field’s Air Force Special Operations Command. The center helps design training programs to improve service members’ performance and reduce injury. The eight-year-old program has three Navy SEAL sites and the Army Special Operations at Fort Bragg, N.C. Hurlburt Field is the only Air Force site and is an addition to a three-year, $3 million study, according to the Gant Daily website.

Other Items of Interest –
Senate blocks huge vets benefits bill
http://www.militarytimes.com/article/20140227/NEWS05/302270033/Senate-blocks-huge-vets-benefits-bill

Military Times © February 27, 2014

By Leo Shane III

A massive veterans legislative package that would have expanded a host of post-military benefits was sidelined Thursday after Senate Democratic backers failed to find enough support among their Republican colleagues. A procedural motion to cut off debate and allow the bill to move to a floor vote fell short by four votes, with all but two Republicans voting along party lines. Bill sponsor Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., chairman of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, called the defeat a frustrating disappointment and vowed to find a way to guide the measure through Congress this year.........

90% of Military Wives Jobless or Underemployed 'Not Acceptable'

ABC News © March 1, 2014

By ERIN DOOLEY
Michelle Aikman agonized for more than a year before agreeing to marry her military boyfriend. It wasn’t that Robert Aiken wasn’t handsome enough, kind enough, clever enough. Aikman, 34, an ambitious young engineer from Littleton, Colo., just didn’t know whether she could accept the limitations her now-husband’s service in the Air Force would place on her career. “I busted my hump to have every opportunity available,” Aikman said in a recent interview, “and as soon as I married into this life, that was all gone. That’s not acceptable to me.” ........

Navy Said to Seek Three Littoral Ships Instead of Four

Bloomberg News © February 28, 2014
By Tony Capaccio

The troubled U.S. Navy Littoral Combat Ship is intended to be a small, speedy, adaptable ship for patrolling shallow waters close to shore in areas such as the Persian Gulf. The U.S. Navy will request $2.1 billion to continue developing the Littoral Combat Ship and buy three of the vessels in fiscal 2015, one fewer than previously planned, according to defense officials. No decision has been made on which of the two companies building different versions -- Lockheed Martin Corp. (LMT) and Austal Ltd. (ASB) -- will see one of its ships delayed by a year, according to one of the officials, who asked not to be identified before the Pentagon budget for the year beginning Oct. 1 is sent to Congress on March 4…….

DOD Soliciting Input for New List of Military Family Issues States Should Address

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/dod-soliciting-input-for-new-list-of-military-family-issues-states-should-address/#

Defense Communities 360 © March 2, 2014

The Pentagon is preparing its annual list of issues affecting service members and their families in which “state governments are the primary agents for making positive change,” and is gathering input for its fiscal 2015 list. “Each year, DOD selects issues for states to consider that represent barriers resulting from the transience and uncertainty of military life,” according to the Feb. 28 Federal Register notice. In the past, the department has asked states to ease the hurdles children in active-duty military families face when they transfer school districts, including problems involving records transfer, class and course placement, qualifying for extracurricular activities and fulfilling graduation requirements…….

NAUS Update –

WASHINGTON REPORT: Early Budget Insights

On Monday, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel began a full court press to generate early support and potentially to offset expected objection to the 2015 Budget rollout scheduled for next Tuesday.
Hagel, his acting Deputy Christine Fox, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs Adm. James Winnefeld and a number of other Pentagon officials spanned out to discuss various proposals contained in the DoD budget and to “rationalize” their inclusion in next week’s presentation of the defense budget.

Among the proposals, DoD officials said recommendations would include efforts to simplify, modernize and consolidate TRICARE programs for retirees under age 65. In addition, officials said they would “modesty increase copays and deductibles … in a way that tries to guide our retirees and active duty family members to the most affordable types of care.”

Officials also cited proposals to mothball the entire Air Force A-10 “Warthog” fleet, to put on temporary duty 11 of the Navy’s 22 Navy cruisers, to curtail future acquisition of the F-35 advanced fighter aircraft and to reduce the level of active-duty soldiers to 440,000 soldiers from the current level of 520,000, overruling Army chief-of-staff Gen. Raymond Ordieno’s call for 490,000 troops needed to meet future global missions.

The budget rollout also will slash Commissary funding $1 billion over the next three years in a move that will leave the military grocery provider with less than a third of its current funding.

Under the plan unveiled by Hagel, the Pentagon wants to cut taxpayer funding for commissaries by more than two-thirds over the next three years, from $1.4 billion to $400 million. Stores overseas and in remote areas would continue to be funded out of that remaining $400 million.

At a congressional hearing, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Michael Barrett was asked whether he supported full commissary privileges. Barrett replied: “You’ve served your nation honorably. You’ve worn the cloth. You’re part of the 0.4 percent [of Americans] willing to put it on the line. Hell yeah.”

NAUS President Jack Klimp said, “It’s outrageous that the Pentagon would push up out-of-pocket costs for a young lance corporal $4,500 a year, when we see food stamp use rising for young troops.”

To rationalize the commissary plan, the Defense Secretary said, "We must now consider fair and responsible adjustments to our overall military compensation package." Pentagon leadership is also requesting cuts to Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH), reductions in annual military pay raises and smaller overall troop levels.
March 10, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **March Task Force Meeting** -- Looking forward to seeing you at the Task Force on the afternoon of **Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 316 W. Tennessee St. Tallahassee, FL 32301 beginning at 1:30 PM and ending approximately 5:00 PM.** This day is scheduled to be Military Day at The Capitol and is being held with Florida National Guard military displays and an event with the Governor and Legislators in the courtyard at noon. The legislature is currently planning to act upon military and veteran initiatives Tuesday morning. Please plan to have lunch somewhere before the meeting… hotel has a small restaurant, or lots of places downtown or close by!

2. **Attachments:**
   - TPG Monthly Report
   - REPI Information
   - DOD Major Acquisition Programs
   - TPG Bi-Weekly Conference Call

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:
New Hampshire Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D), chairman of the Armed Services’ subcommittee responsible for installations policy, last week reiterated her opposition to the Pentagon’s request to conduct a new round of base closures. Last week, during his preview of the fiscal 2015 budget request — which is scheduled to be formally unveiled today — Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said DOD will ask Congress for permission to hold a BRAC round in 2017, the third consecutive year the Obama administration has requested additional base closures.

By ANDY MEDICI

When it comes to a new round of base closures in 2017, lawmakers are split between lukewarm support, vehement opposition and general uncertainty. Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md., said while Congress has to make tough budget decisions about the Defense Department, he does not think there should be another base realignment and closure (BRAC) round.
Virginia Should Advocate for New BRAC, Commission Recommends

The commonwealth of Virginia stands to gain from a new round of base closures and, as a result, it should advocate for the Pentagon to hold another BRAC, according to a 10-member commission created last year by then-Gov. Bob McDonnell (R). “A BRAC will provide DOD the opportunity to achieve a number of efficiencies by consolidating existing activities located outside the commonwealth with existing installations and activities already in the commonwealth,” according to the first of 20 recommendations the Commission on Military Installations and Defense Activities included in its report.

Opposition Mounts on Hill to BRAC Request

The Pentagon’s request to hold a round of base closures in 2017 is having trouble gaining traction among lawmakers, a similar reception to its requests for additional BRAC rounds in each of the past two years. The administration’s proposal stands little chance of going forward this year, Carl Levin (D-Mich.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said Wednesday following his panel’s hearing on DOD’s fiscal 2015 budget request.

Levin on BRAC: Not going to happen

There is not a path forward for Congress to agree to a new round of military base closures, Senate Armed Services Chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.) told The Hill. “I just don’t think we’ve seen the value of it, including the last BRAC,” Levin said Wednesday, referring to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC).
“I haven’t seen the business case, whether they’ve given it to us or not I don’t know, but I don’t think they have proven that the last BRAC produced the savings they said it would,” Levin said after his committee heard testimony from Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey……..

**BRAC is DOD’s Preferred Method to Address Excess Infrastructure, Spokesman Insists**


Defense Communities 360 © March 9, 2014

Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby on Friday successfully deflected a reporter’s question as to when DOD would act to eliminate excess infrastructure outside the bounds of BRAC by repeating multiple times that officials would prefer to pare down the department’s real estate portfolio through a base closure round. “The preferred method is to work with the Congress and to get another round of BRAC,” Kirby said. The reporter asked Kirby to clarify recent statements by Defense Secretary and other top officials that DOD has authorities beyond BRAC to reduce its infrastructure, but the press secretary offered very little in terms of specifics……

**FDSTF –**

**Fla. House passes tuition break for veterans**


Tampa Tribune © March 4, 2014

Saying it could help the state's economy in the long run, the Florida House on Monday unanimously passed a "Florida GI" bill aimed at helping veterans living in the state. The key part of the bill would offer a tuition break to honorably discharged veterans regardless of when they
moved to the state. But the measure also includes college scholarships for National Guard members, while also setting aside money to renovate armories and acquire land adjacent to existing military installations in the state.

DOD Budget Cuts –

**DoD Releases Fiscal 2015 Budget Proposal and 2014 QDR**


President Barack Obama today sent Congress a proposed defense budget of $495.6 billion in discretionary budget authority to fund base defense programs in fiscal year 2015. The request is $0.4 billion less than the enacted FY 2014 appropriation and is consistent with the current budget caps. The Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative -- a government-wide initiative -- requests an additional $26 billion in FY 2015 to address significant readiness and modernization challenges. In the years from FY 2016 to FY 2019, the Department of Defense (DoD) is asking for funding that exceeds the current budget caps by a total of approximately $115 billion in order to meet defense requirements.


Budget -- http://comptroller.defense.gov/budget.aspx

**DoD proposes wide-ranging Tricare fee hikes**


Military Times © March 4, 2014

By Patricia Kime
Tricare Prime, Standard and Extra would go the way of the dodo, replaced by a single Tricare plan with a fee structure adjusted to where beneficiaries get medical care, under the Pentagon’s proposed fiscal 2015 budget. The proposed $47.4 billion health care budget would consolidate the three major Tricare programs into a single program starting in January 2016. It would introduce fees for retirees who use military treatment facilities, add enrollment fees for future Tricare for Life beneficiaries and increase prescription drug co-pays for nearly everyone who uses Tricare's retail or mail order pharmacy benefits.

**GOP Hawks Blast Obama Budget; $26B Wish List Could Be Doomed**

Defense News © March 4, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

Republican hawks say US President Barack Obama’s latest military spending request will embolden America’s foes to take aggressive acts, while his Democratic mates offered only tepid support. Republican lawmakers began panning the fiscal $496 billion Pentagon request before senior Defense Department officials explained the plan in their briefing room.

**Pentagon planning to cut 6,300 civilians in 2015**

The Hill © March 4, 2014

By Kristina Wong

The Pentagon plans to reduce the number of its civilian workers from about 755,400 in 2014 to 749,100 in 2015 — a reduction of 6,300 workers, or 1 percent, according to its 2015 defense budget request. “The Military Services and Defense Agencies will begin to shape the workforce to reflect the changing post-Afghanistan needs and a declining military force,” said a budget overview released Tuesday.
The need for civilian skills related to the Afghanistan War, such as those supporting depot maintenance, will decrease over time, according to the overview. ……

**US Navy Budget Takes Bite Out of Aircraft, Weapons**


Defense News © March 4, 2014

By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

Most of the US Navy’s aviation programs take significant hits in the 2015 budget, including the P-8A Poseidon, F-35C Joint Strike Fighter, and MH-60R helicopter, and plans to buy the MQ-8C Fire Scout unmanned shipboard aircraft have been shelved for now. The budget also takes a big bite out of weapons procurement, notably the elimination of Tactical Tomahawk cruise missile procurement after this year……

**20,400 fewer airmen in 2015, budget proposal shows**


Air Force Times © March 4, 2014

By Stephen Losey

The Air Force would shed 20,400 total force airmen in fiscal 2015 under the proposed budget released Tuesday. According to highlights of the budget, the Air Force’s overall uniformed end strength — including Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve airmen — would drop 4 percent from 503,400 in fiscal 2014 to 483,000. The active-duty force would be hardest hit, with a loss of 16,700 airmen, or 5 percent of this year’s 327,600 active-duty end strength. ……..

**Spending Up Slightly, while Forces Come Down over Five-Year Budget**
Defense Communities 360 © March 5, 2014

The five-year budget released Tuesday by the Pentagon revealed a topline spending level that climbs a total of 13 percent at the same time the uniformed and civilian workforces decline by about five percent through fiscal 2019. DOD’s plan calls for spending $496 billion in FY 2015, a figure virtually unchanged from the current year, before jumping to $535 billion in FY 2016. The topline then would gradually rise to $559 billion in FY 2019……

Milcon Would Suffer Deep Cut under FY’15 Proposal

Defense Communities 360 © March 4, 2014

Spending on new construction would drop 36 percent under DOD’s fiscal 2015 budget request, as the department’s proposal defers many military construction projects in order to fund higher priorities such as operations and readiness. As a result, the proposal funds only the “most critical facility requirements,” according to a DOD overview of the budget. The FY 2015 request calls for $5.4 billion for milcon, down from $8.4 billion allocated for FY 2014……

Experts: DoD War Budget Will Remain Even if US Troops Leave Afghanistan

Defense News © March 3, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The US Defense Department will likely continue asking Congress for war funding separate from the Pentagon’s base budget accounts and not subject to federal spending caps even if all American troops leave Afghanistan by the end of the year,
experts say. The Pentagon will submit a $496 billion 2015 budget request to Congress on Tuesday, a spending plan that does not include money for operations in Afghanistan. The war-funding measure, know as overseas contingency operations (OCO), is being delayed because the Afghan government has not approved a security agreement that would allow NATO troops to remain in the country beyond the end of the year.

**Top Armed Services Democrat: Don’t Bet on Sequestration Going Away**

http://www.govexec.com/defense/2014/03/top-armed-services-democrat-dont-bet-sequestration-going-away/79759/?oref=river

Government Executive © March 3, 2014
By Jordain Carney

The Obama administration is submitting a five-year budget that largely ignores sequester budget caps, but the House Armed Services Committee ranking member said the lower spending levels are likely here to stay. "I think if you had to bet, you would bet that sequestration is going to stick around," said Washington Democrat Adam Smith, adding that leadership doesn't have the votes to undo the budget caps. Smith and Republican Rep. Randy Forbes of Virginia, a contender to lead the Armed Services Committee, appeared on *Defense News*, which aired Sunday.

**Pentagon Weapons Would Get $25 Billion Less Than Planned**


Bloomberg News © March 4, 2014
By Tony Capaccio
The Pentagon’s proposed $496 billion budget for the coming fiscal year would provide $154 billion for weapons purchases and research, $25 billion less than projected a year ago, according to Defense Department figures. The reduction is part of the $45 billion in savings that defense officials had to find to meet the budget caps lawmakers agreed to in December. ……..

In planning for the future, the Pentagon sees fewer troops and more technology


Washington Post © March 4, 2014

By Walter Pincus

“I think we’re going to do pretty well in the budget, sir.” That was Adm. William H. McRaven of the Special Operations Command, probably one of the few senior Pentagon officials who could say that to the House Armed Services Committee last Thursday about President Obama’s fiscal 2015 budget, being delivered to Congress on Tuesday………..

Air Force to accelerate headquarters staff cuts

http://www.federalnewsradio.com/1103/3573763/Air-Force-to-accelerate-headquarters-staff-cuts-


By Jared Serbu

The Air Force will not only meet but exceed Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel edict to the military services and Defense agencies to cut back their headquarters-level spending by 20 percent over the next five years. And the service will do so more quickly than required. Top Air Force officials said last week, by going beyond Hagel's 20 percent directive, the service will reduce internal costs so they can redirect funds to readiness and modernization activities………..
2015 budget released: How the cuts affect pay, BAH, per diem and Tricare


Military Times © March 4, 2014

By Andrew Tilghman

The Pentagon’s new budget released Tuesday says military personnel spending should fall to its lowest point since 2008 as cuts to compensation take effect and the force continues to shrink from its wartime peak. The budget documents for 2015 offer new details on Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel’s proposals last week to reduce spending on pay and benefits. Those included controversial calls for Congress to limit troops’ pay raises, slash housing allowances by about 6 percent, eliminate commissary subsidies in many locations and boost Tricare fees for families of active-duty troops and working-age retirees……..

Four Ways the Pentagon Is About to Infuriate Congress

http://www.nationaljournal.comdefense/four-ways-the-pentagon-is-about-to-infuriate-congress-20140304

National Journal © March 4, 2014

By Jordain Carney

White House budgets are part wish list and part political sales pitch, and when the White House sent Congress its $496 billion military budget Tuesday, it set up some hard sales. Working on a tight budget, the Pentagon is proposing cuts to areas that lawmakers hold dear. And although top Pentagon officials appeared across Washington last week on a charm offensive, they’ll need nothing short of sales magic as they try to get Congress to go along with a handful of sure-to-be-controversial changes……..

DoD Official: Extra $115 Billion Does Not Fund Carrier, Soldiers


Defense News © March 5, 2014
By MARCUS WEISGERBER

Last week, top US defense officials told Congress that if the Pentagon were allowed to bust its budget caps, it would save one aircraft carrier and tens of thousands of troop billets slated for elimination. But DoD’s new spending request — which stays under the cap for 2015 but exceeds the 2016-19 caps by a total of $115 billion — contains no money for the carrier and extra troops, according to a senior DoD official.

Hagel Issues Sequester Warning

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © March 6, 2014

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel warned Senate legislators Wednesday that the Defense Department would not be able to fulfill its defense strategy if Congress refuses to fund the department above sequester levels. Hagel said the $495.6 billion budget, released Tuesday, allows DOD to meet the strategy, defend the nation, compensate US troops, and provide the proper training for service members. “These commitments will be seriously jeopardized by a return to sequestration-level spending,” Hagel told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The Biggest Threat to the Pentagon’s Budget Is Entitlement Spending


Defense One © March 5, 2014

By Rep. Scott Rigell

Last week, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel provided sobering insight into the Department of Defense’s fiscal year 2015 budget request. Much of what the secretary shared caused a sharp reaction across the defense community and on Capitol Hill, with options including a reduction in the size of the Army to pre-World War II levels, increased cost-shares from active duty and retired service members for TRICARE, and if sequestration continues in fiscal year 2016, retirement of the aircraft carrier USS George Washington halfway through its expected service life.
DOD Stuck with Sequestration, House Panelists Conclude


Defense Communities 360 © March 7, 2014

In the 10 days since Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel outlined the department’s latest budget and associated cuts in force structure, Republican lawmakers have denounced the spending plan while Democrats have expressed reservations with the proposed changes. But despite warnings from Hagel and other top Pentagon officials that Congress will need to reverse at least some of the defense cuts imposed under the 2011 Budget Control Act if it wants to avoid weakening the military, the prospect of lawmakers reaching a deal to adjust the spending caps remains quite low………..

A defense budget based on hope

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-military-defense-budget-based-on-hope/2014/03/08/4185d6f2-a544-11e3-8466-d34c451760b9_story.html

Washington Post © March 8, 2014

By Editorial Board

IF, AS the Obama administration is convinced, the United States will no longer conduct “long and large stability operations” in foreign countries, then the defense budget it has proposed for next year makes some logical choices. Troop strength, particularly in the Army, is being cut — to the lowest level since before World War II — so that money can be spent on new technology, cyber operations and special operations forces, which will be expanded. Weapons systems good for fighting ground wars, like the A-6 attack plane, are being eliminated in favor of strategic systems like the new F-35 plane and development of a new long-range bomber. Funding for missile defense is staying roughly level while the old U-2 spyplane is being grounded……

DoD Budget: Expect Big Changes In Five-Year Spending Priorities

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140309/DEFREG02/303090022/DoD-Budget-Expect-Big-Changes-Five-Year-Spending-Priorities
By MARCUS WEISGERBER

Just before Maj. Gen. Jim Martin, the US Air Force budget director, walked into the Pentagon briefing room on March 4, an aide slipped him a note. The paper said that if a reporter asked about the future of the service’s Combat Rescue Helicopter (CRH) program, say that Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James just made the decision to keep the program alive. Thirty-four minutes into his briefing on the 2015 budget proposal, in which CRH wasn't mentioned, the question came........

Air Force left with little budget flexibility

http://www.airforcetimes.com/article/20140308/NEWS/303080007

By Aaron Mehta

Air Force leadership spent months telling anyone who would listen that their budget would result in a smaller service today in order to afford modernization for tomorrow, and its budget delivered on that promise. But in an attempt to cut as deeply as possible to fund key priorities, the service has left itself in a precarious position as it heads into Congress to defend its decisions. The truth is this: There simply isn't wiggle room left for appropriators to shift funds around. If Congress changes programs, something else is going to have to go........

DoD’s $26B Budget Hail Mary ‘Not Going To Happen:’ Rep. McKeon

http://breakingdefense.com/2014/03/dods-26b-budget-hail-mary-not-going-to-happen-rep-mckeon/

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.
Despair, distrust, and sequestration dominated yesterday’s House Armed Services Committee hearing on the Pentagon’s 2015 budget request. Almost everyone on HASC hates the automatic budget cuts, and the president has proposed a way to bypass them, but comments from committee leaders and backbenchers alike showed how political gridlock makes any solution look far out of reach. “We really have to live within right now something that I hate, and I’m sure you do and most of the members of the committee do, but it is the law and we’re stuck with it right now,” HASC chairman Buck McKeon told his high-level witnesses, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey, and Pentagon comptroller Bob Hale……..

Space Coast –

**Can Cape Canaveral Rise Again?**

http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/space/rockets/can-cape-canaveral-rise-again-16559733

Popular Mechanics © March 5, 2014

Even with the space shuttle in retirement, Cape Canaveral remains a busy spaceport. But can Florida's Space Coast regain its hallowed place as the world's capital of human spaceflight? Popular Mechanics tours the Cape to glimpse the present and future in heavy-lift rocket country……..

MacDill AFB –

**The US Special Operations Command opens new university at MacDill Air Force Base**


WTSP News © February 27, 2014
Amongst talks of military cuts this week, the US Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base broke ground on its new Joint Special Operations University. This groundbreaking comes four days after Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel announced cuts will shrink the Army size and changes in military pay. Mayor Bob Buckhorn adds "It is one of the biggest economic engines we have here, multi-billion dollar impact. We need to preserve what takes place here, We need to make sure that our military families know that we love them. And we need to do whatever we can to grow SoCom and CentCom……

**Altman: Portrait may signal leadership change at MacDill**


Tampa Tribune © March 2, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

If I were a betting man (and other than the Super Bowl pools I am no longer) I would bet that last week’s visit to the House Armed Services Committee marked the last time U.S. Special Operations Command honcho Adm. William McRaven delivers a posture statement. And I am betting that sometime this summer, there will be a Soom change of command ceremony over at MacDill Air Force Base. Not only is it the Spec Ops community buzz, but I’m also reading the commando tea leaves. First of all, it’s getting to be that time………

**Why a charter school at MacDill Air Force Base is ‘absolutely necessary’**


Tampa Tribune © March 5, 2014

BY STEPHEN J. MITCHELL

As a member of the MacDill Advisory Education Council, I have been disappointed reading recent articles and editorials in other publications that are not supportive of a charter school at MacDill Air Force Base and that are based to some extent on misinformation or lack of information. First, and most importantly, there are 10,000 active-duty personnel stationed at MacDill with about 12,000 children, and 25,000 children of veterans in the Tampa Bay area.
Education of the children of active-duty military service personnel is a key and major quality-of-life issue for the men and women serving at MacDill Air Force Base.

**MacDill charter school backers pull out of appeals process**


Tampa Tribune © March 6, 2014

By MATT DIXON

The backers of a charter school for MacDill Air Force Base withdrew their appeal to the state to overturn the Hillsborough County School Board’s recent decision rejecting their application. “Our goal is to serve the needs of students of our military families as efficiently as possible,” Florida Charter Educational Foundation President Ken Haiko said in a news release Thursday. “To achieve that goal, we decided that the best course of action is to make some minor revisions to the application and resubmit it.”

**Defense cuts cause Centcom commander ‘great concern’**

[Source](http://tbo.com/list/military-news/defense-cuts-cause-centcom-commander-great-concern-20140305/)

Tampa Tribune © March 5, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

With Russian troops in Ukraine and China announcing a huge increase in its military budget, Army Gen. Lloyd Austin III, commander of U.S. Central Command, reminded congress that the MacDill Air Force Base-headquartered command still oversees the vast majority of threats facing the U.S. And that defense budget cuts cause him “great concern.” “We own about 90 percent of the problems facing the country in terms of issues arising,” Austin said in answer to a question from Howard “Buck” McKeon, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

**Two major MacDill commands winners in new budget**

[Source](http://tbo.com/list/military-news/two-major-macdill-commands-winners-in-new-budget-20140304/)
As expected, the two major commands headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base came out winners in the budget and planning documents unveiled in Washington Tuesday. U.S. Special Operations Command is being given a 10 percent boost in its base budget for the next fiscal year under the $496 billion defense spending plan presented by President Barack Obama Tuesday. “The $7.7 billion budget will support a Special Operations force of 69,700 personnel,” according to the Pentagon. “At this level, Socom will have the resources for full-spectrum training, global capabilities, and regional expertise.”

Eglin AFB –

Final report aims to lift F-35 flight restrictions over Val-P


Northwest Florida Daily News © March 2, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

After eight years of tense public hearings and exhaustive data collection, Eglin Air Force Base on Friday submitted its final environmental impact report recommending flight restrictions over Valparaiso be lifted. The Air Force now has at least 30 days before a decision can be made about exactly where and how the jets can fly over Northwest Florida.

Defense budget could help Northwest Florida


Northwest Florida Daily News © March 4, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

Some major local military operations — the F-35 program and special operations forces, for example — appear to be largely untouched by the Pentagon’s proposed budget cuts, but force
reduction measures and degradation of military benefits still will have an effect on local service members. The Pentagon officially unveiled its 2015 budget proposal Tuesday as part of the White House’s total budget request. .............

**Chugging Along at Lightning Speed**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © March 10, 2014

F-35 production is holding steady with plans to churn out between 36 and 38 airframes this year, said Program Executive Officer Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan. The main challenges for the F-35 strike fighter program are completing airframe modifications and software upgrades on the 58-strong operational fleet, he added. "We simply cannot afford to have to do things twice on this program," Bogdan said in a March 4 Air Force release. "We don’t have the time, and we don’t have the money. We know what our commitments are, and we’re going to do everything we can to deliver them," he added..........

NS Mayport –

**L-3 gets undersea warfare training contract**


Jacksonville Business Journal © March 7, 2014

By Timothy Gibbons

Part of a $6.7 million job supporting the Navy’s Undersea Warfare Training Range will be done at Mayport Naval Station. L-3 Communications MariPro Inc. of Goleta, Calif., was awarded the option tied to a previously awarded contract to work in support of the range, which is located off the coast of Jacksonville.........
NAS Jacksonville –

**Jacksonville Grant Program Supports Veterans, Transitioning Personnel**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/jacksonville-grant-program的支持s-veterans-transitioning-personnel/#

Defense Communities 360 © March 4, 2014

The city of Jacksonville and the Jacksonville Jaguars NFL franchise are partnering to support local organizations serving veterans and active-duty service members transitioning to civilian life. As part of a five-year partnership launched last November, the Jacksonville Military Veterans Community Partnership Grants program will focus on services that support the transition to civilian life, provide emergency financial assistance, support local career assistance, provide military spouse and family support, and encourage wraparound social services, according to a Jaguars press release.

Tyndall AFB –

**Local impact of defense budget uncertain**


News Herald © March 4, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE | The Daily News

Force reduction measures and degradation of military benefits could have an effect on local service members under the Pentagon’s proposed budget cuts. The Pentagon officially unveiled its 2015 budget proposal Tuesday as part of the White House’s total budget request. The first post-Afghanistan war budget calls for a drawdown of Army and Air Force personnel, but invests additional funding in training, new weapons systems and special operations.
Florida National Guard –

**Florida last in National Guard-civilian ratio**


News Herald © March 1, 2014

By The Associated Press

Despite ever-present threats from hurricanes, floods and other natural disasters, Florida ranks last in the ratio of Army National Guard troops to civilian residents. Numbers provided to The Florida Times-Union by the Florida Army National Guard show there are 10.3 guardsmen per every 100,000 civilians in the state. The newspaper reported Saturday that Florida Army National Guard leaders are worried about the low numbers. The state’s adjutant general said his forces are already stretched thin and that budget cuts could make the situation worse……..

Hurlburt Field –

**U-28 phaseout, C-130 cuts proposed in 2015 budget**


Northwest Florida Daily News © March 5, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

The Pentagon has proposed some big shifts in its special operations aircraft inventory in 2015, including the elimination of two types of aircraft housed at Hurlburt Field. The U-28 and MC-130P Combat Shadows would be phased out completely, according to the Department of Defense’s budget proposal released Tuesday. The number of AC-130U Spooky gunships and MC-130H Combat Talon IIs at Hurlburt also would be cut back.
The budget still needs approval in Congress, where it is likely headed for a heated battle.

NAS Key West –

**County spending $40,000 for Navy jet-noise study**

http://www.keysnet.com/2014/03/01/495010/county-spending-40000-for-navy.html

KeysInfoNet © March 1, 2014

By Sean Kinney

F-35s such as this will be coming to Naval Air Station Key West at some point. The Monroe County Commission will spend $40,000 with consultant Keith and Schnars to conduct a study of jet noise surrounding Naval Air Station Key West's Boca Chica Field. In 2013, the U.S. Navy released an environmental impact statement, approved in October by Dennis McGinn, assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment, that allows increased flight and training operations out of Boca Chica Field.

Avon Park –

**Central Florida County Wins Grant to Attract Industry Compatible with Air Force Range**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/central-florida-county-wins-grant-to-attract-industry-outside-air-force-range/

Defense Communities 360 © March 9, 2014
A state grant awarded to Highlands County will help officials in Central Florida promote economic development outside Avon Park Air Force Range. The $40,000 grant was awarded by Enterprise Florida under its defense reinvestment grant program, which is intended to support military installations and help surrounding communities diversify their economies. Funds from the grant can cover studies, presentations, analysis, plans, marketing and modeling……..

Other Items of Interest –

**QDR Emphasizes Cyber, Science and Technology**


Defense News © March 4, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The Pentagon’s latest Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) has emphasized the need to protect science, technology, research and development, specifically cyber capabilities, a key priority of senior defense officials. The US Defense Department plans to invest in “new and expanded cyber capabilities and forces to enhance our ability to conduct cyberspace operations and support military operations,” the review, which is conducted ever four years, states……..

**HASC Chairman to DOD: Rewrite QDR**


Air Force-Magazine © March 5, 2014

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) called on the Defense Department to “re-write and re-submit” the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, which was officially released Tuesday along
with the President’s Fiscal 2015 budget request. McKeon said the review “should be immensely valuable to planners and senior commanders,” but falls short because it places too much emphasis on politics and too little emphasis on policy. “For that reason, I will require [DOD] to re-write and re-submit a compliant report,” McKeon said in a March 4 statement. He added, “In defiance of the law [sequestration], this QDR provides no insight into what moderate-to-low risk strategy would be, is clearly budget driven, and is shortsighted.” ............

Pentagon’s QDR Proclaims Military Ready To Do It All

Defense One © March 4, 2014

By Kevin Baron

The Pentagon released its highly-anticipated, four-year strategy review on Tuesday and with it a vision that the United States military can downsize, reconfigure and seek bold new innovations all while remaining ready to do everything from nuclear war to counterterrorism operations in defense of America’s borders. “With the president’s budget, our military will be able to defeat or deny any aggressor,” Pentagon officials write in the 88-page Congressionally-mandated Quadrennial Defense Review, outlining President Barack Obama’s top-level priorities.......
the war in Afghanistan. But Katrina McFarland, assistant secretary of defense for acquisition, said the agency is now reconsidering the strategy in light of the budget pressures it faces.

**Tiered Readiness Returns In Army 2015 Budget; Not All Brigades Ready to Fight**


Breaking Defense © March 4, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Last year, the sudden budget cuts known as sequestration forced the Army to cancel crucial training for 78 percent of its combat brigades. The budget request for 2015, released today, buys back a lot of that lost readiness — but not all. In fact, the Army has now officially resigned itself to what it once said it would never do: a system of readiness haves and have-nots, in which some units are never fully trained. That’s something the Army Vice-Chief of Staff, Gen. John Campbell, admitted was on the table when he talked to me in August, but now “tiered readiness” is the official Army plan.

**Exclusive: DoD proposes revolutionary changes in retirement benefits**


Military Times © March 6, 2014

By Andrew Tilghman

After years of silence on the intensely controversial issue of military retirement reform, the Pentagon on Thursday unveiled a detailed proposal for fundamental, far-reaching changes to the current pension system, Military Times has learned. The changes would preserve the current system’s defining feature of a 20-year, “cliff-vesting,” fixed-income
pension. But it would ultimately provide smaller monthly checks, according to documents obtained by Military Times……

Navy plans to retire all frigates by end of 2015


Navy Times © March 8, 2014

By Christopher P. Cavas

The steady decline of the fleet’s frigate force is being stepped up, and it’s looking like the last ship, previously scheduled to inactivate in 2020, will leave service by the end of 2015. Twelve frigates already have been programmed for decommissioning in 2014 and 2015. Now, sources said, the Kaufman and Rodney M. Davis, previously slated to inactivate in 2017, and Ingraham, in 2020, will be gone before 2016……...

How Big Will the US Army Be in 2019? Not Even the Army Knows


Defense News © March 9, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY

Just as the budgeting office of the US Army was preparing to submit its fiscal 2015 budget, last-minute word from the White House turned everything on its head. The original 2015 budget, along with the forward-looking future years defense plan (FYDP) for 2016-2019, called for the Army to fall to 420,000 soldiers by 2019, a significant cut from the 490,000 soldiers the Army is slated to field by the end of 2015………
FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting May 15th** – The next Task Force meeting will be on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Miami-South Homestead in Homestead, FL. For planning purposes, the meeting will begin at 9 AM and is scheduled to be completed – including a base tour -- by 2 PM. **Please confirm your attendance with me if you have not already done so. We would like to determine if there will be a quorum for this meeting.**

2. **Attachments:**

   - Legislative update

 Regards, BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**

**BRAC –**

**Adm. Greenert says Navy is not pushing for BRAC**

By Brock Vergakis

In what may provide some reassurance to coastal communities that are dependent on military spending, the Navy's top admiral says he doesn't see a great need for the Navy to go through another round of base closures. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert made the comments during a visit to Mayport Naval Station in Florida last week.

Housing Investors Face Uncertainty under BRAC, Downsizing

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/housing-investors-face-uncertainty-under-brac-downsizing/#

By PAUL McLEARY

US Army Leaders Push for Another BRAC Round

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140325/DEFREG02/303250029

Senior US Army leadership has doubled down on its support for another round of shuttering and shrinking domestic installations, with Army Secretary John McHugh telling a congressional committee Tuesday morning that the service could save about $1 billion a year by undertaking a new round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC.) “To maintain an unused building is to throw money away” at a time when the Army’s
budget is under stress from sequestration and the flattening of topline budget numbers in future budgets, he said…….

Navy Retains Little Excess Infrastructure, Officials Say


Defense Communities 360 © March 25, 2014

The Navy eliminated most of its excess capacity in previous BRAC rounds, but the service still would take the opportunity to assess its existing footprint if Congress were to authorize additional base closures, the Navy’s top leaders told lawmakers Tuesday. “We will certainly take a — a very hard look at all our capacities, at all the bases that we have, should Congress authorize a new BRAC round. And we do support the use of that tool,” Secretary Ray Mabus told the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee…….

‘Empty Facilities Tax’ Costing Army $500M Annually, McHugh Says

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/empty-facilities-tax-costing-army-500m-annually-mchugh-says/#

Defense Communities 360 © March 27, 2014

The Army is spending an estimated $500 million a year to maintain buildings it no longer needs, a cost that will rise in the absence of a BRAC round as the service continues to draw down its forces, Secretary John McHugh told lawmakers Thursday. McHugh referred to the funds spent on unneeded facilities as an “empty facilities tax” as he testified before the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. He pointed to that half-billion-dollar-a-year tax as one reason why Congress should approve the Pentagon’s request to hold a round of base closures in 2017…….

FDSTF –

Gov. Scott signs "Florida GI" bill that includes tuition break for veterans

http://www.therepublic.com/w/FL--GI-Bill

The Republic © March 31, 2014
Veterans living in the state of Florida will get some additional benefits under a bill signed by Gov. Rick Scott. On Monday, Scott signed the "Florida GI" bill at the National Guard Armory in Panama City. The bill offers a tuition break to honorably discharged veterans regardless of when they moved to the state. The tuition break will cost an estimated $12 million. The bill also includes college scholarships for National Guard members and sets aside money to renovate armories and acquire land adjacent to existing military installations in the state. It also waives professional licensing fees up to five years after a veteran is discharged.

Rick Scott Signs Florida GI Bill Into Law


Sunshine State News © March 31, 2014
By: ALLISON NIELSEN

Tuition breaks for veterans are now a reality in Florida -- on Monday, Gov. Rick Scott signed the Florida GI Bill into law at the National Guard Armory in Panama City. The bill would allow honorably discharged veterans to pay in-state tuition rates if they choose to attend a state university or college. The bill also includes additional perks for veterans, like money for tuition scholarships for National Guard members. Giving veterans in-state tuition rates was a chief legislative priority for both Florida Senate President Don Gaetz, R-Fort Walton Beach, and Florida House Speaker Will Weatherford, R-Wesley Chapel. The bill gained unanimous support from the Florida Legislature. After signing the bill, Scott took to Twitter to announce his support for the legislation.

DOD Budget Cuts –

Local officers urge caution in budget cutting

http://www.floridatoday.com/article/20140323/NEWS01/303230063/Local-officers-urge-caution-budget-cutting?nclick_check=1

Florida Today © March 22, 2014
By R. Norman Moody
Base pay for most airmen won’t increase more that 1 percent, they’ll likely pay more for groceries at the commissary, and such airplanes as the A-10 Thunderbolt II and 50-year-old U-2 could be phased out as the military tightens its belt. These are a few of the effects of a proposed reduced Department of Defense budget of $495.6 billion, which is less than the current year and conforms to budget caps in place that will be felt at bases and by U.S. troops everywhere……..

**Boehner: No boost to defense spending**


The Hill © March 26, 2014

By Erik Wasson

House Republicans will not seek to increase defense spending in their 2015 budget in the wake of the crisis with Russia, Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) said Tuesday. House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) will keep both the top-line spending level of $1.014 trillion for 2015 and the specific caps for defense and non-defense spending. The two-year budget deal reached in December put a $521 billion cap on non-defense spending and a $492 billion cap on defense spending, not including funds for the war on terrorism……..

**House lawmakers cool to DoD pay, benefits proposals**


Military Times © March 25, 2014

By Leo Shane III

The Pentagon’s pay and benefits proposals for fiscal 2015 would be crippling for troops and their families, and potentially a disincentive for many to continue serving, according to House lawmakers who oversee personnel programs in the annual defense budget. At a hearing Tuesday, Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., chairman of the House Armed Services
Committee’s military personnel panel, hinted that proposals to trim basic pay, housing stipends, Tricare benefits and commissary offerings could be overhauled by lawmakers in coming weeks as they finalize their budget priorities…..

Air Force Chief: Budget Cuts Affect Combatant Commands


Defense.gov © March 27, 2014

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Tyrone C. Marshall Jr.

Painful budget reductions will reduce the future capabilities of combatant commanders, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III told Congress here yesterday. Testifying alongside Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James at a hearing of the House Appropriations Committee’s defense subcommittee, Welsh discussed the difficult decisions budget constraints have presented and will continue to present to the Air Force’s role in defending national security……

Further Sequester Relief Not a Priority for Senate Leadership

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/further-sequester-relief-not-a-priority-for-senate-leadership/#

Defense Communities 360 © March 27, 2014

Senate Democrats have downgraded their effort to ease the burden of sequestration on DOD through fiscal 2021, dropping it from their list of legislative goals for the remainder of the year. Over the last 18 months, top Senate Democrats had made a push to replace the 2011 Budget Control Act spending caps on defense and domestic spending with alternative mechanisms for reducing the deficit, but on Thursday Senate leaders highlighted only domestic issues as their priorities for 2014……

2015 budget proposal shows half of plans

Air Force Times © March 29, 2014

By Brian Everstine

The Air Force's 2015 budget plan represents about half of what the service plans to do in terms of retiring and moving aircraft, with analysis not yet finished on what will come next and how the force structure will ultimately be balanced among active duty, Air National Guard and Reserve, Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh said. “Because we’re only halfway through this, we haven’t balanced all the force structure across the active and reserve components,” Welsh said at a March 26 House Appropriations defense subcommittee hearing.

MacDill AFB –

The partnership behind MacDill’s Airfest

http://tbo.com/list/news-opinion-commentary/the-partnership-behind-macdills-airfest-20140316/

Tampa Tribune © March 16, 2014

By Col. Scott DeThomas

The countdown is on for this year’s “MacDill Air Force Base presents Tampa Bay AirFest 2014.” This air show promises to be action-packed and filled with great aerial acts featuring the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds. Additionally, the ramp will be filled with displays from both the military and civilian aviation communities. MacDill Air Force Base, in partnership with generous local supporters, has built a two-day show that will make you proud to be an American.

Eglin AFB –
**GAO Predicts F-35 Software Troubles May Drive Annual Costs Up To $15 Billion**


Breaking Defense © March 24, 2014

By **COLIN CLARK**

Here’s the rub in this latest GAO report. It’s based on the director of Operational Test and Evaluations finding that the program won’t be able to make up lost time and deliver planes to the Marines on time. The Marines have already said they do not think the delivery of plane’s ready to go to war, known as Initial Operational Capability, will be affected by the software problems. Since software is so important to all of the the F-35’s three versions, the plane cannot handle some weapons considered crucial unless the right software version has been loaded……..

**Further Delays Predicted for F-35 Program**

[http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140326/DEFREG02/303260041/Further-Delays-Predicted-F-35-Program](http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140326/DEFREG02/303260041/Further-Delays-Predicted-F-35-Program)

Defense News © March 26, 2014

By **JOHN T. BENNETT**

The general in charge of the F-35 told a US House panel Wednesday he sees more delays ahead — four to six months — for the often-troubled fighter jet program. The House Armed Services Tactical Air and Land Forces subcommittee’s portion of an oversight hearing dedicated solely to the F-35 lasted only about an hour. It would have ended 20 minutes sooner if Chairman Rep. Mike Turner, R-Ohio, had had his way, but Ranking Member Rep. Loretta Sanchez, D-Calif., had additional questions…….
CNO Holds All Hands Call At Naval Station Mayport


Mayport Mirror © March 26, 2014

By MC1 Michael Wiss

“Visions of the future” was the theme as Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Jonathan Greenert held an “All Hands Call” at Naval Station Mayport March 18. Before addressing local Sailors, Greenert proudly gave the oath to 16 petty officers who chose to be reenlisted by the CNO during the event. After swearing them in, the CNO greeted each of the Sailors and presented them with coins. “First, I want to thank all the family members here today,” Greenert said. “I want to reassure that we will continue to support the Navy’s family programs.”

USS Simpson Returns Home


Mayport Mirror © March 26, 2014

By USS Simpson Public Affairs

The guided-missile frigate USS Simpson (FFG 56), and embarked HSM-46 Detachment Eight, returned to her Naval Station Mayport, Fla. homeport March 20 after a six-month deployment to the 6th Fleet area of responsibility. While deployed, the crew conducted more than 700 flight hours in support of regional and maritime security, more than 200 drills to increase overall preparedness and qualified more than 80 Sailors as Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialists (ESWS).

MCPON passes the word

http://members.jacksonville.com/military/periscope/2014-03-26/story/mcpon-passes-word

Florida Times-Union © March 26, 2014

By MC2 Martin L. Carey
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Mike Stevens and the Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert spoke with Sailors and answered their questions during an all hands call at Naval Base Kings Bay and Naval Station Mayport, Fla., March 18. The live event, transmitted worldwide via Navy Live Stream, addressed the questions and concerns of local Sailors and gave the opportunity for anyone with a computer to watch it online. The call began with CNO discussing his tenants of warfighting first, operate forward, and be ready……..

Florida National Guard –

Guard Association Says Compromise With Army Possible

Breaking Defense © March 25, 2014
By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

After more than two months of escalating conflict, the powerful National Guard Association of the US downshifted today and took a markedly more conciliatory tone towards the Army leaders it had been savaging just last week. As Army Sec. John McHugh and Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno testified before the House Armed Services Committee, NGAUS president Gus Hargett, a retired general himself, issued a supportive statement headlined “NGAUS, Army Leaders Agree on Most Issues.” The statement still ended by criticizing the active-duty Army for not heeding the Guard’s needs during the internal Pentagon budget process, but even this passive-aggressive note was a long way from the just plain aggressive, even inflammatory rhetoric of the past ten weeks……..

The Total Force and the Operational “Bumper”
http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx
The Air Force will soon undertake an experiment to see if it can successfully integrate more Air National Guard units into its Air Expeditionary Force construct to meet combatant commander requirements, Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh said during a Center for Strategic and International Studies event in Washington, D.C., Thursday. As a result of intense discussions with both Air Guard and Reserve officials surrounding the five-year USAF force structure plan, Welsh said the ANG believes it can handle a one-to-five deploy-to-dwell ratio going forward…….

**Welsh Details Structure Commission Follow-On**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

The Air Force has been poring over the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force’s January report since its release, and while it agrees with many of the recommendations the service is working to get more analysis on others before implementing them. "We completely agree with 11 of them,” Welsh said of the NCSAF recommendations during a Thursday forum at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. However, 25 of them USAF wants to “understand better,” particularly what the “second or third order effects” of the actions would be for the Total Force, said Welsh........

Hurlburt Field –

**Hurlburt joins Florida Clean Marina Program**

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/hurlburt/hurlburt-joins-florida-clean-marina-program-1.297266

Northwest Florida Daily News © March 28, 2014
The Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Clean Boating Partnership recognized the Hurlburt Field Marina as the newest member of Florida’s Clean Marina Program. The program is a state initiative which identifies marinas and boatyards that are dedicated to ensuring Florida’s waterways and natural resources are protected. “Protecting Florida’s marine resources is instrumental to the continued health of the state’s natural and business environments and it is always rewarding to see them actively involved in protecting these resources,” said Shawn Hamilton, FDEP northwest district director, in a press release.

Other Items of Interest –

**Hagel Names Military Professionalism Advisor**


Air Force Magazine © March 26, 2014

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has named Rear Adm. Margaret "Peg" Klein to serve as his senior advisor for military professionalism. Klein will report directly to Hagel on military ethics, character, and leadership issues. Klein “brings to the position a wealth of operational and leadership experience, including command responsibilities at various levels throughout the Navy community,” said Hagel in a March 25 statement. Hagel said Klein, who previously commanded the US Naval Academy, “knows that ethics and character are absolute values that must be constantly reinforced.”

**Naval bases across Southeast will review security procedures after Monday's shooting at Norfolk Naval Station**


Florida Times-Union © March 25, 2014

By Clifford Davis
A sailor was fatally shot aboard the USS Mahan at Norfolk Naval Station late Monday. The captain of Norfolk Naval Station said Tuesday he will review security procedures at his sprawling base after a civilian attempted to board the USS Mahan, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, and fatally shot a sailor. Naval bases across the Southeast also will be doing the same, according to Mike Andrews, a spokesman for Rear Adm. Rick Williamson, commander Navy Region Southeast.

The Obama Doctrine: When Does Caution Become Retreat?

http://breakingdefense.com/2014/03/the-obama-doctrine-when-does-caution-become-retreat/

Breaking Defense © March 26, 2014
By JAMES KITFIELD

The juxtaposition of recent images was jarring: Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel unveiling a defense budget that substantially shrinks the U.S. Army, while insisting that “after Iraq and Afghanistan, we are no longer sizing the military to conduct long and large stability operations.” And then there were the images of masked Russian troops seizing Crimea and threatening to carve apart Ukraine with naked aggression.

Ft. Rucker Poised to Grow after Next BRAC, Local Official Says


Defense Communities 360 © March 26, 2014

Despite the obvious threat posed by a looming BRAC round, Fort Rucker stands to gain missions in the next round of base closures, according to a member of the post’s local support group, Friends of Fort Rucker. The installation, located in southeastern Alabama, has an array of assets that could allow it to benefit from the next BRAC round, said Rod Wolfe, a retired brigadier general who also serves on Alabama’s Military Stability Commission.

DoD to look at consolidating commissaries, exchanges
Defense officials have ordered a review of options that include consolidating commissaries and exchanges, as well as having commissaries adopt an “Exchange-like business model,” according to information obtained by Military Times. The review will be conducted by the Pentagon’s Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation Office, according to an internal Pentagon email sent Thursday by Christine Fox, acting deputy secretary of defense, a copy of which was obtained by Military Times and later verified by defense officials.

Sen. Nelson: None of the controversial VA deaths occurred at Haley

Neither the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital in Tampa nor the C.W. “Bill” Young” VA Medical Center at Bay Pines were the locations where deaths occurred as the result of treatment delays, according to U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL) and hospital officials. Frustrated by a lack of answers from VA officials about the location of VA facilities where the delayed treatments led to 19 deaths nationwide, including five in the region encompassing all of Florida, Nelson visited Haley Friday afternoon on a fact-finding tour.

House Approves One-Year Doc Fix
The House on Thursday passed by voice vote a one-year “Doc Fix” that would avert a 24 percent cut in payments to physicians who treat Medicare and TRICARE patients. The bill’s passage (HR 4302) came suddenly, after House leaders had announced an agreement with the Senate on enactment of the Doc Fix. The Senate is likely to clear the bill Monday. Until then please send another email message to your elected officials.
Click [here](#) to send the message on the Budget and we encourage you to send as many emails as you want on the other issues listed that affect you.

**Some Commissaries May Close**

On Wednesday, Frederick Vollrath, assistant secretary of defense for readiness and force management, told the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee that some stateside commissaries might in fact have to shut down due to a loss of business that would likely result from the price hikes that would happen under the Pentagon fiscal 2015 budget plan. “It’s a possibility, [but] I don’t know what the probability is,” he said.

Industry officials and military associations have warned that the subsidy cuts might ultimately force commissaries to close because of the loss of business stemming from customers being turned off by the reduced savings that accrue from shopping at commissaries instead of public retail outlets. Vollrath acknowledged that commissary sales will likely decline as a result of the proposed changes.

“In working with some of the other retail organizations [we know that] when your price goes up the patronage tends to go down. So we would expect a reduction in patronage,” he said.

He predicted that retirees would be most likely to change their shopping habits.

“We know that some of the patrons, particularly retirees, will drive a long distance because of the current savings, and then they may not if the savings drop. They may not drive two hours from wherever they are retired to come in to get those savings. So there is a probability that the patronage will go down,” he told the subcommittee.

But Vollrath is hopeful that the commissaries will still maintain enough sales to stay in business.

“Our hope in working this, which is an art, [is] that we will still offer enough benefit that the service members and their families will value that,” he said.

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**HEALTH CARE NEWS**

**TRICARE Closes Walk-in Service Centers**

This is a reminder that all stateside TRICARE walk-in service centers will be closing April 1. The closure of the 189 facilities is expected to save the Defense Department about $50 million a year, officials said.
The TRICARE Service Centers, which handle about 137,000 visitors a month, are staffed by contractors and handle issues ranging from processing provider changes to billing problems. Patients with questions and concerns about their TRICARE services can visit the TRICARE website or call the toll free number at 1-877-TRICARE.

ACTIVE DUTY NEWS

Navy Changes PCS Policy
A change to Navy personnel policy now allows detailers to write orders directing the transfer of sailors up to six months prior to or after their Projected Rotation Date (PRD). Additionally, shore duty sailors in pay grades E-4 to E-9 may be pulled for Early Return to Sea Duty, after having completed at least 24-months ashore.

Navy detailers will also have increased flexibility in filling anticipated fleet vacancies on time with a fully trained and qualified relief. PRDs will not be adjusted and the current Career Management System/Interactive Detailing (CMS/ID) application and detailing policies remain unchanged. Sailors will still enter their CMS/ID order negotiation window nine months prior to their PRD. However, when they are selected for their next assignment, their orders may direct transfer earlier. For more information, read the message at the Navy Personnel Command website.
March 17, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **April Task Force Meeting Cancelled** – The April Task Force meeting has been cancelled because of *Easter week* calendar conflicts. The next Task Force meeting will be on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Miami-South Homestead in Homestead, FL. For planning purposes, the meeting will begin at 9 AM and is scheduled to be completed –including a base tour -- by 2 PM. More details to follow next week.

2. **New Task Force Web Site** – Please note the new URL for our web site. The web site can be found at: [http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/the-florida-defense-support-task-force/](http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/the-florida-defense-support-task-force/)

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**Need for BRAC is Clear, Installation Officials Tell Lawmakers**  
Defense Communities 360 © March 12, 2014

A new round of base closures is needed to avoid wasting money on unneeded facilities, John Conger, acting deputy undersecretary of defense for installations and environment, told the House Appropriations Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on
Wednesday. Equally important, granting DOD the authority to realign and shutter installations also would free up defense funds for other urgent priorities, including readiness and modernization, Conger told lawmakers……..

Farr Presses DOD on BRAC Cleanup Funds

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/farr-presses-dod-on-brac-cleanup-funds/#

Defense Communities 360 © March 14, 2014

Troubled by a steep drop in the budget to clean up installations closed during previous BRAC rounds, California Rep. Sam Farr (D) asked defense installation officials at a House hearing Wednesday to explain why the department’s unobligated balance for BRAC cleanup funds was so high. Farr said he had learned that the department had about $900 million in unobligated funds for BRAC cleanup. He was equally concerned about the fiscal 2015 budget request for $270 million, which would represent a 40 percent drop in funding from this year’s allocation and a 64 percent decline from FY 2013’s allocation……..

A Better Way to Close American Bases


By (RET.) GEN. NORTON A. SCHWARTZ and WILLIAM F. MURDY

In an age of military belt-tightening, the Pentagon is wisely willing to scale back its base operations on U.S. territory. So why won’t Congress let it? For the third year in a row, lawmakers appear uncharacteristically united in their opposition to the Defense Department’s request for another round of BRAC—the acronym for base realignment and closure—even though the process is based on a law Congress itself crafted back in 1990……..

Schwartz Makes BRAC Pitch

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © March 17, 2014

Two years after leaving his position as the Air Force’s top uniformed officer, retired Gen. Norton Schwartz, former Chief of Staff, is urging Congress to accept the Defense Department’s plea for another round of BRAC. Due to aircraft and personnel cuts, DOD must cut bases if there is any hope of
productively using its resources, according to a March 11 editorial in Politico Magazine, penned by Schwartz, who currently serves as President and chief executive officer of Business Executives for National Security, and fellow board member William Murdy......

FDSTF –

Bill to draw military retirees, installations to Florida passes both chambers; goes to governor for signature


Palm Beach Post © March 11, 2014

By John Kennedy

With senators saying they hoped it gives Florida prominence among military veterans, the state Senate on Tuesday approved a new Florida GI Bill, which makes veterans eligible for in-state tuition and also provides scholarships for members of the state’s National Guard. Sen. Garrett Richter, R-Naples, an Army veteran who won a Bronze Star in Vietnam, said the legislation (CS/HB 7015) will help draw military retirees and freshly discharged veterans to Florida, bringing fresh skills to the state economy.......

State Senate approves veterans bill


Tampa Tribune © March 11, 2014

BY MATT DIXON

State lawmakers Tuesday sent an omnibus military bill containing language aimed at promoting charter schools on military bases to Gov. Rick Scott, who says he will sign the measure. Though the bill passed both chambers of the Legislature on unanimous votes, language that encourages military base commanders to work with the Department of Education to sprout charter schools on military bases prompted heartburn for some Democrats, including those in the Tampa Bay area.......

Florida GI Bill’ passes in state Senate, moves on to Rick Scott

http://www.bizpacreview.com/2014/03/12/florida-gi-bill-passes-in-state-senate.moves.on-to-rick-scott-105750

BizPac Review © March 12, 2014

With the goal of establishing Florida as the top “Welcome Home” state for the military, the Florida GI Bill passed unanimously Tuesday in the Florida Senate. The bill offers a tuition break to honorably discharged veterans and funds college scholarships for National Guard members. Among other provisions, House Bill 7015 provides funds to purchase land next to military bases to prevent encroachment. The House passed the measure unanimously on the first day of the Legislative Session and it now moves to Gov. Rick Scott’s desk for his signature…….

(Note: This article cites FDSTF as example of best practice)

Experts say Colorado lags other states in efforts to fend off military cuts


Colorado Springs Gazette © March 16, 2014

By Garrison Wells

Two miles of gravel road leading to a gate at Fort Carson, serious car crashes on Colorado 94 and a lack of space at Peterson Air Force Base linger as issues that need resolution as the area looks to diminish looming impacts of Department of Defense cuts. There's also the problem of a golf course at Peterson that could be shut down. It has become too expensive to water......

DOD Budget Cuts –

How the new military budget affects Navy warships

http://hamptonroads.com/2014/03/how-new-military-budget-affects-navy-warships

The Virginian-Pilot © March 10, 2014
By Kate Wiltrout

President Barack Obama’s proposed budget, rolled out on Tuesday, could have major long-term effects on the warships that call Norfolk home - and the shipyards that build and maintain them. The Navy today has 283 warships, about 60 of them homeported here. As the military shrinks after a decade of war and faces mandatory cutbacks under sequestration, the budget proposal signals which ships the Pentagon considers most vital. Here’s a guide to some of the basic takeaways:

Air Force details fleet cuts, states hardest hit

Air Force Times © March 10, 2014

By Brian Everstine

The Air Force on Monday announced specifics on planned cuts to its fleet over the next five years, including 50 F-15Cs heading to retirement and multiple MQ-1 Predator units upgrading to the newer Reaper drone. The Air Force’s plans to cut 50 F-15C Eagles begin in fiscal 2015, with cuts to its active-duty fleet. Twenty-one F-15Cs overseas will be retired, along with two from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. The Air National Guard’s cutbacks all come in fiscal 2016, with the biggest hit going to the Oregon Air National Guard, which will lose 15 Eagles. Three F-15Cs will each be cut from California, Massachusetts, Florida and Louisiana:

US Navy Budget Plan: Major Questions Abound

Defense News © March 9, 2014

By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

The carrier is out. The carrier is in. The carrier is in, but only if money goes up. More planes are back in — well, sort of, but we’ll have to see. The new buying plan for littoral combat ships is — not yet decided on. The plan for laying up and modernizing half the fleet’s cruisers is almost ready but — not quite yet. New rules for counting the battle force are — not quite there, either....
**Inhofe Wants More Info on Confusing DoD Budget 'Now'**

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140311/DEFREG02/303110026/Inhofe-Wants-More-Info-Confusing-DoD-Budget-Now-

Defense News © March 11, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The top Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee wants the Pentagon to clear up lingering confusion about its 2015 spending blueprint. And he wants it to do so “now.” The Pentagon’s 2015 spending request is complete, and officials have assured the House and Senate Armed Services committees that a portion of its five-year budget plan complies with spending caps included in existing law…….

**Lawmakers Unlikely to Adjust Sequester Cuts through FY’15**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/lawmakers-unlikely-to-adjust-sequester-cuts-through-fy15/

Defense Communities 360 © March 11, 2014

With a difficult compromise on spending already achieved in December, Congress is unlikely to offer agencies additional relief from the existing spending caps until fiscal 2016. The bipartisan deal reached late last year reversed $63 billion in discretionary spending cuts across the government over FY 2014 and 2015, reducing the urgency to revisit the caps until the agreement expires on Sept. 30, 2015. At that point, though, serious discussions on a new deal to lift the spending caps could begin…….

**Air Force Proposes Cutting 500 Aircraft from Fleet**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/air-force-proposes-cutting-500-aircraft-from-fleet/

Defense Communities 360 © March 11, 2014

The Air Force unveiled a far-reaching plan Monday for shrinking its force structure over the next five years that would eliminate aircraft from all three components, 25 states and the District of
Columbia. The five-year plan, part of the Air Force’s fiscal 2015 budget request, calls for eliminating 500 aircraft, with 90 percent coming from U.S. bases.

**Inhofe Demands Clear Spending Plan from Pentagon**


Defense Communities 360 © March 12, 2014

After defense officials presented conflicting accounts over the past two weeks of what force structure levels are included in their five-year spending plan, Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.), ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, wants DOD to clear up the confusion right away. “Everyone knows it’s a dilemma,” Inhofe said. “They’re trying to do something to make the sequestration part of the budget less offensive,” Inhofe told Defense News.

**Rep. Visclosky: 'Impossible' To Move Pentagon Spending Bill With Only OCO 'Placeholder'**


Defense News © March 13, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

A key US House member warned Thursday the Obama administration’s withholding of a war-funding request could hinder passage of the chamber’s 2015 military spending bill. Rep. Pete Visclosky of Indiana, the top Democrat on the House Appropriations Defense subcommittee, took umbrage with a decision by Pentagon brass and White House budget officials to send Congress only a $79 billion “placeholder” figure for a new overseas contingency operations (OCO) budget blueprint.

**So Many Defense Budgets; So Little Clear Direction**


Breaking Defense © March 13, 2014
By MACKENZIE EAGLEN
This is the most confusing defense budget submission in recent times. It will not help Pentagon leaders achieve the goal they seek, which is for Congress and the White House to pass a new law softening the effects of sequestration for the remainder of the decade. While the mandatory budget cuts known as sequestration are part of the problem, good old fashioned politics loom large as well. All the parties — whether at the Pentagon, White House or Capitol Hill — are acting as rational actors in trying to avoid blame; the problem is few of their interests strategically align……..

DoD's Extra $26 Billion Fund a 'Long Shot'

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140315/DEFREG02/303150014/DoD-s-Extra-26-Billion-Fund-Long-Shot-

Defense News © March 15, 2014

The White House has yet to send the US Congress a line-by-line breakdown of its fiscal 2015 $56 billion Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative (OGSI) — of which $26 billion is earmarked for the Pentagon. But Congress’ support for the spending plan tacked onto the new budget request seems unlikely. Even Defense Department officials acknowledge that receiving backing for the stand-alone funding measure — which Pentagon officials stress would repair military readiness problems caused by sequestration in 2013 — will be an uphill battle……..

James: Sequester Will Cost Lives

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © March 17, 2014

Cuts to Air Force readiness accounts over the last decade have degraded safety, and continuing with sequestration could cost an increasing number of lives, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James told the House Armed Services Committee Friday. Answering a question from Rep. Pete Gallego (D-Texas) about the effects of ongoing sequester, James said, “the thing I worry about most is preparedness and readiness.” While “thank goodness, there haven’t
been that many crashes” due to inadequate training, “there have been some,” James admitted…….

Three Myths About the Defense Budget


Defense One © March 14, 2014

By Ben Freeman

The Pentagon’s fiscal year 2015 budget request has been savaged by Republicans and even some Democrats. Critics argue it’s “a skeleton defense budget,” that will “dramatically reduce the size of the Army to pre-World War II levels,” and all of this “will embolden America’s foes to take aggressive acts.” All of these critiques have one thing in common: they’re not true…….

MacDill AFB –

SENATE PASSES BILL ENCOURAGING STATE-LEVEL COLLABORATION FOR MILITARY CHARTER SCHOOLS

HTTP://WWW.TAMPABAY.COM/NEWS/EDUCATION/K12/NEW-BILL-ENCOURAGES-STATE-LEVEL-COLLABORATION-FOR-CHARTER-SCHOOLS-ON/2169726

TAMPA BAY TIMES © MARCH 11, 2014

By Kathleen McGrory, Times/Herald Tallahassee Bureau

On the heels of a tug-of-war over a proposed charter school at MacDill Air Force Base, the state Senate on Tuesday approved a bill encouraging military commanders to establish charters. The bill allows commanders to "work with the commissioner of education to increase military family student achievement, which may include the establishment of charter schools on military installations.” Similar high-level involvement took place last summer when Gov. Rick Scott’s office referred backers of the MacDill charter to a Fort Lauderdale charter school management company…….

Eglin AFB –
Some leery of Air Force proposal to train in state forests

Northwest Florida Daily News © March 16, 2014
By Lauren Sage Reinlie
Judy Russell is alarmed by a military proposal to conduct training on the state forest land she treasures. She pictures herself paddling down the serene Blackwater River when helicopters start swooping overhead. She sees heavily armed men trampling over endangered plants and animals. Late last year when she learned of the military’s proposal, no one she knew had heard anything of it. Other people in outdoor organizations were concerned, but she felt they were afraid to speak up.........

NAS Jacksonville –

NAS Jax and NS Mayport earn FDEP Environmental Excellence Awards

Florida Times-Union © March 12, 2014
By MC2 Amanda Cabasos
NAS Jax and NS Mayport received Environmental Excellence Awards presented by Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) during the Mayor’s Environmental Awards Luncheon at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens on March 6. The award recognizes the team efforts in successfully preventing violations and improving environmental compliance and sustainability at the local naval facilities. Jacksonville Mayor Alvin Brown said, “This is a real important award. You know we pride ourselves on working with all of our stakeholders in our community to make Jacksonville a better place to live, work and raise a family – and the environment is one of them.........

NS Mayport –

'Florida G.I. Bill' passed Tuesday; land to be bought around Mayport to stave off BRAC
By Clifford Davis

Three weeks after the Pentagon announced major cuts to the active military and state National Guard forces, Florida’s Legislature took steps to ease the impact, offering education help, improving National Guard armories and providing more educational reimbursements to guardsmen. Perhaps the biggest announcement from the “Florida G.I. Bill” for Jacksonville was a provision for $7.5 million to buy land around Florida military bases to buffer them from future closings.

Work Is Booming At EOD Mayport

By Paige Gnann

When the phone rings at Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Six Detachment Mayport, you can pretty much bet that there is going to be an interesting story on the other end. You know, like the time some divers found a World War II bomb lodged on the sea floor off the coast of Vero Beach and they had to dispose of it a mile off shore. Or the one about the unsuspecting kayakers who stumbled upon an illumination hand grenade on a deserted beach.

Taxpayer money to help Mayport going only to JaxPort

By Clifford Davis

Money set aside in a bill passed by the Florida Senate for Mayport Naval Station "buffering," will all go to JaxPort. That news was a surprise and a disappointment to some private property owners who wonder why they didn't get offers. Photos
One landowner will get all the money designated by the state to stem encroachment around Mayport Naval Station — the Jacksonville Port Authority. Lawmakers tacked $7.5 million in taxpayer money onto the “Florida G.I. Bill” (HB 7015) passed by the state Senate on Monday to buy properties or their development rights around Mayport and two other bases as a way to ward off potential base closings as the Pentagon retrenches.

Mayport LCS sees boost despite threat of national cuts


WOKV © March 17, 2014

By Stephanie Brown

Despite big cuts potentially coming to the US Navy overall, I’ve learned there are reasons for Naval Station Mayport to be looking up. Since Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel first announced his plan to reduce the number of Littoral Combat Ships the Navy will order by 20, WOKV has been digging in to the potential impact on Mayport. More than a dozen LCS are slated to come to Mayport as part of making the base the East Coast homeport for this squadron.

Tyndall AFB –

Tyndall AFB again to seek input on closing public waterways

http://www.newsherald.com/military/tyndall-afb-again-to-seek-input-on-closing-public-waterways-1.289217

News Herald © March 10, 2014

By ZACK McDONALD / The News Herald

Military officials announced Monday a new proposal restricting access to the base’s surrounding public waterways will be available for public scrutiny in the coming months. Tyndall Air Force Base submitted the “waterway security proposal” after several meetings with concerned Bay County residents, business owners, citizen groups and elected leaders over nine months. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will publish Tyndall’s proposal for a 30-day public comment period in the upcoming months, though officials Monday could not determine an exact date.
Florida National Guard –

**National Guard Commanders Rise In Revolt Against Active Army; MG Rossi Questions Guard Combat Role**


Breaking Defense © March 11, 2014
By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

The battle between the regular Army and the National Guard, which we all knew would blow up one of these days, has blown up. At 3:30 this afternoon, the spokesman of the 54 state and territorial Guard commanders, Kentucky Adjutant General Ed Tonini, raised the standard of revolt against the active-duty leadership who had, he said, “slammed their minds shut” on any compromise. Meanwhile, much more quietly, and with many caveats, the regulars have broken a 13-year taboo: In an exclusive interview with Breaking Defense, Army Quadrennial Defense Review director Maj. Gen. John Rossi questioned aspects of the Guard’s much-lauded combat performance since 9/11……..

**Army, Guard Chiefs Strive For Compromise As Subordinates Quarrel**

http://breakingdefense.com/2014/03/army-guard-chiefs-strive-for-compromise-as-subordinates-quarrel/

Breaking Defense © March 13, 2014
By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Poor General Ray Odierno. While the Army Chief of Staff took pains this morning to have only kind words for the National Guard (watch the video clip), one of his subordinates’ statements about the Guard’s post-9/11 performance keeps causing angry ripples across the Internet. Those ripples started spreading after I reported what Maj. Gen. John Rossi told me: that Guard brigades couldn’t handle the most tactically complex counterinsurgency missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.
Since we published Rossi’s remarks, our website and that of military satirist, cartoonist, and commentator Doctrine Man, who picked up the story, have been deluged with hundreds of comments pro and con………..

Hurlburt Field –

**AFSOC: Changes to aircraft at Hurlburt don't mean drawdown**


Northwest Florida Daily News © March 10, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

The number of aircraft and personnel at Hurlburt Field should not significantly change because of planned shifts in aircraft inventory, including the elimination of two types of planes based there, according to Air Force Special Operations Command. The U-28 and MC-130P Combat Shadow will be eliminated in the next couple years, but new aircraft will be introduced, according to the Department of Defense’s most recent budget proposal........

Naval Air Station Pensacola –

**Blue Angels are back for 2014 air shows season**


Pensacola News-Journal © March 16, 2014

Backed by the tail wind of a rejiggered Navy budget, the Blue Angels are once again in the air show business with Pensacola Naval Air Station as their home base to launch a nationwide tour during which they expect nearly 15 million visitors to view their 38 appearances. Grounded for most of their 2013 tour because of federal spending
restrictions, the elite Navy flight demonstration team kicked off the 2014 show season at the Naval Air Facility in El Centro, Calif., on Saturday………

Patrick AFB –

**New nuclear monitoring center opens at Patrick Air Force Base**


MyNews 13 © March 11, 2014

By Jerry Hume

A new center dedicated to monitoring nuclear activity around the world is now open in Brevard County. The U.S. Air Force hopes the new facility will help them detect ever evolving global threats. The Air Force will have more room -- an additional 60,000 square feet -- for tests and monitoring, now that their new Air Force Technical Applications Center (AFTAC) is complete. “It’s going to be a lot more data processing and a lot more contribution to the national and international mission,” said AFTAC Project Manager Jeff Barrows………

Other Items of Interest –

**How the Army plans to thin the ranks**


Army Times © March 10, 2014

By Tony Lombardo

If you’ve been hoping for a chance to voluntarily end your contract and collect a payout, don’t hold your breath. Even as the Army braces for a potential drop to 420,000 soldiers, leadership is intent on avoiding the use of voluntary separation incentives that the service has offered in the past. “The mandate that we’ve been given from leadership is, to the maximum extent possible, the Army will keep the best and brightest,” said Roy
Wallace, the assistant deputy chief of staff for the G-1 (personnel), in a sit-down with reporters at the Pentagon on March 5………..

New SASC AirLand Chairman on F-35 Remedy: Fully Fund It
http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140311/DEFREG02/303110032/New-SASC-AirLand-Chairman-F-35-Remedy-Fully-Fund-It

Defense News © March 11, 2014
By JOHN T. BENNETT

In comments likely to please the program’s contractors, the incoming chairman of the Senate subcommittee that oversees the Pentagon’s troubled F-35 program says there’s one thing Congress can do to avoid more problems: fully fund it. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., was handed the panel’s AirLand subcommittee gavel Tuesday morning. By the afternoon, reporters already were peppering him with questions about his plans, which will include crafting parts of the full Armed Services Committee’s 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which deals with the US military’s ground and air forces………..

New US Navy Counting Rules Add Up To More Ships

Defense News © March 11, 2014
By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

You might have missed it, but virtually overnight the US Navy just grew, from 283 battle force ships to 291. A windfall purchase? A fast-track transfer? No, just a new way of counting the ships that carry out the Navy’s missions. “We periodically assess the rules of how we count ships, and these changes better reflect the demands of our combatant commanders and the current mission requirements of our Navy’s battle force,” Navy Secretary Ray Mabus said…….
Changes Coming for Air Force Reserve

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force-Magazine © March 13, 2014

The Air Force Reserve will see a lot of new changes if Congress approves the Defense Department’s Fiscal 2015 budget request. Specifically, the budget seeks to “increase the number of Reserve fighter wings equipped with F-16 fighters, create a classic associate B-1 bomber group, increase the number of Reserve KC-135 tankers, inactivate the Reserve airlift wing at Pope Field, N.C., retire the A-10 fighters, and inactivate the Reserve's E-3 AWACS classic associate group,” states a March 10 release. “These force structure changes are significant, but they ensure the Air Force Reserve remains an integrated, flexible, and combat-ready force,” said Brig. Gen. Buck Waldrop, Air Force Reserve Command director of plans, programs, and requirements......

Report Addresses Key Hurdles to Renewable Energy Development at Installations

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/report-addresses-key-hurdles-to-renewable-energy-development-at-installations/

Defense Communities 360 © March 11, 2014

A new report published by the American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE) offers an overview of the primary decisions facing companies pursuing development of renewable energy projects at military installations. Renewable Energy for Military Installations: 2014 Industry Review is made up of 12 articles, each written by a separate set of authors. The 54-page report is divided into four sections: policy — addressing state utility regulatory risk; and collaboration among state energy offices and DOD; contracting and finance — the Army’s multiple-award, task-order contract (MATOC); creating successful power purchase agreements; and risk in long-term energy contracts with DOD; siting and technology considerations — solar and wind energy; and energy security and microgrids......

Reduction in Army Brigades to Follow Cuts in End Strength, Vice Chief Says
Army planners are determining how many brigade combat teams will need to be eliminated as the service’s active-duty forces shrink to between 440,000 and 450,000 soldiers, the end strength included in its fiscal 2015 budget request. The Army’s size is slated to drop to 420,000 under DOD’s five-year spending plan, an outcome which could be averted if Congress lifts the spending caps imposed under the 2011 Budget Control Act…….
March 24, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting May 15th** – The next Task Force meeting will be on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Miami-South Homestead in Homestead, FL. For planning purposes, the meeting will begin at 9 AM and is scheduled to be completed –including a base tour -- by 2 PM. Please confirm you attendance with me if you have not already done so.

2. **Briefing to Congressman Rooney** – Last week, Chairman Patronis, Doug Callaway from the Florida Washington Office, Rocky McPherson and I met with Congressman Rooney to brief him on the Florida Defense Support Task Force. The briefing was well-received and the Congressman is extremely supportive of Task Force efforts to protect Florida’s military installations.

3. **Attachments:**
   - Legislative update
   - FDSTF Grant Announcement
   - Slides from briefing to Congressman Rooney
   - Notes from bi-weekly TPG conference call

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

For Pentagon, it’s always a tough battle to get Congress to close military bases, facilities


Washington Post © March 17, 2014

By Walter Pincus

The third time may be the charm for the Defense Department in getting Congress to start the procedure that ultimately could close more excess military bases. That would mean authorizing the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. Past and proposed reductions in force numbers have created what defense officials say is more than a 25 percent surplus of military bases and facilities that are wasting billions of dollars each year. A separate Army analysis found that its excess capacity within the United States ranges between 12 and 28 percent, depending upon the facility. That figure will grow, because the Army is shrink by an additional 70,000 troops in the next five years…………..

Lawmakers Weigh Politics and Economics in Deciding on BRAC Rounds


Defense Communities 360 © March 19, 2014

Lawmakers’ uncharacteristic bipartisan opposition to the DOD’s request for a new BRAC round continues to be a political hot potato, according to two recently published commentaries. The 2005 BRAC round proved to be the costliest ever, according to retired General Norton Schwartz, former Chief of Staff of the Air Force and William Murdy, chairman of Comfort Systems USA and vice chairman of the board of directors for Business Executives for National Security. The upfront costs of a BRAC round prove to be extremely high, costing taxpayers $35 billion in upfront costs and $4 billion annually in perpetuity……..
Some House Members Shift Perspectives on BRAC

Defense Communities 360 © March 20, 2014

Congress will vote to approve a new round of BRAC in the near future, according to a vocal member of the House Armed Services Committee, who commented on Tuesday. Asked about when and if BRAC would pass, Congressman Austin Scott (R-GA) said, “I think yes, he [Obama] will get the votes for a BRAC, not this year but next year,” reports WMAZ-TV in Macon. Scott’s comments came during a visit to Macon’s Robin Air Force Base, home to Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex (WR-ALC), one of the Air Force’s three depots. Scott’s district also includes Moody Air Force Base…….

DOD Budget Cuts –

Risk’ discussed following Army budget request

Northwest Florida Daily News © March 13, 2014

By DAVID VERGUN / Army News Service

At what point does the Army become a hollow and ineffective fighting force if the drawdown and budget cuts continue? Army leaders were asked that question during a media roundtable at the Pentagon, March 5, just a day after the Army’s proposed fiscal year 2015 budget was revealed. Weighing in on the question was Brig. Gen. John G. Ferrari, deputy director of Army Program, Analysis and Evaluation........

Admiral: Pentagon Will Not Redraw COCOM Boundaries

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140318/DEFREG02/303180027?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter
The Pentagon is not looking to redraw the boundaries of its geographical war-fighting commands, but is exploring the possibility of realigning forces around the world, a senior US military official said Tuesday. The Defense Department had been looking at a major reorganization of the combatant commands (COCOMs) for more than a year, however that effort lost steam in recent months, according to sources. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said last summer that budget cuts might force DoD to cut a COCOM.

Pentagon’s Gamble on Getting More Money Questioned


The Pentagon is betting that Congress will roll back $35 billion in automatic defense cuts scheduled to begin in fiscal 2016. That may prove wishful thinking, with little consensus among lawmakers over eliminating the looming defense cuts that were part of the across-the-board reductions, known as sequestration, embedded in the 2011 agreement to lift the federal debt limit. “I hope there is nobody naive enough to believe that we can just end it for defense,” Dick Durbin, the Senate’s second-ranking Democrat and chairman of the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, said of sequestration in an interview. “It’s going to be ended for both defense and non-defense if it’s going to work.”

On Capitol Hill, a Return to Pet Military Projects

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140323/DEFREG02/303230009
There was scant evidence for weeks that a bipartisan US budget deal would bring a return to the practice of finishing annual spending bills — until recently, when the first signs emerged. On Capitol Hill, when both chambers pass annual agency appropriations bills, it’s known as “regular order.” But for much of the Barack Obama era, bitter partisan bickering over reducing America’s massive debt overtook hearings intended to focus on agencies’ annual budgets, including ones held by the four defense committees……..

**DOD Bets Against Sequestration**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/dod-bets-against-sequestration/#

The DOD’s current long-term fiscal plans make a big assumption— that Congress will find a way to halt the automatic $35 billion cut to the department’s budget slated for 2016. In a memo to the military service chiefs last month, Acting Deputy Secretary of Defense Christine Fox said next fiscal year “will be a critical inflection point…and we will look for a signal from Congress that sequestration will not be imposed in FY 2016.” It is hard to find anyone in Congress that shares the Pentagon’s wishful thinking, according to a recent story in Bloomberg……

MacDill AFB –

**Exclusive: Boeing U.S. tanker program seen $1 billion over budget**

http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/21/us-boeing-tanker-idUSBREA2K1UA20140321
The U.S. Air Force on Friday estimated that Boeing Co's (BA.N) development of a new refueling plane will cost nearly $1.1 billion more than initially planned, but the terms of the government's contract mean Boeing must cover the added costs. The latest estimate from the Air Force office that runs the KC-46A aerial tanker program puts the total development cost at $5.85 billion. The Air Force plans to spend $52 billion to develop and buy 179 of the new refueling planes to start replacing its fleet of 50-year-old KC-135 tankers, which are used to refuel fighter jets and other warplanes during flight......

Eglin AFB –

Eglin set to release report on using Tate’s Hell


News Herald © March 17, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE | Daily News

Judy Russell is alarmed by a military proposal to conduct training on the state forest land she treasures. She pictures herself paddling down the serene Blackwater River when helicopters start swooping overhead. She sees heavily armed men trampling over endangered plants and animals. Late last year when she learned of the military’s proposal, no one she knew had heard anything of it. Other people in outdoor organizations were concerned, but she felt they were afraid to speak up........

The fight over forest training

http://www.newsherald.com/opinions/editorials/the-fight-over-forest-training-1.292689

News Herald © March 18, 2014

In case you weren’t aware, Bay County residents aren’t the only ones dealing with military growing pains and fear of encroachment issues. Residents near Eglin, as reported in our sister paper The Northwest Florida Daily News, are wondering why Eglin Air Force Base wants to expand its training to state forest land. As with the debate over Tyndall Air Force Base’s plans to enhance its security by holding the right to shut
down adjacent waterways in the event of an emergency, Eglin’s plans are drawing fire as well. In both cases, people are paying attention, and that is as it should be.

F-35 program maturing at Eglin


Northwest Florida Daily News © March 22, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

Since pilots started flying the F-35 here two years ago, progress has been slow but steady. Now the training program for the military’s newest fighter jet is ramping up, and soon operations will start looking just like any other military flight training program in the country — albeit a diverse one. The Air Force, Navy and Marines as well as Dutch and United Kingdom forces are training to fly and maintain the aircraft at Eglin.

Lockheed Martin F-35 Jet’s Software Delayed, GAO Says


Bloomberg News © March 22, 2014

By Tony Capaccio

Delays in testing critical software for Lockheed Martin Corp. (LMT)’s F-35 jet are threatening to delay the Pentagon’s most expensive weapon and boost development costs, according to congressional investigators. “Persistent software problems” have slowed testing to demonstrate the aircraft’s combat, navigation, targeting and reconnaissance systems, the U.S. Government Accountability Office said. The Marine Corps F-35 version, designed for short takeoffs and vertical landings, has a key milestone next year. While the Marines want the plane to be deemed ready for warfare in mid-2015, tests on some of its software might not be completed on time, and may be as much as 13 months late.
US Southern Command –

**SouthCom Pushes for More Anti-Drug Ships**

http://www.military.com/daily-news/2014/03/17/southcom-pushes-for-more-anti-drug-ships.html?comp=700023317828&rank=1

Military.com © March 17, 2014

by Richard Sisk

Budget cuts and the support of just one Navy ship for the entire U.S. Southern Command have been a boon for the Latin American drug cartels shipping narcotics to the U.S., the SouthCom commander said. "I simply sit and watch it go by," Marine Gen. John Kelly said of the cocaine aboard the cartels'30-foot "go fast" boats heading north through the Caribbean and along Central America's Pacific coast. "Because of asset shortfalls, we're unable to get after 74 percent of suspected maritime drug smuggling," Kelly said........

**Budget Shortfalls Reversing Southcom Gains, Commander Says**


Defense News © March 13, 2014

By Claudette Roulo

After 50 years of battling drug trafficking alongside the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean, budget cuts are reversing hard-fought gains and forcing U.S. Southern Command to accept significant risks, the Southcom commander said today. "Last year, we had to cancel more than 200 very effective engagement activities and numerous multilateral exercises, Marine Corps Gen. John F. Kelly told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee........

NAS Jacksonville –

**Navy P-8 Poseidon crew shows off plane's capabilities to the Times-Union**
Thirteen thousand feet over the ocean, it’s hard to make out anything in the vast expanse of blue. That is until the advanced optics of the Navy P-8 Poseidon take over. “See that? Their motor just kicked on,” said Petty Officer 2nd Class Aaron Bucher as he looked at the bubbling white water stirred up by a shrimp trawler’s engines. The Times-Union rode along with a P-8 from Navy patrol squadron VP-45 on Friday as it performed a training exercise just like its sister squadron, VP-16, is conducting as it searches for missing Malaysian Air Flight 370 in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Australia.

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**NS Mayport –**

**Over threat of cuts, LCS to be part of "brilliant" Mayport future**

More than just a budget boost- a sign of a bright future. I first told you Monday about the Navy’s plan to begin building the infrastructure needed at Naval Station Mayport for the base to become the East Coast homeport for the Littoral Combat Ships. “If you’re gunna have your ships docked here, homeported here, it just makes sense,” says Florida’s Democratic US Senator Bill Nelson.

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**Team Effort To Conserve Energy At NS Mayport**

As Naval Station Mayport pushes to execute its energy mission of promoting positive command, conservation and behavior change, Navy leaders are looking to installation energy managers (IEMs) to help shape energy culture across the region. Funded by
Commander, Naval Installations Command (CNIC), IEMs track energy usage at bases, facilitate new projects, and meet with leadership to tackle a variety of energy challenges. The man tasked with this daunting task is new Naval Station Mayport Installation Energy Manager Chris Vidal…….

Navy still needs small surface combat ships and Mayport will be the hub, Navy secretary says


Florida Times-Union © March 21, 2014

By Terry Dickson

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus Jr. told 1,800 sailors and Marines at Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base Friday that Americans are safe because the Navy is always in the right place all the time. Mabus stressed that though concerns about money remained, the Georgia and Jacksonville bases are still in the Navy’s plans to upgrade. That includes replacing subs and building more ships — with Mayport being the hub for “small surface combat ships.” It’s all part of a strategy, he said, that will place the Navy at the forefront of U.S. defense strategy…….

Florida National Guard –

NGAUS Escalates Guard-Army Conflict Another Notch

http://breakingdefense.com/2014/03/ngaus-escalates-guard-army-conflict-another-notch/

Breaking Defense © March 17, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Late Friday, the powerful National Guard Association of the US escalated the already bitter conflict between the Guard community and regular Army leaders by another notch — and they did so in response to something an Army general told Breaking Defense. On Tuesday, Breaking Defense published an interview I’d done with Maj. Gen. John Rossi, the
Army Seeks Balanced Force through National Guard Cuts

The Army’s plan to reduce the size of the National Guard by 15,000 service members has raised alarm among the governors and National Guard state commanders of all 50 states, and has spurred Rep. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.) to introduce legislation that would prevent cuts to the National Guard prior to 2016. “The Army does not want to do this; it has been forced to make these cuts due to the budget,” said Army Vice Chief of Staff General John Campbell, reported The Hill in a recent interview. “It’s about achieving the right balance, the right force mix for the Army in order to execute the nation’s defense strategy.”

Hurlburt Field –

AFSOC is getting a new commander

Lt. Gen. Bradley Heithold has been named the next leader of the Air Force Special Operations Command headquartered at Hurlburt Field. He will take over for Lt. Gen. Eric Fiel, who has held the position since June 2011. The date of the change of command has not been determined. Heithold now serves as vice commander of U.S. Special Operations Command headquarters in Washington, D.C. He is responsible for planning, coordinating and executing actions with the Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, all branches of the military and other governments.
Post-9/11 veterans employment improves but still lags civilian rate


Military Times © March 20, 2014

By George Altman

Employment for the latest generation of veterans improved in 2013 but still lags well behind that of civilians, according to a new government report. The unemployment rate for post-9/11 vets was 9 percent in 2013, down from 9.9 percent in 2012, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ annual veteran employment report, released March 20. But even with that nearly 10 percent decrease, the post-9/11 vet unemployment rate gained little ground on the 2013 nonveteran rate of 7.2 percent.

A Better Fleet: Scrap LCS, Double Virginia Sub Buy & Move Design Back To Navy


Breaking Defense © March 20, 2014

By KIRK LIPPOLD

The US Navy needs more ships. The United States cannot protect the world’s sealanes, let alone “pivot to the Pacific,” if we further downsize our military. Especially given other nations’ growing anxiety about whether the US will still shoulder the leadership role of protecting them, the Navy must grow, not become smaller. Yes, individual ships may be more capable today than in the past, but the harsh reality is that even the most high-tech ships are useless unless the U.S.
maintains enough of them to sustain a forward deployed presence in hot spots around the world……

MSC ships offer blueprint for cruiser lay-ups

Navy Times © March 22, 2104

By Lance M. Bacon

Cruiser crews going into lay-up in the coming years could be cut by two-thirds and share berthing and galleys with other ships if the Navy follows an established model that has cut costs by more than 80 percent. The Pentagon on Feb. 24 announced a plan to place 11 of 22 cruisers and three dock landing ships in a reduced operating status, a proposal that leaves a number of unanswered questions as the Navy works out the details. Yet this much is certain: Don’t expect to get an easy tour if your ship goes into lay-up. Much of the crew will rotate to fill gaps at sea and critical billets ashore……

Study: Student vets have higher graduation rates than nonvets
http://www.militarytimes.com/article/20140324/EDU/303240024/Study-Student-vets-higher-graduation-rates-than-nonvets

Military Times © March 24, 2014

By George Altman

Student veterans seeking associate and bachelor’s degrees under the GI Bill have slightly better graduation rates than their nonveteran peers, data from a new Student Veterans of America study suggests. SVA’s Million Records Project also found that students who start school at for-profit institutions have slightly lower chances of success than those who start at nonprofit colleges and universities. Nearly 64 percent of students who started at private schools earned a degree. For public schools, the number was just under 51 percent; for for-profit schools it was just under 45 percent……
April 7, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting May 15th** – The next Task Force meeting will be on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Miami-South Homestead in Homestead, FL. For planning purposes, the meeting will begin at 9 AM and is scheduled to be completed – including a base tour -- by 2:30 PM. **Please let me know if you will be able to join us for dinner on Wednesday night and the tour from 1-2:30 PM on Thursday.**

2. **Attachments:**
   - TPG Monthly report
   - FDVA Legislative update

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**Levin, Shaheen warn Pentagon not to bypass Congress on base closures**
The Hill © April 3, 2014

By Jeremy Herb

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.) on Thursday issued a stern warning to the Army not to try to bypass Congress to close bases. Levin said that any attempt by the military to circumvent Congress would set back an already endangered Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commission process “by many, many years.” “If our Army or any of the other services proposes something in the budget which is not compliant with the BRAC process, in other words front-running the BRAC process, it will be will be triply difficult to get a BRAC process going,” Levin told Army Secretary John McHugh at an Armed Services Committee hearing…….

FDSTF –

Scott signs veterans bill while in Panama City

News Herald © March 31, 2014

By Chris Olwell / The News Herald

Florida made a push to be the most military friendly state in the nation Monday by creating a $22.2 million law designed to create educational and professional opportunities for returning military members. Gov. Rick Scott, Senate President Don Gaetz and House Speaker Will Weatherford joined local leaders and veterans to sign the bill into law Monday during a ceremony at the National Guard Armory…….
DOD Budget Cuts –

**Congress, Pentagon at odds in budget talks; it’s military’s needs vs. lawmakers’ home front**


Washington Post © March 31, 2014

By Walter Pincus,

Defense Department officials and Congress continue to disagree on how to save money in the fiscal 2015 defense budget. In most instances, Pentagon officials have the facts and politicians generally have concern about the effects on their constituents. Here are two examples from recent Capitol Hill hearings:...........

**Stripped from Senate Democrats' Agenda: Getting Rid of Sequestration**

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140327/DEFREG02/303270032/

Defense News © March 27, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

US Senate Democratic leaders have stripped from their legislative agenda efforts to further ease or eliminate the remaining eight years of across-the-board defense and domestic spending cuts. As Senate Majority Leader Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada and other top Democrats — including Appropriations Defense subcommittee Chairman Sen. Richard Durbin of Illinois — assembled on a small stage in a Senate studio Wednesday, an aide placed a large white poster board with dark blue letters on a stand beside them........

**Next Up on the Chopping Block**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx
The Air Force is looking at a wide range of force structure cuts in order to preserve readiness accounts in key mission areas in case budget-sequestration-level funding persists beyond Fiscal 2015, Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Larry Spencer told lawmakers. The Air Force's Fiscal 2015 budget proposal stands above the sequestration level, but the service has tried to put "reversible" budget items in its near-term plans in case sequestration stands pat, Spencer testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee's readiness panel on March 26.

With 'Ryan Budget,' GOP Wants To Show It's Strong on Defense

House Budget Committee Chairman and possible presidential candidate Rep. Paul Ryan unveiled a GOP spending plan Tuesday that would inflate President Barack Obama’s proposed Pentagon spending level by over $30 billion. The much-anticipated 2015 “Ryan budget” almost certainly will be approved by the Republican-controlled House. But the Wisconsin Republican’s spending plan isn’t going anywhere beyond the lower chamber — Senate Budget Committee Chairman Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., says she will not craft a 2015 budget resolution.
restoring them by 2017. Ryan does this by taking from the nondefense side of the ledger and still reducing overall federal spending beyond what is contemplated under the total sequester caps……..

**House appropriators cut military construction spending**

The Hill © April 2, 2014
By Jeremy Herb

The House Appropriations Committee is cutting spending on military construction in its first 2015 appropriations bill, while boosting funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. In all, the committee’s legislation provides $71.5 billion in discretionary spending for military construction and Veterans Affairs — $1.8 billion less than what was enacted last year. The bill provides $6.6 billion for military construction, a cut of $3.3 billion compared to 2014 appropriations levels. The panel says the spending reduction is attributed to a lack of need for new military construction projects. The appropriations measure increases funding for veterans programs, meanwhile, by $1.5 billion……..

**Budget Cuts Threaten Military Readiness, Officials Say**

Defense.gov © April 3, 2014
By Nick Simeone, American Forces Press Service

The Pentagon will need additional resources if the United States wants to remain a global leader through defense strategy, and the current budget request for military spending assumes an increased level of risk for some missions, two senior Defense Department officials told Congress today. Christine E. Wormuth, deputy undersecretary of defense for strategy, plans and force development testified at a House Armed Services Committee hearing alongside Navy Adm. James. A. Winnefeld Jr., the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
Both officials said continuing cuts to the Pentagon budget would significantly reduce the department’s ability to implement the defense strategy at a time when the country faces a rapidly changing security environment……..

**US Navy Unfunded List Requests Growlers, Poseidon Aircraft**


Defense News © April 3, 2014

By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

Although titled an “unfunded priority list,” the US Navy’s document giving Congress options to add to the 2015 budget is neither prioritized, nor a list of unfunded programs. Rather, it is largely a list of programs and endeavors that suffered cuts as the Pentagon strove to reduce spending across hundreds of areas, with funding amounts reflecting what it would take to get those areas back to previously-planned levels. Defense News obtained a copy of the list ………

**USAF Submits $8B Unfunded List to Congress**


By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The US Air Force has sent Congress an $8 billion unfunded priorities list, with more than $3.3 billion eyed for new procurement programs, according to a copy of the list obtained by Defense News. The undated list includes $200 million for the Combat Rescue Helicopter program, a last-minute add to the five-year spending projection contained in the Pentagon’s fiscal 2015 budget proposal, which was sent to Capitol Hill in early March…………
Without Capitol Hill Advocates, US Weapons Cuts All But Certain


Defense News © April 5, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

Widespread opposition has yet to form around any single Pentagon proposal to cut a specific weapon system, indicating most could be implemented despite lawmakers’ protestations on behalf of parochial interests. Some lawmakers and analysts were quick to dismiss the Pentagon’s 2015 budget plan as dead on arrival. After all, it called for big troop cuts, politically radioactive troop benefit cuts, left some wondering if 11 aircraft carriers are affordable, and cut entire fleets of A-10 attack aircraft and U-2 spy planes……..

Sequester Projections

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © April 7, 2014

The US will be left “less ready and less viable in meeting national defense requirements both now and in the future” if sequester fully returns in Fiscal 2016, Maj. Gen. James Jones said during a House Armed Services Committee’s seapower and projection forces panel. Jones, Air Force assistant deputy chief of staff for operations, plans, and requirements, said that a return to sequester caps would mean the Air Force would have to “revisit” the decision to cut the KC-10 fleet “in order to garner savings … [of] $2.3 billion in the [Future Years Defense Plan] and $2.6 billion in the out years.”……..

Unfunded Priorities Lists Unlikely to Be Fulfilled
The military services last week sent Congress a list of $36 billion worth of priorities not included in DOD’s fiscal 2015 budget request, including significant amounts of funding for facility needs. The lists, requested by the House Armed Services Committee, stand little chance of being funded, though, as lawmakers are unlikely to revisit the FY 2015 spending caps included in last December’s budget agreement. “It is not going to happen,” Gordon Adams, a Stimson Center analyst responsible for the defense budget during the Clinton administration, told Defense News.

MacDill AFB –

MACDILL GETTING EIGHT MORE KC-135 TANKERS — MAYBE

Tampa Bay Times © MARCH 29, 2014

By William R. Levesque, Times Staff Writer

The Air Force plans to slash its ranks, retire a big chunk of its aircraft fleet and trim billions of dollars from its budget in coming years. Can there be any good news for MacDill Air Force Base amid such carnage? Maybe. The Air Force’s long-range plans, recently unveiled in the proposed fiscal 2015 Pentagon budget, call for MacDill to add eight KC-135 aerial refueling aircraft to its fleet of 16 in 2018 along with nearly 300 additional personnel to tend them.

Long Troubled Tanker Program May Be Turning Corner; Costs Down Half Billion Dollars

Breaking Defense © April 2, 2014

By COLIN CLARK
One of the most screwed up programs in Pentagon history, the airborne tanker, may have turned a corner, with the KC-46 program cutting more than half-a-billion dollars from its projected costs, with $386.9 million of those savings coming in fiscal 2015. Some of these details will doubtless be discussed at the Wednesday afternoon House Armed Services subcommittee hearing about the tanker and other Air Force projection assets such as the C-5 and C-17……..

Eglin AFB –

GAO’s F-35 Estimate Plunges $11.5 Billion; EELV Costs Soar $28.1 Billion


Breaking Defense © March 31, 2014

By COLIN CLARK
The most expensive conventional weapons program in history just scored a major win, with the F-35 program’s estimated acquisition costs plunging $11.5 billion. This is no program estimate that critics might savage. This comes from the Government Accountability Office’s definitive annual Assessment of Selected Weapons Report. The GAO did not mince words in identifying the biggest winner in its analysis of the Pentagon’s major weapons programs……..
NS Mayport –

Mayport says farewell to frigate USS De Wert


Florida Times-Union © April 4, 2014

By Clifford Davis

The USS De Wert (FFG 45) sits at the pier at Mayport Naval Station on the final day of its service life to the U.S. Navy, Friday, April 4 2014. It was decommissioned Friday. The old lady looked good on her final day, though almost completely gray. The chaplain quoted from Ecclesiastes Chapter three. “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven,” he said. Hundreds of people attended the occasion, dressed in their best attire to bid her farewell. She had shaped their lives, kept them safe and would forever remain a part of them………

Florida National Guard –

Training Tops US Army Guard Unfunded List


Defense News © April 3, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY

- The US Army National Guard is asking Congress to find an extra $1.5 billion to meet its unfunded requirements in fiscal year 2015, primarily to fund training and operations, according to a copy of the list obtained by Defense News. Due to budget cuts and the winding down of troop requirements in Afghanistan, the Guard was not funded for any brigade-sized Combat Training Center (CTC) rotations in 2015. The Guard, therefore, is requesting $45 million to send two brigades through to intensive operational training………
NAS Pensacola –

Meet the Navy’s main mentor

http://www.pnj.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2014304060013&nclick_check=1

Pensacola News-Journal © April 4, 2014

By Rob Johnson

The scuttlebutt about Rear Adm. Mike White, the new head of the Navy’s specialty schools from coast to coast, is that he arrived at his Pensacola Naval Air Station office in January, leaving a trail of fresh salt spray and jet fuel in his wake. White, a veteran jet pilot, is here to run the sprawling Naval Education and Training Command, directly from sea duty as commander of an aircraft carrier strike group led by the USS Nimitz and fresh from deployment in the Arabian Sea supporting U.S. troops in Afghanistan………

Other Items of Interest –

Defense officials say Asia pivot still on

http://thehill.com/blogs/defcon-hill/policy-strategy/202223-defense-officials-say-asia-pivot-still-on#ixzz2xaSmQ2Jg

The Hill © March 31, 2014

By Kristina Wong
The Obama administration is fully committed to the rebalance to Asia despite questions over whether it can be implemented given cuts to the Pentagon’s budget, senior defense officials said Monday. “The rebalance is at the front and center of our national security strategy,” a senior defense official told reporters at a background Pentagon briefing previewing Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel’s fourth trip to the region as Pentagon chief.

Gov. Scott asks answers in VA hospital deaths


Tampa Tribune © April 1, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

Gov. Rick Scott is the latest politician seeking answers about deaths at Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals. Upset by five deaths in the VA region serving Florida and the lack of answers about where those deaths took place, Scott asked Elizabeth Dudek, secretary of the state’s Agency for Health Care Administration, to inspect VA hospitals in the Sunshine Healthcare Network and publicly report those findings. VA officials say one death is too many and that they work to identify and correct problems.

New York Adds $2M to FY 2014-15 Budget for Base Retention


Defense Communities 360 © April 1, 2014

New York added $2 million to its 2014-2015 budget for base retention, a fund that primarily will benefit Fort Drum as the Pentagon pushes to hold a new round of base closures in 2017. “It’s a very good showing from the state, that they’re aware of the significance of the events that are starting to unfold, and the fact they have to put a lot of effort into preserving what we have,” Carl McLaughlin, executive director of the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization, told the Watertown Daily Times. The Army currently is drawing down to an end strength of 490,000; it almost certainly will need to come down to a force of no more than 450,000 soldiers, and it
possibly will need to drop even further. As a result, Fort Drum will need to compete with other Army posts to retain its forces, McLaughlin said…..

**Ft. Gordon’s Signal Center Renamed Cyber Center of Excellence**


Defense Communities 360 © April 2, 2014

Fort Gordon’s Signal Center of Excellence has become the Army’s Cyber Center of Excellence following a ceremony last week that signified the increasing importance of cyber warfare. The rebranding of the Signal Center comes as the Army is consolidating its Cyber Command at the East Georgia post. That move, announced in December, will co-locate Army Cyber headquarters with the Army’s Joint Forces Headquarters-Cyber and a National Security Agency facility, placing the Army’s operational cyber headquarters alongside the majority of its cyber mission forces……

**Air Force Reliance on Renewable Energy Climbs**


Defense Communities 360 © April 6, 2014

Production from renewable energy sources jumped 53 percent from 2012 to 2013 at Air Force installations, with 8 percent of the electricity consumed by the service coming from renewable sources in fiscal 2013, Kathleen Ferguson, acting assistant secretary for installations, environment and logistics, told lawmakers last week. This year the service is planning renewable projects expected to provide more than 31 megawatts of capacity. An additional 31 to 41 megawatts are planned for FY 2015, according to the written testimony Ferguson submitted to the Senate Armed Services Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee. “Currently, the Air Force has 256 renewable energy projects in operation across a wide variety of renewable energy sources, including wind, solar, geothermal, and waste-to-energy projects,” she told the panel. …..
April 14, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting May 15th** – The next Task Force meeting will be on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Miami-South Homestead in Homestead, FL. For planning purposes, the meeting will begin at 9 AM and is scheduled to be completed – including a base tour -- by 2:30 PM. **Please let me know if you will be able to join us for dinner on Wednesday night and the tour from 1-2:30 PM on Thursday.**

2. **Attachments:**
   - FDSTF Legislative update
   - Notes from TPG conference call

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**Commentary: The Growing Shadow BRAC**
By BARRY RHOADS

The conventional wisdom that there won’t be another Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round is dangerously short-sighted. First, significant force structure and basing decisions are already occurring even without a formal BRAC round, what I call a “Shadow BRAC.” Second, there is a much greater chance that President Barack Obama’s request for a BRAC round in 2017 will be passed than most expect.

Conventional Wisdom on Prospects for BRAC May Be Off, Expert Says

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/conventional-wisdom-on-prospects-for-brac-may-be-off-expert-says/#

Congress is closer to approving the Pentagon’s request to hold a BRAC round in 2017 than commonly believed, according to a commentary published Monday in Defense News. “Even as many House and Senate Armed Services committee members vow to block a BRAC round, other members are quietly indicating possible support for a 2017 BRAC round,” writes Barry Rhoads, co-chairman of Cassidy & Associates.

BRAC Is Only Way to Alleviate Excess Capacity, Hammack Tells Lawmakers

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/brac-is-only-way-to-alleviate-excess-capacity-hammack-tells-lawmakers/#

The Army’s top installations official made the case for a new BRAC round during a Capitol Hill hearing last week, citing the service’s declining force structure and recent efforts to downsize its footprint in Europe. “The best and proven way to address excess and shortfalls in facility requirements in a cost-effective and fair manner is through the BRAC (base realignment and closure) Commission process,” Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary for installations, energy and environment, told the Senate Armed Services Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee.
BRAC Property Disposal Advances, Navy Says

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/brac-property-disposal-advances-navy-says/

Defense Communities 360 © April 9, 2014

Using a variety of conveyance mechanisms, the Navy has disposed of 93 percent of its excess property identified in prior BRAC rounds, with less than 14,000 acres remaining, the service’s top installations official told lawmakers last week. In the testimony he submitted to the Senate Armed Services Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee, Dennis McGinn, assistant secretary for energy, installations and environment, cited several milestones the Navy achieved last year……

Cleanup of Legacy BRAC Sites Going Too Slowly, Lawmakers Say


Defense Communities 360 © April 9, 2014

Prompted by concern over the pace of the cleanup of installations closed during the first four BRAC rounds, the House Appropriations Committee directs DOD to submit a plan to expedite and expand cleanup activities at legacy BRAC sites, according to report language accompanying the fiscal 2015 military construction-veterans affairs spending bill. The plan, which would be due 90 days after the spending bill is enacted, also should explain how the department “will fully utilize the funds previously appropriated,” the report adds……

House Panel Warns DOD against Closure Actions outside of BRAC


Defense Communities 360 © April 9, 2014

The Defense Department should consult with lawmakers before attempting to carry out a closure or realignment outside of a BRAC round, the House Appropriations Committee directs the Pentagon in the report language accompanying the fiscal 2015 military construction-veterans affairs spending bill. The request was prompted by the committee’s concern that “the Department of Defense will authorize the closure of military installations under Title 10 U.S.C. 2687, without adequate congressional consultation,” the report states……
DOD Budget Cuts –

**Senators begin new push to overturn sequestration**


The Hill © April 8, 2014

By Kristina Wong

Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) are planning to begin a new effort to overturn defense budget cuts known as sequestration, according to several senators. "There's going to be discussion coming up among all the members of the committee informally," said Sen. Carl Levin, committee chairman. "We're all going to have a chance to throw out ideas." If sequestration is not lifted by 2016, the Army will have to cut its active duty end strength to 420,000 and retire a Navy aircraft carrier. Sequestration doubled planned defense cuts of $487 billion over the next decade as part of the 2011 Budget Control Act when lawmakers failed to agree on tax and spending reform.

**Budget cuts hurt Coast Guard drug efforts: commander**


Reuters © April 8, 2014

BY DOINA CHIACU

WASHINGTON Budget cuts have eroded the U.S. Coast Guard's ability to combat drug smuggling and the agency is intercepting only about 20 percent of the illegal drugs heading into the United States by sea from South America, its top officer said on Tuesday. Admiral Robert Papp, U.S. Coast Guard commandant, said that figure falls far short of President Barack Obama's goal of capturing 40 percent of drugs entering the country by 2015. "Right now we're hovering probably closer to around 20 percent because of lack of resources out there," Papp told reporters.
US Senator Warns Wartime Funding Might Not Be Coming


Defense News © April 9, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY
A source of potential conflict arose during this morning’s hearing with US Army leadership at the Senate Armed Services Airland subcommittee, when Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., warned that supplemental wartime funding, which the Army has said it needs well after the war in Afghanistan ends, may not be forthcoming. Given the pull of other national priorities, the Army’s request for three to four years worth of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding after the US pulls out of Afghanistan is in peril, the senator said, bluntly warning the generals that “the Army must face the reality that this may not be achievable.”

Army Drawdown Would Require Large Cut in Brigades, Odierno Says


Defense Communities 360 © April 9, 2014

If the full force of sequestration returns in fiscal 2016, the Army would be forced to eliminate up to 46 percent of its active-duty brigade combat teams, Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno told the Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday. Those cuts would be accompanied by a 22 percent reduction in brigade combat teams from the National Guard, Odierno told the panel. Those changes would result in the Army going from a mix of 51 percent active and 49 percent reserve component personnel, to a 46 percent active and 54 percent reserve-component split, reported the Army News Service.

Top SASC Republican Blasts Proposed US Air Force Cuts


Defense News © April 10, 2014
By JOHN T. BENNETT

The US Senate Armed Services Committee’s top Republican on Thursday slammed the Air Force’s 2015 spending plan, saying it “increases risk to unacceptable levels.” SASC Ranking Member Rep. James Inhofe, R-Okla., came out hard against the cuts to the service’s proposed spending plan, contending it “degrades” force readiness “while the threats to our national security are growing.”

Generals: Two-war strategy in jeopardy under sequester
The Hill © April 10, 2014
By Blake Neff

The U.S. military's goal of being able to fight two wars at the same time is in jeopardy due to the continued specter of sequestration, top commanders from all four Defense Department branches said Thursday. "If we continue to go down [in strength] too fast, we will not be able to respond accordingly to different nations in the world," Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. John Campbell said. The second-in-command from each branch of the military testified before the House Armed Services subcommittee on Readiness, to discuss the military's long-term strategic readiness.

Eglin AFB –

Software Straight Talk
http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx
Air Force Magazine © April 9, 2014

The progress of the F-35 Lightning’s software was front and center at Tuesday’s meeting of the Senate Armed Services Committee’s airdland panel.
F-35 Program Executive Officer Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan declared the F-35 is seeing “slow but steady progress” in the aftermath of its restructuring and clarified the timelines impacted by software development for all three variants of the F-35. The first iteration, the IIB block, is not delayed and will be installed on the Marine Corps F-35B aircraft by the July 1, 2015, initial operational capability deadline.

Tyndall AFB –

**Rod Duren: Tyndall center coordinates mudslide rescue mission**
http://www.pnj.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2014304060014&nclick_check=1
Pensacola News-Journal © April 4, 2014
By Rod Duren

The Air Force Rescue Coordination Center at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City was preparing coordination efforts even before the anticipated 911 call came in from Washington state officials about a massive mudslide that buried many residents of Snohomish County. The Darrington, Wash., 911 call center contacted the Tyndall center March 22 requesting assistance with rescue efforts. “We were already aware of the devastation,” said AFRCC commander Lt. Col. Ian Kemp.

**Last of 24 F-22s arrive at Tyndall**

News Herald © April 11, 2014

The last of the New Mexico F-22s finally arrived at Tyndall Air Force Base this week. “It’s great to see finally the airplanes get here,” said Commander of the 95th Fighter Squadron Lt. Col. Ronald Gilbert. “It’s been in a long time coming.” The final four F-22 Raptors from the 7th Fighter Squadron at Holloman Air Force Base near Albuquerque, N.M. arrived at Tyndall Air Force Base Tuesday. Plans were in the works to move the squadron for about three years. The transfer was delayed by about a year.
In a surprising move, the head of the US National Guard Bureau has given his blessing to the US Army’s plan to move all of the Guard’s Apache attack helicopters into the active force while receiving several hundred Black Hawk and Lakota multi-use helicopters in return. “As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, we have fought, and we have discussed many, many times, these topics,” the National Guard Bureau chief, Army Gen. Frank Grass, told the Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday “And I provided my best military advice. I’ve assessed the risk. I’ve given the cost........

Several members of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday signaled their support for a House bill that would create an independent commission to make recommendations about how the Army’s force structure should be allocated between the service’s active and reserve components. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.), also would block the Army’s plan to transfer the National Guard’s 192 Apache attack helicopters to the active Army and replace them with 111 Black Hawk helicopters. The measure has the support of 41 Democrats and 111 Republicans........

Don't chop the Air Force – Look to the Reserves
The Air Force's latest budget plan proposes to cut 25,000 airmen, including 21,000 from the active duty and 4,000 from the reserves. These cuts represent not only a loss to our nation from the investment in costly military training, but also an increased risk from losing the ability to 'surge' these skilled airmen in a future crisis. The recommendations made by the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force (NCSAF) offer an alternative — and less risky — way forward. The NCSAF's plan would reduce risk to the nation by retaining all 507,000 active, guard and reserve airmen in a rebalanced "Total Force."………..

1952 -- Army Special Forces is established to perform high-risk unconventional warfare by air, land and sea. The Special Forces traces it roots in the Office of Strategic Services (precursor of the CIA) during WWII, in which the earliest forms of closed-circuit underwater breathing systems were still in their infancy. 1955 -- Special Forces form the "para-divers" club open only to those soldiers trained in both parachuting and scuba. The early Special Forces divers were trained at the Naval School of Underwater Swimmers in what is now the Truman Annex neighborhood……..
US Navy: Converting Seawater Into Fuel a 'Game-Changer'

[Article Link]

Defense News © April 7, 2014

The US Navy believes it has finally worked out the solution to a problem that has intrigued scientists for decades: how to take seawater and use it as fuel. The development of a liquid hydrocarbon fuel is being hailed as “a game-changer” because it would significantly shorten the supply chain, a weak link that makes any force easier to attack. The US has a fleet of 15 military oil tankers, and only aircraft carriers and some submarines are equipped with nuclear propulsion.

Bay Pines VA facility turns away state inspectors

[Article Link]

Tampa Tribune © April 8, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

A day after Department of Veterans Affairs officials released the locations where delays in treatment led to deaths and injuries of patients, the state’s Agency for Health Care Administration continued carrying out Gov. Rick Scott’s orders to inspect VA medical facilities. Inspectors arrived at the C.W. “Bill” Young VA Medical Center in Bay Pines Tuesday and, as with a similar visit last week to a VA facility in West Palm Beach, were turned away without receiving the information they were seeking.

Lawmakers Say USAF Plans To Cut A-10 Flights and Training Are Illegal

[Article Link]
By BRIAN EVERSTINE
Two key senators say US Air Force plans to stop A-10 flights and training in October are against the law. Sens. Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., and Saxby Chambliss, R-Ga., in an April 4 letter to Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James, say they have learned the service has not allotted any flight hours for the A-10 weapons school, has canceled A-10 modernization and has ended the normal sustainment process for fiscal 2015, which begins Oct. 1. However, the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act blocks the Air Force from retiring or preparing to retire the A-10 in calendar year 2014……

Report details Air force plans for future drones

By Brian Everstine
The Air Force next month will finally reach the target number of 65 combat air patrols for its Predator and Reaper fleet, while the administration seeks to cut back on its drone operations in theater. The Air Force’s long-term outlook for its remotely piloted aircraft fleet was released Friday, and includes insights into how future generations of unmanned systems will take on some missions exclusively flown by manned aircraft today, along with the current state of drone operations……

Fast and Light: US Army Overhauls Its Gear Strategy

By PAUL McLEARY
The US Army is putting the finishing touches on a bold new strategy for how it prepositions stocks of critical equipment around the globe, how it uses those stocks to speed deployments — and who pays for it. Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno ordered the revised strategy last year as part of his vision to make the service more capable of deploying quickly to meet threats, and assist in humanitarian and disaster relief missions.

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**Navy Leaders: Fleet Size Could Fall to 240 Ships Without Budget Relief**


USNI News © April 11, 2014

By John Grady

Without relief from automatic budget cuts and money from sources other than its shipbuilding account to pay for the Ohio-class Replacement program (ORP), the Navy could find itself sending only four new ships in almost all classes to the fleet sometime in the 2020s. Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Seapower Subcommittee on Thursday, Sean Stackley, assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisition, said that would mean “entirely reshaping the Navy’s force structure” and bringing the fleet down to 240 ships.
FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting May 15th** – The next Task Force meeting will be on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Miami-South Homestead in Homestead, FL. For planning purposes, the meeting will begin at 9 AM and is scheduled to be completed – including a base tour -- by 2:30 PM.

2. **Call In Numbers for Meeting** –
   
   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachments:**
   
    FDSTF legislative update  
    FDVA legislative update  
    Notes from bi-weekly TPG call

Regards, BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**
Army to Finish BRAC Property Transfers by 2021, Hammack Says


Defense Communities 360 © April 27, 2014

The Army plans to complete the transfer of excess property at closed installations by 2021, according to a recent blog post by Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary for installations, energy and environment. The Army has about 73,000 acres remaining from prior BRAC rounds. That represents 25 percent of the service’s total acreage disposal requirement of 297,000 acres……..

DOD Budget Cuts –

DoD Details Planned Cuts If Budget Caps Remain

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140422/DEFREG02/304220027

Defense News © April 22, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The Pentagon has laid out plans for how it would cut $66 billion in procurement and research-and-development projects between 2016 and 2019 should US defense spending caps remain in place. The cuts would affect dozens of Defense Department programs, including the Lockheed Martin F-35 joint strike fighter, Boeing KC-46 aerial refueling plane and Airbus Light Utility Helicopter……..

Pentagon Deputy: Defense Contracting Choices Will Only Get Tougher

Sequestration is forcing the Defense Department to “literally build two budgets” and, if the automatic cuts are continued, will damage the quality of U.S. weapons systems and deter innovation, a top Pentagon acquisition official said on Wednesday. Elana Broitman, deputy assistant Defense secretary for manufacturing and industrial base policy, said, “The sequester cuts are tied to no long-term plan, and, though it’s a truism in the marketplace, we are concerned about [having] enough competition with fewer entities around to fund innovation.”

Sequestration and the Pentagon’s ‘Two Budgets’


Defense One © April 24, 2014

By Charles S. Clark

Pentagon Has ‘Bandage’ to Help Contractors Facing Cuts


Bloomberg News © April 25, 2014

By Tony Capaccio

The Pentagon office that monitors the defense industry’s financial health is preparing an initiative to help contractors cope with production-line disruptions caused by automatic budget cuts. A small fund, including $10 million that Congress approved in this year’s defense policy bill, would be used for targeted investments to make weapons systems or components more effective if production is stopped or interrupted under the funding reductions called sequestration. It’s a “bandage until sequestration goes away,” Elana Broitman, deputy assistant
secretary of defense for manufacturing and industrial base policy, said yesterday in an interview………

Upcoming budget crunch could unravel new deployment plan

http://www.navytimes.com/article/20140428/CAREERS/304280018

Navy Times © April 28, 2014

By David Larter

Many ships are sailing on cruises far beyond the once-standard six or seven months, and Navy leaders are eager to make these long and often unpredictable deployments the exception. They've developed a plan to lock in eight-month deployments, but a mounting body of testimony from Navy officials suggests that the plan may soon be another victim of budget battles — and sailors will end up paying the price……..

House panel rejects benefits cuts in 2015 defense budget


Army Times © April 29, 2014

By Leo Shane III, Staff writer

In the first official congressional action on the Pentagon’s proposed 2015 budget, House lawmakers have rejected proposed cuts in housing allowances and commissary funding, as well as an overhaul of the Tricare system that would increase out-of-pocket costs for some beneficiaries. But members of the House Armed Services Committee’s personnel panel remained noticeably silent on the Defense Department’s proposed 1 percent basic pay raise for troops next year, opening the door for another smaller-than-expected pay boost in January………

House Markup Cuts 1 LCS, Supports 11 Carriers

The House Seapower subcommittee markup that was revealed on Tuesday offered at least one surprise — cutting the Navy’s request for three littoral combat ships to only two — but the bill supports the other new ship requests, including two destroyers and two submarines. As expected, the mark supports a full 11-carrier fleet and opposes the Navy’s desire to decommission the aircraft carrier George Washington if there is no change in the mandated sequestration budget cuts.

Space Coast –

**45th SW earns 2013 AF Outstanding Unit Award**


Patrick AFB © April 18, 2014

by 45th Space Wing

"I am pleased to announce the 45th Space Wing has received the 2013 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA)! This makes us back-to-back recipients. The AFOUA achievement represents the culmination of your hard work, dedication and professionalism and is truly an accomplishment everyone can be very proud of."

**SpaceX hopes to land a rocket at Cape Canaveral by end of 2014**


My News 13 © April 25, 2014

By Jerry Hume, Brevard County Reporter
The founder of SpaceX says he plans to launch -- and then land -- a rocket from Florida’s Space Coast by the end of the year. Before last week's launch of a Falcon 9 rocket from Brevard County, SpaceX attached four new landing legs to the first stage of the rocket. SpaceX CEO Elon Musk told reporters Friday in Washington that the first stage was able to make a successful, smooth landing in the Atlantic Ocean...........

MacDill AFB –

**It’s Official: Altus, McConnell to get KC-46A**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © April 24, 2014

The first Active Duty-led KC-46A main operating base will be located at McConnell AFB, Kan., and the formal Pegasus training unit will be based at Altus AFB, Okla., announced the Air Force Wednesday. “Making a final basing decision is an important step in recapitalizing the tanker fleet,” said Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James. “We will begin to replace our aging tanker fleet in 2016, but even when the program is complete in 2028, we will have replaced less than half of the current tanker fleet and will still be flying over 200 half-century-old KC-135 (Stratotankers).”..........

Eglin AFB –

**Eglin, Wright-Patt Receive Environmental Awards**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © April 22, 2014
Air Force teams at Eglin AFB, Fla., and Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, are among the nine groups across the US military recognized as the winners of the 2014 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards, announced the Pentagon on Monday. Eglin's Natural Resources Team won in the natural resources conservation, individual/team category for offering "long-range solutions that ensured regulatory compliance while maximizing the use of land and water ranges to maintain mission readiness," states DOD's April 21 release........

Eglin Environmental Named Best In DOD


Northwest Florida Daily News © April 24, 2014

By Team Eglin Public Affairs

The Department of Defense announced April 21, that Eglin Air Force Base was named winner of the 2014 Secretary of Defense Environmental Award for Natural Resources Conservation. The Natural Resources Team at Eglin AFB won the Natural Resources Conservation, Individual/Team award for offered long-range solutions that ensured regulatory compliance while maximizing the use of land and water ranges to maintain mission readiness......

New U.S. Stealth Jet Can’t Hide From Russian Radar


The Daily Beast © April 28, 2014

America’s gazillion-dollar Joint Strike Fighter is supposed to go virtually unseen when flying over enemy turf. But that’s not how things are working out. The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter—the jet that the Pentagon is counting on to be the stealthy future of its tactical aircraft—is having all sorts of shortcomings. But the most serious may be that the JSF is not, in fact, stealthy in the eyes of a growing number of Russian and Chinese radars.......
NS Mayport –

**COMUSNAVSO/4thFlt Welcomes New CO**


Mayport Mirror © April 24, 2014

The former director of theater engagement for U.S. Southern Command assumed the responsibilities of commander, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and commander, U.S. 4th Fleet on April 17 at the Ocean Breeze Conference Center here. Rear Adm. George W. Ballance replaced Rear Adm. Sinclair Harris, who will become the vice director for operations on the Joint Staff at the Pentagon…….

**USS Gettysburg Returns To NS Mayport After 9 Month Deployment**


Mayport Mirror © April 24, 2014

By MC3 Lorenzo J. Burleson

Guided-missile cruiser USS Gettysburg (CG 64) returned home to Naval Station Mayport, April 18, marking the completion of a nine-month deployment to the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet areas of responsibility (AOR). Gettysburg was deployed as part of the Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group (HST CSG), supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts…….

Tyndall AFB –

**Training aircraft overruns runway at Tyndall**


Navy Times © April 23, 2014

By Brian Everstine
A QF-4 targeting aircraft overran a runway Tuesday at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., causing damage to the aircraft. Investigators say there was no danger to the public or a nearby highway. The incident occurred about 3:40 p.m., shortly after the targeting drone landed following a routine training mission. The aircraft, which can be unmanned, was flying with a crew of two, who are being evaluated by medical staff, the base said in a news release……..

Outpouring of support floods streets for wounded veterans

http://www.newsherald.com/military/outpouring-of-support-floods-streets-for-wounded-veterans-1.310036

News Herald © April 24, 2014
By BEN KLEINE / News Herald

The Hathaway Bridge was swathed in red, white and blue Thursday as dozens of American flags waved in unison to welcome the Warrior Beach Retreat parade. Among those lining the west end of the bridge was Panama City resident Lynn Yarbrough, who gripped three small flags tightly in each hand. She made a point to thank each of the almost 50 cars carrying a wounded veteran……..

95th Fighter Squadron declares initial operational capability

Air Force © April 25, 2014
By Ashley M. Wright, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The 95th Fighter Squadron here took another step toward an increased ability to protect global airpower, unit officials said. Col. David E. Graff, the 325th Fighter Wing commander, declared the 95th Fighter Squadron initial operational capability ready April 8, when the last of 24 F-22 Raptors arrived from Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico. "This is another milestone in the long journey of the 95th FS and (Tyndall AFB towards) realizing our ultimate goal of having a combat F-22 squadron, mission ready" said Lt. Col. Erick Gilbert, the 95th FS commander……..
Guard Apaches Less Ready, Must Move To Active Army: DepSecDef Fox


Breaking Defense © April 21, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

National Guard attack helicopter units just can’t be as battle-ready as full-time regular Army ones, Deputy Secretary of Defense Christine Fox has been telling the Hill. That’s why the Guard should give all its AH-64 Apache gunships to the active-duty force to replace older aircraft lost to budget cuts. “Combat elements must be in the AC [active component],” says one of Fox’s briefing slides, which were obtained by Breaking Defense and incensed one Guard commander we showed them to………..

Nonpartisan commission needed in Army/National Guard debate


The Hill © April 24, 2014

By Army Maj. Gen. Frank Schober (Ret.)

Forty-seven of our nation's governors recently made an emphatic suggestion to Congress: The acrimonious debate between the Army and the National Guard should end and a dialogue should begin with the enactment of H.R. 3930. The proposed legislation sets up an objective, nonpartisan commission to answer a vital question: “What strengths and what force structure of active duty, National Guard and Reserve Army forces will most cost-effectively protect our country at home and abroad?” If the commission proposed by H.R. 3930 looks to budget facts and not obfuscating bluster, it will quickly discover that the present budgetary process is rife with equivocation………..
State Guard Generals Take Fight To Senate, Push Freeze To Planned Cuts

Breaking Defense © April 25, 2014
By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.
After convening in Washington for briefings on the Army budget and how to implement it, the state-level commanders of the National Guard have instead launched a new offensive against the Army plan to cut their forces, flooding Capitol Hill with letters and PowerPoint slides (embedded below). Their immediate goal: Get the Senate to introduce counterpart legislation to a House bill that would freeze all changes to the Guard until an independent commission studied the issue. Step two: Get that language in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act………..

Effort to Overturn National Guard Cuts Runs into Resistance on Capitol Hill

Defense Communities 360 © April 28, 2014

Congress has historically been a reliable advocate for the interests of the National Guard, but in the latest dispute over the Army’s plan to trim the size of the Army National Guard and replace its fleet of Apache attack helicopters, many members on Capitol Hill are pushing back against the arguments of state National Guard leaders. A common refrain from lawmakers is that the cuts in the Army’s end strength forced by the 2011 Budget Control Act spending caps are sufficiently deep that the Guard needs to bear some of the burden of the budget cuts, reports CQ Roll Call……..

NAS Key West –

New Navy officer has local ties
http://keysnews.com/node/54944

Keys News © April 18, 2014
Naval Air Station Key West's newest executive officer, Cmdr. Pornchai Davidson, flew a helicopter over the Southernmost City after Hurricane Wilma hit in 2005 and the image never left him. "You're so used to the color of the water here being what it is, but the color that day was very odd," the Philippines native said. "It was chalky and opaque. Very strange. You couldn't see the bottom either. It was nothing like we were used to seeing. It was just very odd."……

**Fighter squadrons roaring into town**

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff

A slow month of March around Naval Air Station Key West will give way to a handful of squadrons roaring in and out of Boca Chica Field beginning this weekend. The slow thaw up north as spring nears typically means a downturn in squadron action out at Boca Chica Field, but this month through June will prove different. "We are gearing up to host Navy and Marine fighter and electronic attack squadrons from across the country for the next few weeks," said Naval Air Station Key West commanding officer Capt. Steve McAlearney. "It will be busy out here at Boca Chica, and that's the way we like it, as these warfighters get the best air-to-air combat training in the world out on our training ranges."

**CNIC, CNRSE Visits NAS Key West**


Defense Imagery and Distribution System © April 23, 2014

Story by [Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian Morales](http://www.dvidshub.net/news/127216/cnic-cnrse-visits-nas-key-west)

Commander, Navy Installations Command and Commander, Navy Region Southeast visited Naval Air Station Key West April 22 to see first-hand how Sailors and civilian employees sustain the fleet, enable the warfighter and support the family. Vice Adm. William French and Rear Adm. Ricky L. Williamson visited four of NAS Key West’s annexes and met with the NAS Key West’s Sailor of the year, junior Sailor of the year, Blue Jacket of the year and civilian of the year for lunch at Boca Chica Field……
Other Items of Interest –

**Partnership with NBA is a ‘Slam Dunk,’ Dempsey Says**


Defense Communities 360 © April 21, 2014

DOD, the National Basketball Association and USA Basketball launched a new partnership last week to support local communities and hundreds of thousands of active and retired armed forces members and their families through the sport of basketball. The program will focus on community service, transition, leadership and rehabilitation for those with life-altering injuries. On Friday, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey praised the collaboration, saying it will help solve problems at the community level……..

**Florida health agency still awaiting release of VA info**


Tampa Tribune © April 22, 2014
By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

A series of surprise election-year inspections of VA medical facilities by officials from the state Agency for Health Care Administration have resulted in the release of none of the information being sought from VA officials, according to a letter from the AHCA general counsel to his counterpart at the VA. “(T)o date, not a single page of documentation has been produced in response to AHCA’s reasonable document requests relating to the risk management policies and procedures utilized at the numerous Veterans Affairs facilities visited by AHCA staff.” ………

**DOD Should Take Advantage of Roads Program, House Panel Says**


Defense Communities 360 © April 21, 2014
The Defense Department should make greater use of the Defense Access Roads (DAR) program, a way for DOD to upgrade roads outside of military installations, according to the report of the House Appropriations Committee accompanying the fiscal 2015 military construction-veterans affairs spending bill. “The committee has heard of many worthwhile road construction/expansion projects in and around military installations that are in great need of funding,” the panel states. Those projects would benefit both the installations and the communities, the report states…….

Installation Chiefs to Brief Lawmakers on Public-Private Partnerships

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/installation-chiefs-to-brief-lawmakers-on-public-private-partnerships/#

Defense Communities 360 © April 23, 2014

The military services’ installation chiefs will talk about the various ways DOD leverages the private sector to support its infrastructure needs during a panel discussion next week hosted by the Congressional Caucus on Public-Private Partnerships (P3). The panel will include: Kathleen Ferguson, acting assistant secretary of the Air Force for installations, environment and logistics; Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary of the Army for installations, energy and environment; and Dennis McGinn, assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment…….

House VA committee to hold Florida hearing


Tampa Tribune © April 24, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

The House Veterans Affairs Committee will hold a field hearing in Florida after a request from Gov. Rick Scott. In his on-going election-year battle with the Veterans Administration, Scott is calling for the field hearing because “numerous veterans have written to my office...and contributed their own stories of the VA’s neglect and incompetence.” In his letter to Florida Republican Jeff Miller, committee chairman, Scott cites the cases of three veterans — including one from Pinellas County — who experienced delays in treatment. The letter only gives the veterans’ first names………….
Army Estimates Installations’ Excess Capacity at 18 Percent

Preliminary results of a facility capacity analysis by Army officials indicate the service’s excess capacity ranges between 12 and 28 percent in the United States, depending on facility category, with an overall average of 18 percent. Excess capacity totals over 167 million square feet of facilities across all installations, potentially costing the Army over $500 million a year in unnecessary operations and maintenance, based on a cost of $3 per square foot to maintain underutilized facilities........

Many Officers Will Be Forced Out, Army Concedes

The Army on Wednesday acknowledged that a majority of the 3,000 officers whose positions need to be eliminated by the end of fiscal 2015 will be forced out, clarifying an earlier assertion denying the officers would be subject to involuntary separation. Officials will need to let go at least 2,000 officers as part of an effort to shrink the service’s end strength from 522,000 soldiers to 490,000 by October 2015, reported Government Executive in a correction to a recent story........

Defense contractors fight for their slice

Defense contractors are going back to war to protect their slice of a shrinking Pentagon budget. Gone are the days of unity when giants like Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman banded together in 2012 to fight automatic defense cuts in a campaign called Second to None. Now, with another round of sequestration ahead and an uncertain post-war era looming, contractors are back to skirmishing with one another over every last scrap of the defense budget........
VA Secretary Shinseki’s presence requested for Tampa-area hearing
http://tbo.com/list/military-news/va-secretary-shinseki-presence-requested-for-tampa-area-hearing-20140425/
Tampa Tribune © April 25, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

U.S. Rep. Jeff Miller, chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, wants to see VA Secretary Eric Shinseki appear at a committee field hearing he is planning to hold in the Tampa area. “It would be nice of him to come down,” said Miller, speaking at a press conference with Gov. Rich Scott Friday afternoon. “I believe Secretary Shinseki wants to do the right thing, but I fear he is not being told the truth by his subordinates.” VA officials did not immediately respond late Friday afternoon……..

AFRC Stays, For Now

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © April 30, 2014

The Air Force will not move to close down Air Force Reserve Command in 2015 despite a recommendation by the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force to do so, Secretary Deborah Lee James told Senate legislators Tuesday. Speaking before the Senate Armed Services Committee, alongside Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh, James said AFRC is needed to organize the service’s 70,000 Reservists as they become more involved in Total Force Initiatives. Disestablishing AFRC before USAF is capable of integrating its infrastructure, duties, and oversight responsibilities would be premature, James said.........
April 21, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting May 15th** – The next Task Force meeting will be on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Miami-South Homestead in Homestead, FL. For planning purposes, the meeting will begin at 9 AM and is scheduled to be completed – including a base tour -- by 2:30 PM.

2. **Welcome to Marcy Sanders** – Last week we welcomed Marcy Sanders who joins us as the newest member of the FDSTF support team replacing Donna Cucinella. Marcy is a hard-charging Navy veteran who will be a great addition to our team. Her email is: msanders@eflorida.com and her telephone is: 850-878-4566. You will get to meet her at our next meeting in May.

3. **Attachments:**

   - FDSTF legislative update
   - FDVA legislative update
   - Impacts of Sequestration

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**Too many bases: The plan to sidestep Congress' opposition to closures**

Army Times © April 14, 2014

By Brian Everstine

The Air Force is digging deep to achieve extensive budget cuts — cutting people, eliminating entire aircraft fleets and begging Congress for another round of base closures. Getting lawmakers to approve base closures in their districts is never easy, so the service is studying how far it can go in eliminating people and planes at some bases without prompting opposition on Capitol Hill. The concept of “warm basing” — keeping a base open in a limited, less costly way while avoiding opposition to base realignment and closure actions — is one option being explored by Air Force leaders. That strategy is also recommended by a congressionally mandated report on Air Force force structure………..

**Air Force Has Few Options In Light of Capitol Hill Opposition to BRAC**


Defense Communities 360 © April 14, 2014

Despite serious problems created by declining budgets, Congress remains adamantly opposed to a new round of base closure, leaving the Air Force with few options for cutting costs associated with installations. “The department is facing a serious problem created by the tension of declining budgets, reductions in force structure and limited flexibility to adapt our infrastructure accordingly,” said John Conger, the acting deputy undersecretary of defense for installations and environment, according to the Army Times……..


**BRAC Criteria Need to Account for Intellectual Resources, House Panel Says**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/brac-criteria-need-to-account-for-intellectual-resources-house-panel-says/#

Defense Communities 360 © April 17, 2014

The Pentagon should take into account the “intellectual capabilities” of the region surrounding an installation under consideration for realignment or closure, according to the report of the House Appropriations Committee accompanying the fiscal 2015 military construction-veterans affairs spending bill. The committee recommends that DOD add a new factor to the final BRAC selection criteria that takes into account a region’s intellectual capabilities, especially when considering academic and technical institutions……

**DOD Budget Cuts –**

**Could Another Debt-Level Spike Cause More Defense Cuts?**

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140415/DEFREG02/304150024

Defense News © April 15, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

Despite deep across-the-board cuts scheduled over the next decade, the US federal deficit is projected to again hit $1 trillion in just eight years. And already there are calls for additional steps, even as the defense sector continues dealing with sequestration. Congress and the Obama administration since 2009 have battled over a package of long-term measures to pare the massive federal deficit. The best they could do amid bitter political partisanship was sequestration, which mandates a nearly 10 percent cut each year to all non-exempt defense and domestic accounts well into the next decade….
Kendall: Pentagon Will Tie Budget Proposals To Needs, Not Budget Caps


Defense News © April 15, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The US Defense Department will continue sending Congress budget proposals that do not adhere to federal spending caps and will instead opt to develop budgets it believes are appropriate to defend the country, a senior Pentagon official said. DoD acquisition chief Frank Kendall said, “it is extremely unlikely that we will ask for less money than the president thinks he needs to defend the country.” His comments came in a speech Tuesday at a National Defense Industrial Association conference……..

If DoD Spending Levels Remain, $66B Modernization Cut Would Follow


Defense News © April 16, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The Pentagon’s planned five-year spending plan for procurement and research-and-development projects, set forth in its 2015 budget proposal, would be cut by $66 billion if US federal spending caps remain in place, according to a new Defense Department report. The cuts would impact dozens of Pentagon programs, including the Lockheed Martin F-35 joint strike fighter, Boeing KC-46 tanker and Airbus Light Utility Helicopter……

DOD Report Reveals Extent of Facility Budget Cuts under Spending Caps
Spending on installation services, facilities sustainment and military construction would be trimmed by $17.5 billion if the defense budget were held at sequester levels from fiscal years 2016-2019, according to a report released Tuesday by the Pentagon. The Army would be forced to make the most far-reaching reductions to installation services, with the report projecting it would need to cut spending by $3.8 billion over the four-year period. The Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps are projected to cut installations services spending by a total of $1.0 billion from FY 2016-2019, compared to the department’s five-year spending plan submitted as part of its FY 2015 budget request. ……

DOD Releases Estimated Impacts of Sequestration-Level Funding Report

Today, the Department of Defense released a report that documents the damaging cuts to military forces, modernization, and readiness that will be required if defense budgets are held at sequester-levels in the years beyond fiscal 2015. This report fulfills a commitment made by Secretary Hagel to provide details on the effects of these undesirable budget cuts.

As the report says, sequester level budgets would result in continued force-level cuts across the military services. The Army would be reduced to 420,000 active duty soldiers along with 315,000 in the Guard and 185,000 in the Reserve. The Marine Corps would drop to 175,000 active duty personnel. The Air Force would have to eliminate its entire fleet of KC-10 tankers and shrink its inventory of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). The Navy would be forced to mothball 6 destroyers and retire an aircraft carrier and its associated air wing, reducing the carrier fleet to ten.

Modernization would also be significantly slowed. Compared to plans under the fiscal 2015 budget, the department would buy eight fewer ships in the years beyond fiscal 2016-- including one fewer Virginia-class submarines and three fewer DDG-51 destroyers – and would delay delivery of the new carrier John F. Kennedy (CVN-79) by two years. The services would acquire 17 fewer Joint Strike Fighters, five fewer KC-46 tankers, and six fewer P-8A aircraft.

There would also be sharp cutbacks in many smaller weapons programs and in funding for military construction. In addition, the department would invest about $66 billion less in procurement and research funding compared with levels planned in the fiscal 2015 budget.

The report notes that sequester-level budgets would worsen already existing readiness shortfalls across the force and delay needed training to prepare the joint force for full-spectrum operations.

Overall, sequester-level cuts would result in a military that is too small to fully meet the requirements of our strategy, thereby significantly increasing national security risks both in the
short- and long-term. As Secretary Hagel has said, under sequester-level budgets, we would be gambling that our military will not be required to respond to multiple major contingencies at the same time.

The full report is posted here:  

Pentagon: Cuts leave military 'too small'
http://thehill.com/blogs/defcon-hill/203663-pentagon-cuts-leave-military-too-small#ixzz2z5v7yr4g
The Hill © April 16, 2014
By Kristina Wong

The Pentagon released a report Tuesday evening that says sequestration budget cuts leave the United States "gambling" with its military readiness. “Overall, sequester-level cuts would result in a military that is too small to fully meet the requirements of our strategy, thereby significantly increasing national security risks both in the short- and long-term,” a Defense Department statement said. “Needed training” would be delayed across the force, and troops would face even a greater shortfall in being combat ready, the report said……

Air Force to Eliminate 2,700 Civilian Positions in FY’15
Defense Communities 360 © April 16, 2014

The Air Force plans to trim its civilian workforce from 186,026 employees to 183,328 through a combination of early retirements, buyouts and attrition. The elimination of 2,698 positions comes as the Air Force searches for ways to cope with spending caps first mandated in the 2011 Budget Control Act, reports the Federal Times. “Our entire workforce — military, civilian and contractor — must be appropriately sized to support and execute our piece of the National Defense Strategy while concurrently considering fiscal realities,” Lt. Gen. Samuel Cox, deputy chief of staff manpower, stated in written testimony submitted to Congress April 9……
Senate Hearing to Provide Joint Chiefs Chance to Defend Cuts in Benefits


Defense Communities 360 © April 17, 2014

The Senate Armed Services Committee is providing the Joint Chiefs of Staff a rare opportunity to make clear the tradeoff between accepting the changes in military pay and compensation that the Pentagon has proposed or risking further deterioration in the military’s readiness. The May 6 hearing is slated to include testimony from all seven of the four-star officers that make up the Joint Chiefs of Staff. To mitigate the impact of spending caps initially mandated in the 2011 Budget Control Act, defense officials have looked for savings in skyrocketing personnel costs........

U.S. defense industrial base is vulnerable and needs fixing


The Hill © April 11, 2014

By U.S. Army Brig. Gen. John Adams (Ret.)

During an official visit to Beijing this week, U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel told his counterpart that aggressive action by the Chinese government against its neighbors in the East China Sea would be met with a firm response. “The Philippines and Japan are long-time allies of the United States,” Hagel said. “We have mutual self-defense treaties with each of those two countries. And we are fully committed to those treaty obligations.” It would be unwise to doubt the current ability of the U.S. military to fulfill such obligations, in Asia or elsewhere. But the choices that U.S. leaders make today will determine whether America’s armed forces, and the brave men and women who constitute them, will retain their edge and win those fights in the future......
Space Coast –

**100 Successful Launches**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © April 17, 2014

Air Force Space Command last week launched a National Reconnaissance Office intelligence satellite from Cape Canaveral AFS, Fla. The successful launch was treated as routine, but it quietly marked a significant milestone in USAF launch history. It was the Air Force’s 100th consecutive successful national security space launch. The string of successes, which dates back to 1999, is the result of years of self examination, process improvement, and mission assurance changes implemented after a disastrous period in the late 1990s that saw multiple launch failures costing billions of dollars.......

MacDill AFB –

**FLORIDA LOSING CENTER TO STORE AND MOVE TROOP CARS**

HTTP://WWW.TAMPABAY.COM/NEWS/MILITARY/FLORIDA-LOSING-CENTER-TO-STORE-AND-MOVE-TROOP-CARS/2174922

TAMPA BAY TIMES © APRIL 13, 2014

By William R. Levesque, Times Staff Writer

The era of military thriftiness is about to hit troops at MacDill Air Force Base and across Florida in a place they may have thought immune from the budget ax — their personal vehicles. The Pentagon has decreed Florida will no longer have a vehicle-processing center where troops being reassigned, including those ordered overseas, could bring their cars for transfer or storage, the U.S. Transportation Command says. Starting May 1, troops who formerly took their vehicles to a center in Orlando will now have to drive to Atlanta to take advantage of the free service.......
Defense Intelligence Agency creates new training center at MacDill


Tampa Tribune © April 15, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

The Defense Intelligence Agency has created a new training and development center for its 2,000 personnel at MacDill Air Force Base, which is the first of many agency satellite learning centers around the globe. The agency, which provides intelligence to warfighters, policy makers and planners in the Pentagon and intelligence communities, is transforming the Regional Joint Intelligence and Education Center at U.S. Central Command into the Southeast Enterprise Learning Center, said spokesman Jim Kudla……..

Centcom commander lauds U.S. intelligence advantage


Tampa Tribune © April 16, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

With U.S. combat operations in Afghanistan set to end in December, Army Gen. Lloyd Austin III, commander of U.S. Central Command told a packed ball room at the Tampa Convention Center that country’s forces are capable of fighting to defend themselves, but have work to do on keeping troops supplied and ready. “As I look at Afghan forces now, the combined force is some 340,000-plus strong, well-equipped, well-trained and as we have seen in this past fighting season as they have taken the lead for providing security for their country, they have made significant progress,” said Austin, speaking at the GEOINT 2013* Symposium.……..

Eglin AFB –
Armament Directorate reaches milestone with JASSM-ER


Northwest Florida Daily News © April 11, 2014

By Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile Program Office

The Armament Directorate celebrated a milestone with the delivery of the first production lot of Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile Extended Range missiles to Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, last month. The JASSM family of weapons, JASSM and JASSM-ER variants, are autonomous, long-range, highly survivable, conventional air-to-ground, precision guided missiles. The weapons provide focused lethality to strike highly defended, high value targets.

F-35 Logs 15,000 Flight Hours

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © April 17, 2014

The joint service F-35 Lightning II fleet recently notched up 15,000 total flying hours, announced Lockheed Martin. "Flying 15,000 hours itself demonstrates that the program is maturing, but what I think is even more impressive is the fact that operational F-35s accounted for more than half of those," said J.D. McFarlan, the company's F-35 vice president for test and verification. Air Force F-35A test aircraft have logged 328 flight hours. The service's operational Lightning IIs have clocked 963 hours in the air so far in 2014, states the release..........

F-35 Engine Cost Up, Sustainment Down


Defense News © April 17, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER
The price tag for the Lockheed Martin F-35 joint strike fighter, the Pentagon’s most expensive weapons program, increased $7.4 billion in 2013, according to a new US Defense Department report. But defense officials say the primary reason for the increase is because the Pentagon has shrunk the number of jets it plans to buy in the coming years, primarily due to federal spending caps. These officials also point to a massive $89.4 billion decrease in the estimated sustainment costs over the life of the program as a sign the effort is on better footing.

NAS Jacksonville –

**USS The Sullivans Gets An Integrated Logistics Overhaul With SERMC**


Florida Times-Union © April 16, 2014

By Ensign Lauren Chapman

NAVSUP Fleet Logistic Center (FLC) Jacksonville Detachment, Southeast Regional Maintenance Center (SERMC), Mayport, is in the beginning months of an eight-month Integrated Logistics Overhaul (ILO) on board USS *The Sullivans* (DDG 68) in conjunction with the ship’s Extended Drydocking Selected Restricted Availability expected to last through October. ILO, a self-help program requested by the ship, is designed to improve USS *The Sullivans*’ readiness by providing logistics support that accurately reflects the ship’s true equipment and operating needs.

NS Mayport –

**Chamber Officials Visit Jax, Mayport**
Twenty-five members of the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce visited Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville and Naval Station (NS) Mayport April 9-11 to see firsthand how the bases operate. The group toured each base as part of the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce Honorary Commanders Association (HCA), which partners civilian business leaders with military commanders from different branches in an effort to enhance the relationship between the two.

New Mayport leader looks at military additions and possible cuts

By Romney Smith

Every new leader brings a new vision, but the new head of the Navy’s 4th Fleet has to consider some tough factors. A ceremonial whistle signals a change of command for Mayport-based 4th Fleet. As outgoing commander Rear Adm. Sinclair Harris heads to Washington D.C., he says Mayport leaders will fight for their sailors to keep jobs, ships- and resources. “We still challenged them to maintain that commitment to our sailors. He's committed to our Navy families in this region, in Mayport, in Jacksonville,” said Harris.

NAS Pensacola –

Military towns: ‘Turn your alert buttons on’

By Rod Duren, News Journal correspondent
The BRAC “Wolfe” of Alabama has begun to make some howling sounds across the region that are ringing in the ears of the Santa Rosa Military Advisory Council. The military is scrambling for budget-saving dollars. The Air Force and Army have gone on record saying they have too much infrastructure and plan to draw-down tens of thousands of personnel. The Navy is comfortable with its numbers.

NAS Whiting Field –

NW Florida Officials Focus on Combating Encroachment to Protect NAS Whiting

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/nw-florida-officials-focus-on-combating-encroachment-to-protect-nas-whiting/#

Defense Communities 360 © April 15, 2014

Officials in Northwest Florida believe their long-term effort to protect Naval Air Station Whiting Field from urban encroachment is their best defense against the potential for losing out in a future base closure round. Over the past 14 years, Santa Rosa County has either purchased or acquired easements on 3,500 acres adjacent to the airfield. A majority of the acreage falls within Whiting’s accident prevention zones, reports the Pensacola News Journal.

NAS Key West –

Fighter squadrons roaring into town

http://keysnews.com/node/54891

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff

A slow month of March around Naval Air Station Key West will give way to a handful of squadrons roaring in and out of Boca Chica Field beginning this weekend. The slow thaw up north as spring nears typically means a downturn in squadron action out at Boca Chica Field, but
this month through June will prove different. "We are gearing up to host Navy and Marine fighter and electronic attack squadrons from across the country for the next few weeks," said Naval Air Station Key West commanding officer Capt. Steve McAlearney. "It will be busy out here at Boca Chica, and that's the way we like it, as these warfighters get the best air-to-air combat training in the world out on our training ranges." ...........

Other Items of Interest –

Four Ways The U.S. Military Can Adopt Clean Energy For National Security


Forbes © April 16, 2014

By Stephanie Kline

At the U.S. Defense Department, the multiple national security threats created by sea level rise and severe weather command daily attention; climate change has been on its radar for years. The recently published Quadrennial Defense Report (QDR), an assessment of U.S. defense readiness, addresses the growing threat that climate change poses to military capabilities and global operations. Adding to that, the newly released Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report states that extreme weather events will begin occurring more frequently across the globe......

Should the Pentagon Rescue Ailing Suppliers?

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/archive/2014/May/Pages/ShouldthePentagonRescueAilingSuppliers.aspx#.U055rW59kPw.twitter

National Defense © May 2014

By Sandra I. Erwin
Many Pentagon contractors will not survive the defense budget cuts that began in 2010 and will continue through the decade. While the shrinkage of the defense industry is certain, it is less clear whether or how it might affect the military. It is an inevitable consequence of plunging budget cycles that suppliers go out of business, and the Pentagon typically has favored a laissez-faire industrial policy even though the defense sector is far from a free market. …….

**Defense Lobbying Shifts from Capitol Hill to Pentagon**


Defense Communities 360 © April 20, 2014

Even as lobbyists gear up for markups of the defense authorization bill and spending bills, much of their attention has shifted to the Defense Department as spending caps and earmark bans limit the power of lawmakers. “We’re not doing the retail lobbying on the Hill anymore,” one lobbyist told CQ. “I’m only hiring people who know their way around the Pentagon.” The change comes as lawmakers have lost much of their influence on spending decisions. “If you have a specific dollar amount, we can’t steer it that easily anymore,” a senior congressional aide said…….
FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting May 15th** – The next Task Force meeting will be on **Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Miami-South Homestead** in Homestead, FL. The meeting will begin at 9 AM and is scheduled to be completed – including a base tour -- by 2:30 PM. Draft agenda is attached.

2. **Meeting Books for Members** – Meeting books will be mailed out Friday for members to read ahead.

3. **Call In Numbers for Meeting** --

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

4. **Attachments:**
   - Draft agenda
   - TPG monthly report
   - Summary of 2014 Florida Legislative Session (From the Tampa Bay Times)
   - The Eagle Fund (Andrews Institute in Gulf Breeze) Grant from FDSTF – Success story
   - Link to Sports Illustrated article on The Eagle Fund --

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**
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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**House Tacks on Provision Prohibiting BRAC Round to Milcon Spending Bill**


Defense Communities 360 © April 30, 2014

The House approved an amendment to the fiscal 2015 military construction-veterans affairs spending bill Wednesday blocking DOD from proposing, planning for or carrying out a new round of base closures. The chamber passed the underlying legislation by a 416-1 vote, getting Congress off to the earliest start to the appropriations process since 1974. The milcon spending bill would provide $6.6 billion for military construction and family housing programs next year, a figure which matches the administration’s request but represents a $3.3 billion decline from the FY 2014 allocation………..

**House Panel Sets Table for Future BRAC Round**


Defense Communities 360 © April 30, 2014

The House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee unsurprisingly rejects the Pentagon’s request to hold a BRAC round in 2017 according to the portion of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill it is scheduled to mark up this morning, but at the same time the panel calls for DOD to prepare a comprehensive assessment of the need for additional base closures. The analysis would compare 20-year force structure plans for each of the services with an inventory of their installations to determine the level of excess infrastructure throughout the department………..
House Dem urges military base closures

The top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee said he expects a defense bill amendment to close excess military bases will get “crushed” by his colleagues, but he intends to propose it anyway. “I don’t have any illusion on what the [Base Closure and Realignment Commission] amendment is going to be on the floor,” Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.) said Thursday morning at a Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments event. “[But] it’s important to start that conversation.” Smith’s comments highlight the difficulty the Pentagon will have in making what it believes are necessary cuts to meet about $1 trillion in defense cuts mandated by Congress over the next nine years…….

Making the BRAC Pitch

Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, said he plans to introduce a rider for a new round of base closures when the Fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill arrives on the House floor. “We need it,” Smith said Thursday during a Capitol Hill event sponsored by the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. Funds must be freed up to protect military readiness, especially since Congress seems intent on turning over at least some of the proposed cuts the military services have put forward, he added...........
Smith to Offer BRAC Authorization Amendment on House Floor

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/smith-to-offer-brac-authorization-amendment-on-house-floor/#

Defense Communities 360 © May 1, 2014

Adam Smith (D-Wash.), ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, plans to offer an amendment to the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill calling for a new base closure round when the legislation reaches the chamber floor. Smith, speaking Thursday at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, said he doesn’t plan to offer the amendment next week when the Armed Services Committee marks up the annual defense policy bill because it would “get crushed,” reported CQ Roll Call………

Panel Questions Potential for BRAC to Generate Savings

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/panel-questions-potential-for-brac-to-generate-savings/#

Defense Communities 360 © May 4, 2014

Due to concerns that potential savings produced by base closures and realignments may never be fully realized, the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee is requesting a report on the “overall effectiveness” of the property disposal process, including an assessment of sales revenue and cleanup costs associated with BRAC actions, according to report language accompanying the panel’s portion of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill. “The committee is concerned that efficiencies associated with the BRAC process are offset with the inability to quickly dispose of excess property and the potential lack of overall savings to the federal government,” the panel stated………

Defense hawks: No cuts in my backyard

http://www.politico.com/story/2014/05/defense-cuts-congress-106328.html#ixzz30t7OixMd

Politico © May 4, 2014

By PHILIP EWING, JEREMY HERB and AUSTIN WRIGHT

The message of congressional defense advocates used to boil down to a simple question: “Where’s mine?” Now, the shorthand pitch has become an equally simple declaration: “Not it.” The Defense Department wants to close a base? Not the one in my district. The Air Force wants to decommission a squadron? Not my guys. The Navy wants to get rid of some warships? Not
ones built by the folks who vote for me. It’s a new twist on an old story. Bone-deep partisan divisions over taxes and spending mean Congress cannot act collectively to reverse the trend of a flat or falling defense budget……..

**Chairman’s Mark Derides Administration’s Repeated BRAC Requests**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/chairmans-mark-derides-administrations-repeated-brac-requests/#

Defense Communities 360 © May 5, 2014

In endorsing last week’s decision by the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee to reject DOD’s request to hold a BRAC round in 2017, Committee Chairman Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) made clear the reasons he opposes additional realignments and closures. “The committee maintains its long held concern that BRAC rounds do not yield true savings but rather impose large upfront costs only then to shift property between federal agencies,” according to the committee’s summary of its portion of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill……..

**DOD Budget Cuts –**

**Budget cutbacks spurring defense mergers**

http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-aerospace-consolidation-20140430,0,3141257.story#axzz30Nu3pvhe
Los Angeles Times © April 30, 2014

By W.J. Hennigan

With protracted federal budget cuts at the Pentagon and NASA on the horizon, aerospace companies across the nation are choosing to combine forces as they vie for fewer dollars and brace for the tough times ahead. In the first quarter of this year, there were 56 merger and acquisition deals announced, according to Irvine aerospace investment bank Janes Capital Partners. This was a 14% increase from last year.......
As many as 1,000 employees of local defense contractors are facing layoffs or pay cuts as the war in Afghanistan winds down. “There will be significant cuts,” said Greg Celestan, chairman and chief executive officer of Celestar Corp., one of several companies that will be affected by a reduction in spending that will come with the end of the war in Afghanistan. “A number of companies are having meetings with existing employees, telling them not to take out any serious financial commitments in the near future.” Hundreds of employees, “even up to 1,000,” will face layoffs or pay cuts of as much as 20 to 30 percent, said Celestan.

**Rep. Smith: 'Accept' Most Proposed Cuts; Extra $26B for DoD is Unlikely**


Defense News © May 1, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

A key US House Democrat on Thursday urged his colleagues to embrace some of the Obama administration’s proposed weapon program cuts, arguing the savings will allow the military to buy new platforms and remain ready for war. House Armed Services Committee Ranking Member Rep. Adam Smith of Washington also said it is unlikely Congress will approve a White House plan to inflate the Pentagon’s annual budget by more than $25 billion next year.

**Lawmaker Says Sequester Could Force Navy to Drop to Eight Carriers**


Seapower Magazine © May 1, 2014

BY JOHN C. MARCARIO, Associate Editor
ARLINGTON, Va. — The Navy will have a huge fight on its hands to keep the current fleet of carriers at 11, U.S. Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, said May 1 in discussion hosted by the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. “They will have a devil of a time keeping them at eight carriers,” he said. The main culprit for this, Smith said, would be the return of sequestration in fiscal 2016, as the Navy has to balance building Littoral Combat Ships, Virginia-class submarines and destroyers along with refueling costs for aircraft carriers. Smith said the challenges will only get worse once the Ohio-class submarine replacement program kicks into gear.

DoD Personnel Costs Could Force Program Cuts


Defense News © May 4, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT
The first of several fiscal 2015 Pentagon spending bills began to come into focus last week, signaling something the defense sector has been lacking for years: Stability. But that could change dramatically in 2016. The House Armed Services Committee (HASC) is rejecting personnel-reform plans proposed by the Pentagon, which already has directed expected savings to other things. And that means lawmakers could end up raiding procurement accounts to keep military personnel programs whole, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars.

HASC Bill Would Shift Billions to Weapons, Readiness Accounts


Defense News © May 5, 2014
By JOHN T. BENNETT
The US House Armed Services Committee wants to shift billions of dollars from things such as service contracts and museums to Pentagon weapon programs. In its version of the 2015 Pentagon authorization legislation unveiled Monday, the panel proposes a
slew of funding transfers that would give the services billions to refuel the USS Ronald Reagan aircraft carrier, develop missile defenses with Israel, buy EA-18G aircraft and upgrade Abrams tanks……….

**Dem: Defense bill leaves ‘crushing’ constraints on Pentagon**

http://thehill.com/policy/defense/205208-dem-defense-bill-leaves-crushing-constraints-on-pentagon#ixzz30ssBBXt4

The Hill © May 5, 2014
By Kristina Wong-

The House’s 2015 spending plan for the Pentagon fails to relieve the “crushing financial constraints” facing the military, a top Democrat charged on Monday.
Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, attacked the 2015 defense bill released by Republicans on Monday as avoiding “difficult choices.” “This year, we had two options: we could have stepped up and made the difficult choices in regard to retiring aging weapons systems and platforms, authorized a [base closure round], or made changes to military compensation and benefits or ended sequestration………. 

MacDill AFB –

**Leidos warns of potential layoffs at MacDill Air Force Base**


Tampa Bay Business Journal © May 1, 2014

By Pam Huff

*Leidos Holdings Inc.* has notified the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity that 93 employees could be laid off at *MacDill Air Force Base* if the company is not awarded a follow-on contract at U.S. Central Command. Virginia-based Leidos provides professional, scientific and technical support services to the USCENTCOM Joint Intelligence Operations Center at
MacDill in Tampa. The company submitted a proposal for a follow-on contract which could be awarded early next month, with an anticipated contract start date of July 1, according to a Leidos spokesperson. However, if unsuccessful, 93 permanent layoffs would occur as of June 30………..

Eglin AFB –

**Eglin, Hurlburt Staying Afloat**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/ HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © May 2, 2014

Eglin AFB, Fla., and near-by Hurlburt Field, closed this week due to torrential rainfall that flooded parts of the East Coast, Eglin spokeswoman Lois Walsh told *Air Force Magazine*. Eglin closed April 30 and reopened the following day, but Hurlburt Field, which is just 12 miles southwest of Eglin, remained closed as of Thursday afternoon. The area received more than 10 inches of rain during a two-day period, said Walsh. Base officials are “assessing damage on base today,” she added Thursday. “[Hurlburt] had a lot more flooding than we did,” she said, adding that most of the damage was not on Eglin, but to the surrounding areas, making it difficult for people to get on base………..

**F-16s train alongside F-35s**


Northwest Florida Daily News © May 2, 2014

By STAFF SGT. CHRISTINA JUDD / 419th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

F-16 Fighting Falcon pilots from Hill Air Force Base’s 419th and 388th Fighter Wings took to the sky here April 24 for their first training missions alongside the F-35A Lightning II, the Air Force’s newest fighter aircraft. Hill AFB’s F-16s flew air-to-air combat training missions with F-35As assigned to Eglin AFB’s 33rd Fighter Wing.
“This was a great opportunity for our F-16s to operate with the F-35,” said Lt. Col. David Castaneda, the 419 FW’s 466th Fighter Squadron commander.

NAS Jacksonville –

**Tougher military scrutiny leads to more access denials**


Florida Times-Union © April 30, 2014

By Clifford Davis

The commander of Navy Region Southeast has tightened security procedures and improved background checks after a civilian transportation worker murdered a Navy sailor aboard the USS Mahan. Jeffrey Tyrone Savage gained access to Norfolk Naval Station on March 24 using a transportation worker identification credential, or TWIC card, issued by the Transportation Security Agency. Savage’s card was valid even though he’d been convicted of manslaughter in North Carolina in 2008.

NS Mayport –

**Bill to fund projects at Naval Station Mayport, Naval Air Station Jacksonville receives U.S. House approval**


Florida Times-Union © April 30, 2014

By Clifford Davis and Christopher Hong

A bill that would approve $50.6 million in construction projects at Jacksonville military bases was approved Tuesday night by the U.S. House of Representatives and now moves to the Senate. The money will help ensure that three of the Navy’s newest platforms, the P-8A Poseidon aircraft, the MH-60R helicopter and the littoral combat ship, will all stay here. The bill, which
funds military training and housing services, base infrastructure maintenance and veterans’ benefits and programs, includes $71.5 billion in spending. That’s $1.8 billion less than last year’s expenditures……..

Bill contains $21 million for Mayport Naval Station


Florida Times-Union © May 2, 2014

By Clifford Davis

After months of uncertainty following Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel’s announcement to cut short orders for the littoral combat ship, Mayport Naval Station role in the program received a shot in the arm this week as the House passed its 2015 military construction bill. Included in the bill, passed by a 416 to 1 margin, was $21 million for the construction of a littoral combat ship training facility at the base………..

Florida National Guard –

What Could an Army National Commission Learn From the Air Force?


Defense News © April 30, 2014

When the Senate Armed Services Committee summoned members of the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force to an April 29th hearing, it marked the official end of the Commissioners duty. But even as one service’s fight between the active and reserve/guard components seemed to be winding down, another is brewing. Let’s recap: the Air Force’s 2013 budget request contained large cuts to the guard and reserve – cuts that the states felt were unfair and disproportionate………..
Hurlburt Field –

**Hurlburt Field leads 'Warrior' exercise**


Pensacola News-Journal © May 4, 2014

By Rod Duren

Hurlburt Field, headquarters of the Air Force's Special Operations Command, began its ninth annual Emerald Warrior 2014 combat training exercise last week across the Gulf Coast. The special ops exercise, which will be using some 90 aircraft, runs through Friday from Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field in Northwest Florida to Stennis Space Center and the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center in south Mississippi. Camp Shelby has served almost continuously since 1917 as a training site for reserve and active-duty personnel. In addition to using aircraft and personnel, exercise participants will have virtual simulators and computer-generated emulators for live training scenarios…………

**Base commander shows how base bounced back after fierce flooding**


Northwest Florida Daily News © May 2, 2014

By LAUREN DELGADO / Daily News

Early morning Wednesday, Col. Bill West realized the storm he initially expected to simply flood the base's front gates was definitely more serious. Flooding reports started pouring in around 1 a.m. for the Commander of the 1st Special Operations Wing. When the sun came up, the storm's power was seen throughout the base. By Friday afternoon, much of the damage was either repaired or on its way to being repaired.........
Hurlburt, FDOT, Superior Construction repair pedestrian bridge


Hurlburt Field © May 2, 2014

by Staff Sgt. Melanie Holochwost, 1st Special Operations Wing Public Affairs

About a dozen workers from the Florida Department of Transportation and Superior Construction aided the 1st Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron in restoring the pedestrian bridge on Hurlburt Field, Fla., April 30 through May 1, after a severe flood. Storm water eroded a portion of the bridge's foundation at about 3 p.m. Thursday, which could have caused the bridge to shift or collapse, said Dan Wilcoxen, 1st SOCES military construction liaison……..

Other Items of Interest –

Army: Cuts would include nearly half of combat brigades

http://thehill.com/policy/defense/army/204816-army-cuts-would-include-nearly-half-of-combat-brigades#ixzz30Pn4me7S
The Hill © April 30, 2014

By Kristina Wong

Army leaders told a Senate panel Wednesday that combat brigades would be reduced by 46 percent if sequestration cuts continue. “We will have no choice but to slash end-strength levels if sequestration continues in order to obtain the proper balance between end strength, readiness and modernization,” Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno told the Senate Appropriations Defense subcommittee on Wednesday. The Army is already planning to cut its end strength down to between 450,000 and 440,000 by 2017, but may have to go down to 420,000 by 2019 if the cuts are not overturned……..

Ready, Set, Go! Navy Gives Industry 21 Days For LCS Alternatives
John D. Burrow is in a hurry – and if you think you know what the Navy needs as an alternative to its controversial Littoral Combat Ship, you will be too. Minutes ago, the Navy released a pair of Requests For Information (RFIs) on LCS alternatives – one RFI for concepts for the ship as a whole and the other for specific shipboard technologies. The deadline for responses: 22 May. As Burrow told reporters this morning, “the RFIs will give them 21 days to provide that information.”

Measure Would Bolster Energy Security at Installations

Legislation introduced in the House and Senate Wednesday would make it easier for installations to invest in measures to increase their energy security. The DOD Energy Security Act, sponsored Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) and Rep. Scott Peters (D-Calif.), would establish the secure energy innovation program and require DOD to develop metrics to illustrate the costs and risks associated with a prolonged lack of access to power. The program is designed to help officials more accurately balance costs and risks for energy programs, and allow for better strategic decision-making, according to a fact sheet provided by the sponsors.

TBIs MIA: An Estimated 30,000 Undocumented Bruised Brains

Despite its vaunted intelligence-gathering capability, the U.S. military was surprised when enemies in Iraq and Afghanistan began building and deploying roadside bombs to kill and maim U.S. troops. It got so bad that a soldier asked Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld nearly two years into the Iraq war why U.S. troops were forced to defend
themselves against such improvised explosive devices with homemade “hillbilly armor.”

Congress Joins Pentagon in Cooling on LCS


Military.com © May 1, 2014
By Kris Osborn

Congressional support for the Navy's Littoral Combat Ship appears to be waning even further after an influential U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee proposed slowing down the pace of production for the vessel. The House Armed Services Committee Seapower and Projection Forces subcommittee has proposed legislation that slows the rate of purchase for the LCS from three to two per year. The subcommittee supports the LCS program and the development of a new small surface combatant, but priorities such as refueling the USS George Washington and ensuring that the Navy can operate an 11-carrier fleet took precedence in the budget, said a congressional staffer close to the subcommittee..........

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs Bill Passes House

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © May 5, 2014

The House passed the Fiscal 2015 military construction and veterans affairs appropriations bill last week with a vote of 416-1. The $71.5 billion bill is $1.8 billion below Fiscal 2014 levels, states an April 30 House Appropriations Committee release. It reduces military construction funding by $3.3 billion and increases funding for veterans programs by $1.5 billion. The bill provides $719.551 million for Air Force construction projects, including $94.663 million for the Air National Guard and $49.492 million for the Air Force Reserve. “I applaud the passage of this extremely important, bipartisan legislation for our troops and vets.
**McKeon Wants DoD to Redo QDR**

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140505/DEFREG02/305050022/McKeon-Wants-DoD-Redo-QDR

Defense News © May 5, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The chairman of the US House Armed Services Committee has drafted legislation that would require the Defense Department to re-write a major military strategy review that was sent to Congress in March. If DoD does not re-submit its quadrennial defense review (QDR), Rep. Howard “Buck” McKeon, R-Calif., said he would withhold 25 percent of the Pentagon policy office’s budget.

**Army outlines plan to inactivate 7 brigade combat teams**

http://www.armytimes.com/article/20140505/NEWS/305050018

Army Times © May 5, 2014

By Michelle Tan

The Army has inactivated three brigade combat teams this fiscal year, and has seven more to go, as it works toward an end-strength of 490,000 soldiers by the end of 2015. In all, 10 BCTs will be cut this year and next, and the Army is “on target” to meet its restructure requirements, said Col. Daniel King, a spokesman for Forces Command. It takes anywhere from six to 10 months to inactivate a BCT, King said. “This process is the most challenging on installations that don’t include multiple, similar units, where we can cross-level [soldiers],” King said. “On our large installations ... we can transfer soldiers from one unit to another, usually without having to move families.”

**DoD: Slashing Redundancy Instead of Personnel**

http://nationalinterest.org/blog/dod-slashing-redundancy-instead-personnel-10360

National Interest © May 5, 2014

There has been a lot of talk from all sides concerning the Army force drawdown to 440,000 personnel. This would be the lowest cut since before World War II and
represents a reduction of 80,000 soldiers. The President’s Budget for 2014 highlights the tremendous expense for military personnel: $137.1 Billion or over 25 percent of the total defense budget. Indeed, slashing personnel is a significant and reasonable option to drive down short- and long-term costs in DoD’s gargantuan budget. But most people don’t realize that the 80,000 cut is not focused solely on front-line soldiers—it will also include the ancillary and support personnel that work alongside the front-line forces.

Committee Chair Rejects DOD’s Compensation Reforms; Adjusts A-10 Fleet Retirement


Defense Communities 360 © May 5, 2014

The full committee portion of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill rejects most of the Obama administration’s proposed reforms to military benefits, including plans to slash subsidies for commissaries and slow increases in the basic allowance for housing. The chairman’s mark rejects other cost-saving reforms in the Pentagon’s FY 2015 budget as well, including plans to retire the Navy’s 11th aircraft carrier and to hold a new BRAC round in 2017.
May 12, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting May 15th** – Look forward to seeing you this week at the Task Force meeting on **Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Miami-South Homestead** in Homestead, FL. The meeting will begin at 9 AM and is scheduled to be completed – including a base tour -- by 2:30 PM. Agenda is attached.

2. **Call In Numbers for Meeting --**

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachments:**

   - Meeting agenda
   - FDVA Final Legislative Report
   - Notes from TPG Bi-Weekly Conference Call

Regards, BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**

**BRAC –**
Defense hawks: No cuts in my backyard

http://www.politico.com/story/2014/05/defense-cuts-congress-106328.html#ixzz30t7OixMd

Politico © May 4, 2014

By PHILIP EWING, JEREMY HERB and AUSTIN WRIGHT

The message of congressional defense advocates used to boil down to a simple question: “Where’s mine?” Now, the shorthand pitch has become an equally simple declaration: “Not it.” The Defense Department wants to close a base? Not the one in my district. The Air Force wants to decommission a squadron? Not my guys. The Navy wants to get rid of some warships? Not ones built by the folks who vote for me. It’s a new twist on an old story. Bone-deep partisan divisions over taxes and spending mean Congress cannot act collectively to reverse the trend of a flat or falling defense budget……..

Chairman’s Mark Derides Administration’s Repeated BRAC Requests

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/chairmans-mark-derides-administrations-repeated-brac-requests/

Defense Communities 360 © May 5, 2014

In endorsing last week’s decision by the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee to reject DOD’s request to hold a BRAC round in 2017, Committee Chairman Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) made clear the reasons he opposes additional realignments and closures. “The committee maintains its long held concern that BRAC rounds do not yield true savings but rather impose large upfront costs only then to shift property between federal agencies,” according to the committee’s summary of its portion of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill……..

Smith Proposal Would Reform BRAC Process


Defense Communities 360 © May 6, 2014

An amendment that Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, plans to offer to the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill approving a new BRAC round will call for a variety of reforms intended to address lawmakers’ most common criticisms of the base closure process. “Given that the last BRAC round transformed more than it closed and has cost more and saved less than original estimates, members of Congress have justifiable reservations about giving the Department of Defense authority to conduct another round,” Smith said in a written release……
HASC Chair McKeon: Sorry, Mr. Smith, No BRAC


Breaking Defense © May 6, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Hours after the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee put out legislative language to permit a Base Reduction and Closure round, the top Republican shot him down. Rep. Adam Smith has warned his colleagues repeatedly that Congress must make “unimaginable” choices to cope with the automatic budget cuts known as sequestration. In particular, Smith says they must consider closing military bases using a new round of base closures (BRAC), a process that’s always politically painful and which many in Congress argue was discredited by the 2005 round, which they say cost more money than it saved……..

House Committee Rebuffs BRAC Request

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/house-committee-rebuffs-brac-request/#

Defense Communities 360 © May 7, 2014

The House Armed Services Committee approved language in the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill rejecting the Pentagon’s request to hold a BRAC round in 2017 during its day-long markup Wednesday of the annual policy measure. The vote was set in motion last week when the Readiness Subcommittee included a prohibition on conducting additional base closure rounds in its portion of the bill, and reinforced when Committee Chairman Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) endorsed the ban on new BRACs earlier this week…….

Hagel ‘Not Pleased’ with Committee Votes to Ignore DOD’s Cost-Saving Proposals


Defense Communities 360 © May 11, 2014

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel was not pleased by the House Armed Services Committee’s markup last week of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill, press secretary Rear Adm. John
Kirby told reporters Friday. The panel overturned a variety of cost-saving proposals from the Pentagon’s latest budget request, including plans to hold a new BRAC round, trim the size of the Army and restructure the National Guard, retire the Air Force’s A-10 fleet and scale back military compensation. “I can tell you that the secretary was certainly not pleased,” Kirby said……

**DOD Needs New Base Closure Round, Senior Official Says**


Defense.gov © May 12, 2014

By Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

The Defense Department is calling on Congress to authorize another round of base realignments and closures because of excess capacity that is cutting into funding for troop readiness and other higher priority needs, a senior DOD official said. “We cannot afford to waste money on infrastructure that essentially taxes the warfighters for the readiness funds they need,” John Conger, the acting deputy undersecretary of defense for installations and environment, told American Forces Press Service in an interview. The department is asking for another BRAC round in 2017. “The department is facing resource problems and we are being forced to consider significant force structure reductions,” Conger said. “That exacerbates the situation we already have with excess infrastructure.”

**DOD Budget Cuts –**

**HASC Bill Would Shift Billions to Weapons, Readiness Accounts**


Defense News © May 5, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The US House Armed Services Committee wants to shift billions of dollars from things such as service contracts and museums to Pentagon weapon programs. In its version of the 2015 Pentagon authorization legislation unveiled Monday, the panel proposes a
slew of funding transfers that would give the services billions to refuel the USS Ronald Reagan aircraft carrier, develop missile defenses with Israel, buy EA-18G aircraft and upgrade Abrams tanks.

**Dem: Defense bill leaves ‘crushing’ constraints on Pentagon**


The Hill © May 5, 2014

By Kristina Wong-

The House’s 2015 spending plan for the Pentagon fails to relieve the “crushing financial constraints” facing the military, a top Democrat charged on Monday.

Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, attacked the 2015 defense bill released by Republicans on Monday as avoiding “difficult choices.” “This year, we had two options: we could have stepped up and made the difficult choices in regard to retiring aging weapons systems and platforms, authorized a [base closure round], or made changes to military compensation and benefits or ended sequestration.

**Inhofe decries ‘reckless’ cuts to military compensation**


The Hill © May 6, 2014

By Martin Matishak

The top Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday harshly criticized the Obama administration’s “reckless” proposals to rein in troop benefits. “We’re telling them they just cost us too much, that they constitute a ‘ticking time-bomb,’ and that their sacrifice is ‘eating us alive,’” Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.) said in his opening statement at a hearing on military compensation. “We are telling them that we are looking for a way out of fulfilling our commitments to them. This is not the right signal to send those who volunteered to serve in time of war.”
Sequestration Endangers National Security

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © May 7, 2014

Sequestration is “destroying military readiness and endangering national security,” AFA President retired Gen. Craig McKinley told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday. In his prepared testimony, McKinley said sequestration “has normalized a dangerously low level of defense spending, constrained defense decision-makers, and ... created an unhealthy competition for resources within DOD’s base budget.” McKinley emphasized a need to honor the commitment to current and retired service members, saying any change to the compensation and retirement structures should grandfather those currently serving........

HASC Votes to Limit LCS Mission Mods Funding, Keep Cruisers


Defense News © May 7, 2014
By JOHN T. BENNETT

A US House panel wants the Pentagon’s testing chief to sign off before the Navy can spend any fiscal 2015 funds to buy littoral combat ship mission modules. The panel approved an amendment to its 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) offered by Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., that would block all funding for LCS mission modules until senior Pentagon and Navy officials deliver some assurances to lawmakers......

HASC Endorses 2 Super Hornets Per Month, Wants Black Hawk Plan

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140507/DEFREG02/305070039/HASC-Endorses-2-Super-Hornets-Per-Month-Wants-Black-Hawk-Plan

By JOHN T. BENNETT
A US House panel on Wednesday approved provisions restricting the Air Force’s ability to retire its E-3 warning aircraft, encouraging the Navy to build two F/A-18E/F Super Hornets each month, and ordering the Pentagon to hand over reams of information. The House Armed Services Committee began its markup of the fiscal 2015 National Defense Authorization Act by approving several en bloc amendment packages. Included was one offered by Rep. Vicky Hartzler, R-Mo., that “encourages” the Navy to use advanced procurement dollars to build at least two Boeing Super Hornets per month……..

**HASC Debates Sequestration’s ‘Terrible Dilemma’: A Ready Force Or A Large One**

http://breakingdefense.com/2014/05/hasc-debates-sequesters-terrible-dilemma-a-ready-force-or-a-large-one/

Breaking Defense © May 7, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

“Given sequestration, given all the cuts…we can have a larger force or we can have a ready force,” said Rep. Adam Smith. “I’m going to choose the latter.” But the 2015 National Defense Authorization markup that the House Armed Services Committee will pass sometime tonight raids $1.4 billion from operations, maintenance, and training funds. “There’s a legitimate debate to be had” about that choice, said Smith, HASC’s top Democrat, but the committee is not engaged in that debate. Instead, he said, “we’re closing our eyes and plugging our ears and saying ’no, no, no, no, we’re not going to make that choice.’”……..

**HASC OKs $600B in 2015 DoD Spending, Nixes A-10 Retirement Plans**


Defense News © May 8, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The House Armed Services Committee (HASC) early Thursday unanimously approved a measure that would authorize just over $600 billion in 2015 US defense spending and block plans to retire the A-10 attack plane. After a marathon markup session, the
committee easily approved its version of the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act that includes a $495.8 billion base Pentagon budget level and $79.4 billion more for an overseas contingency operations (OCO) budget.............

**Pentagon 'firmly behind' Obama cuts despite rejection by House**

The Hill © May 8, 2014

By Kristina Wong

The Pentagon on Thursday said it stands “firmly” behind President Obama's 2015 defense budget request, much of which was rejected by the House Armed Services Committee. The House panel completed a marathon session on Thursday morning that turned aside most of the president’s proposals, including the retirement of an aircraft carrier and the A-10 aircraft, the closing of excess bases, and cuts to troop pay raises and benefits. ..........

**In Resisting DOD Austerity Measures, House Bill Puts off Budget Reckoning**

Defense Communities 360 © May 8, 2014

The fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill passed unanimously early Thursday morning by the House Armed Services Committee brushed off a slew of cost-saving proposals by the Pentagon in an attempt to avert reductions in force structure needed to accommodate strict spending caps. The list of reforms rejected by the committee include reductions in the end strength of the active Army and Army National Guard, elimination of the A-10 aircraft fleet, possible retirement of an 11th aircraft carrier, and a plan to deactivate up to 11 cruisers and three amphibious ships........

**Wishful thinking on the defense budget**
The House Armed Services Committee has completed action on the fiscal 2015 defense budget, and what it has produced is a triumph for the status quo. Contrary to President Obama’s requests, the committee voted to preserve the A-10 Warthog close-air support plane, as well as a nuclear aircraft carrier the Pentagon thought it could do without. It also approved a 1.8 percent pay increase for most military personnel, instead of 1 percent as the administration proposed.

Committee chairman Howard P. “Buck” McKeon (R-Calif.) was pretty candid about this: “My underlying goal . . . is to hold onto as much of the stuff and as much of the training as we can,” he said, according to Reuters, in the hope that “some miracle happens and we get money . . . next year that we don’t have now.”

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House lawmakers have rejected most of the Pentagon’s proposed cost-saving measures for next year, raising serious questions about how the military will stay under budget limits once sequestration returns in 2016. The House Armed Services Committee this week passed a defense bill that rejected plans from the Pentagon to save billions of dollars by cutting an aircraft carrier, legacy aircraft, troop pay raises and benefits and excess bases.

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Congressional Conundrum: Cut Weapons Programs Now or Later?
Rep. Adam Smith grimaced and appeared to sigh. The nightmare scenario he had warned about for weeks was playing out all around him. And the House Armed Services Committee ranking member could do nothing to stop it. The Washington Democrat had just pushed an amendment that aimed to essentially kill a Republican one that would block the Navy from sidelining 11 cruisers to save money. As he had for some time about the full list of cuts proposed by the US military, Smith warned his colleagues that cuts today would free up funding for new weapon systems later……….

Eglin AFB –

**What has weapons, snakes and over 2,000 visitors?**


Northwest Florida Daily News © May 7, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

The Army’s 6th Ranger Training Battalion Open House is back on this year, after a hiatus due to budget concerns last year. For over 60 years, the battalion has invited the public out to Camp James E. Rudder to show off what their instructors and students are up to deep in the swamplike forest about 25 miles north of Fort Walton Beach. Thousands of students each year go through the strenuous training to become an Army Ranger, attending a portion of the course at Camp Rudder. Less than 50 percent will graduate……….

**Airbus A350 XWB at McKinley Climatic Lab in Florida for Extreme Weather Tests**


Asia Travel Tips © May 8, 2014

Requirements and test aircraft to the extremes, the first ever Airbus A350 XWB to visit the United States, MSN (manufacturer’s serial number) 2, has arrived at McKinley Climatic Lab at Eglin Air Force base in northwest Florida. Over the next couple of weeks the aircraft and its various systems and cabin installations will be
Eglin AFB Sets Meetings on Training Sites

http://www.wmbb.com/story/25477111/eglin-afb-sets-meetings-on-training-sites

WMBB © May 9, 2014

The Gulf Regional Airspace Strategic Initiative Landscape Draft Environmental Impact Statement is now available for review. In addition to the Draft EIS availability, the Air Force is holding public hearings to solicit comments on the proposed alternatives analyzed in the EIS. The Air Force, through the GRASI Landscape Initiative (or GLI), is seeking to partner with the State of Florida to develop additional training locations and flexibility for use when training at existing military bases is not available.

NS Mayport –

Community Welcomes USS New York To Fleet Week Port Everglades


Mayport Mirror © May 7, 2014

By MC3 Stephane Belcher

Local community leaders officially welcomed participants of Fleet Week Port Everglades 2014 during the ship greeting and all hands on deck party at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood, Fla., April 28. During the event, hosted by Broward Navy Days, community members welcomed members of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard to South Florida and thanked them for their service.

Tyndall AFB –

Lawmakers want resolution of F-22 whistle-blowers probe

Two members of Congress urged the Pentagon on Thursday to finish an investigation into two whistle-blower pilots in Virginia who complained about problems with the F-22 fighter jet. Virginia Sen. Mark Warner and Illinois Rep. Adam Kinzinger say that both Virginia Air National Guard pilots have seen their careers suffer since raising their concerns, including in a “60 Minutes” interview two years ago. In a letter Thursday, the lawmakers urged Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel to complete an investigation into alleged retaliation against the two pilots, Capt. Joshua Wilson and Maj. Jeremy Gordon, assigned to Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Virginia.

The United States Army is composed of three components: the Active Army, the Reserve Army and the Army National Guard. All have proved essential in supporting war efforts during the 1991 Gulf War, peacekeeping in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo, and most recently as part of the “Global War on Terrorism” in Iraq and Afghanistan. Under the National Guard Act of 1933, Guard members are considered members of the Army at all times.
The US Army wants no part of it and the top leadership of the Army Guard and Reserve remain split, but powerful factions in Congress are moving to set up an independent commission that would examine the sweeping force structure changes the active duty Army says are necessary. On May 6, Sens. Patrick Leahy D-Vt., and Lindsey Graham R-S.C., co-chairs of the Senate National Guard Caucus, led a bipartisan group of 19 senators in introducing the National Commission on the Future of the Army Act, which would establish just such an independent panel.

Senate Coalition Moves to Block Army National Guard Changes

A bipartisan group of 19 senators introduced legislation to preserve much of the Army National Guard’s combat aviation mission until an independent commission reviews a proposal from the Army to transfer the Guard’s 192 AH-64 Apache attack helicopters. The measure — introduced by Sens. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), co-chairs of the Senate National Guard Caucus — also would bar the Army’s plans to trim the size of the Guard from 350,000 to 335,000 soldiers by fiscal 2017.

Committee Rejects Army Plan to Restructure National Guard

The House Armed Services Committee Wednesday night voted to block the Army’s plan to shift almost 200 Apache attack helicopters from the National Guard to the service’s active component. The amendment to the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill was proposed by Rep. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.) and passed by a voice vote with support from both sides of the aisle, reported the Hill.
Following the vote, the committee passed the underlying defense policy bill early Thursday morning.

HASC Gives Guard Half A Loaf; Will SASC Provide The Rest?
http://breakingdefense.com/2014/05/hasc-gives-guard-half-a-loaf-will-sasc-provide-the-rest/
Breaking Defense © May 9, 2014
By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

This week, the House Armed Services Committee gave advocates for the Army National Guard about half of what they wanted. Next week, a staffer told me, the Senate Armed Services Committee may look at giving the Guard the other half. But because Guard backers have taken very different approaches in each chamber, it’ll be up to the House-Senate conference on the National Defense Authorization Act to put the two half-loaves together into the whole package the pro-Guard lobby wants – and the Guard has been disappointed by conferences before.

Hurlburt Field –

Notice an uptick in military activity? It's Emerald Warrior
Northwest Florida Daily News © May 7, 2014
By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

Northwest Florida residents may have noticed an increase in military aircraft, vehicles and boats over the past couple weeks. That extra hustle is part of Emerald Warrior, the military’s premier irregular warfare exercise hosted each year at Hurlburt Field. This year the ninth annual exercise was expected to draw about 2,000 service members from various branches to Hurlburt Field and other locations where the training takes place. 90 aircraft participated.
Patrick AFB –

**Patrick dining facility cooks the competition**


Patrick AFB © May 7, 2014

By 45th Space Wing Public Affairs office

The Riverside Dining Facility at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., is the recipient of the 2014 John L. Hennessy Award and was selected as the best in Air Force Food Transformation. For the 58th consecutive year, the Hennessy Award recognizes the best food service programs in the Air Force, as well as individual excellence………..

Other Items of Interest –

**McKeon Wants DoD to Redo QDR**

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140505/DEFREG02/305050022/McKeon-Wants-DoD-Redo-QDR

Defense News © May 5, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The chairman of the US House Armed Services Committee has drafted legislation that would require the Defense Department to re-write a major military strategy review that was sent to Congress in March. If DoD does not re-submit its quadrennial defense
review (QDR), Rep. Howard “Buck” McKeon, R-Calif., said he would withhold 25 percent of the Pentagon policy office's budget………

Army outlines plan to inactivate 7 brigade combat teams

http://www.armytimes.com/article/20140505/NEWS/305050018

Army Times © May 5, 2014

By Michelle Tan

The Army has inactivated three brigade combat teams this fiscal year, and has seven more to go, as it works toward an end-strength of 490,000 soldiers by the end of 2015. In all, 10 BCTs will be cut this year and next, and the Army is “on target” to meet its restructure requirements, said Col. Daniel King, a spokesman for Forces Command. It takes anywhere from six to 10 months to inactivate a BCT, King said. “This process is the most challenging on installations that don't include multiple, similar units, where we can cross-level [soldiers],” King said. “On our large installations ... we can transfer soldiers from one unit to another, usually without having to move families.” ……….

DoD: Slashing Redundancy Instead of Personnel

http://nationalinterest.org/blog/dod-slashing-redundancy-instead-personnel-10360

National Interest © May 5, 2014

There has been a lot of talk from all sides concerning the Army force drawdown to 440,000 personnel. This would be the lowest cut since before World War II and represents a reduction of 80,000 soldiers. The President’s Budget for 2014 highlights the tremendous expense for military personnel: $137.1 Billion or over 25 percent of the total defense budget. Indeed, slashing personnel is a significant and reasonable option to drive down short- and long-term costs in DoD’s gargantuan budget. But most people don’t realize that the 80,000 cut is not focused solely on front-line soldiers—it will also include the ancillary and support personnel that work alongside the front-line forces........
Florida politicians angered by VA errors, inefficiency


Sun-Sentinel © May 11, 2014

By Mark K. Matthews, Washington Bureau

Florida Republicans and Democrats don't agree on much, but they are uniting to criticize the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for not doing enough to help the 1.5 million state residents who served in the military. In the past several weeks, politicians from Republican Gov. Rick Scott to U.S. Rep. Corrine Brown, D-Jacksonville, have blasted the $154 billion agency and its contractors on issues ranging from the VA's transparency over patient deaths to the speed in which an overdue veterans hospital is being built in Central Florida..........  

Local veterans’ hospitals part of nationwide audit


Tampa Tribune © May 11, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

Like counterparts around the country, officials at the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital in Tampa and the C.W. “Bill” Young VA Medical Center in Bay Pines are preparing for an audit ordered by VA Secretary Eric Shinseki in the wake of problems veterans are having accessing care nationwide. The two hospitals, among the nation’s busiest, will be part of a nationwide audit that begins Monday, said Mary Kay Hollingsworth, spokeswoman for the VA Sunshine Healthcare Network, which comprises Florida, south Georgia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Every VA facility in the country servicing more than 10,000 patients will be audited, Hollingsworth said.............

Contractor Costs Must Come Down, US Army Brass Says

Almost nothing is certain when it comes to the Pentagon’s procurement and operations and maintenance accounts these days, and service leaders appear to have reached the point where they’ve given up trying to put on a good face for industry. At a defense industry conference near Dulles airport in the Washington suburbs on May 6, several Army generals took to the podium to both celebrate how modernized their fleets of ground vehicles are, while bemoaning how expensive the remaining work has become……..
May 19, 2014 – FDTSF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Meeting in Orlando** -- The next Task Force meeting will be Thursday, June 19, 2014 from 9 AM – 3 PM at the Doubletree Hotel, 60 South Ivanhoe Blvd., Orlando (Downtown). There is scheduled to be a tour of Team Orlando following the meeting concluding at no later than 3 PM. On Wednesday evening June 18th, there will be a joint reception with Florida Defense Alliance members at the hotel. Please let me or Marcy know if you will be attending.

2. **Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) Meeting, June 18th** – This FDA semi-annual membership meeting will be held in Orlando – at the same Doubletree -- the day prior to the FDSTF meeting. This group contains approximately 70 representatives from state EDCs, chambers, and installations staff representatives. Their primary functions is ground up issue identification and vetting, and networking/best practices among the membership. TF members are invited to attend if convenient.

3. **Homestead ARB Contact Information** – Some members asked for the contact information for Larry Ventura at Homestead ARB.

   LAWRENCE VENTURA JR.
   Chief, Environmental Flight
   Base Community Planner
   Comm (786) 415-7163
   DSN 535-7163

   482 MSG/CEV
   29350 Westover St., Bldg 232
   Homestead ARB, FL 33039-1299
   Email: lawrence.ventura@us.af.mil

4. **Attachment** -- NAS Pensacola Reunion Flyer

Regards, BG.

Bruce Grant
Defense Consultant
Enterprise Florida, Inc.
1030 East Lafayette Street, Suite 9
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

House Language Could Provide Head Start for BRAC Authorization, Conger Says

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/house-language-could-provide-head-start-for-brac-authorization-conger-says/

Defense Communities 360 © May 12, 2014

Language approved by the House Armed Services Committee last week calling for a comprehensive assessment of the need for additional base closures and realignments could provide the Pentagon a jump on a new BRAC round, according to John Conger, acting deputy undersecretary of defense for installations and environment. The provision, included in the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill approved by the committee last week, directs DOD to compare 20-year force structure plans for each of the services with an inventory of their installations to determine the level of excess infrastructure throughout the department……..

Nation Wastes $6B Annually on Unneeded Bases, Analyst Says

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/nation-wastes-6b-annually-on-unneeded-bases-analyst-says/

Defense Communities 360 © May 18, 2014

By repeatedly dismissing the Pentagon’s request for additional base closures, Congress is responsible for wasting $6 billion a year on unneeded installations, according to a commentary by Loren Thompson appearing in Forbes. To arrive at that figure, Thompson takes DOD’s fiscal 2015 budget request for $40 billion for base operations, facility maintenance and military construction; pro-rates that figure to account for the 20 percent of military sites that are outside the United States and its territories; and applies the department’s estimate that about 20 percent of its infrastructure is excess…….
BRAC Decisions Need to Consider Climate Change Impacts, Report Says


Defense Communities 360 © May 14, 2014

Climate change impacts such as sea-level rise and drought will threaten military infrastructure and their host communities, pointing to the need to take into account environmental changes in future basing decisions, according to a new report from a government-funded military research organization. “The challenge for the U.S. military is not simple: reduce force size, increase capabilities and readiness, fix our bases so climate change will not undermine our training and deployment activities — all in the context of a constrained budget………

DOD Budget Cuts –

Authorization Bill Places Pentagon on Path toward ‘Hollow’ Military

http://www.defensecommunities.org/uncategorized/authorization-bill-places-pentagon-on-path-toward-hollow-military/

Defense Communities 360 © May 12, 2014

By voting to block most of the Pentagon’s proposals for coping with stringent spending caps imposed through fiscal 2021, the House Armed Services Committee last week could jeopardize the military’s readiness while raising questions as to how DOD will meet the mandated budget limits starting in FY 2016. “When we are told we can’t reduce infrastructure, we can’t retire weapons systems, we can’t change pay, compensation, health care, what’s left … is readiness and modernization,” Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters over the weekend……..

Under Sequestration, Air Force, Army Bear Brunt Of Impact, CSIS Study Shows


Defense Daily © May 12, 2014

The Air Force and Army saw the biggest decreases in contract obligations between FY ‘12 and FY ‘13 while the decrease at the Navy was relatively minor, says a May 12 report by the Center
for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) that shows that overall the budget sequestration that was in effect part of last year and into early 2014 did have a large impact on defense spending. “The impact of sequestration on DoD contract obligations has been as large as many observers had predicted, if not larger,” said the preliminary report by Jesse Ellman, a research associate with the CSIS National Security Program on Industry and Resources……..

**Air Force: More than 20 percent HQ staff cuts in one year**


Federal Times © May 14, 2014

By **STEVE WATKINS**

The Air Force intends to cut more than 20 percent of its headquarters staffs within a year as part of an overall downsizing effort, according to Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James. James said the move responds to a directive issued last summer by Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel that all military services trim their headquarters staffs by 20 percent over five years by 2019……..

**Congress Considers Hundreds of NDAA Amendments This Week**


Defense One © May 18, 2014

By **Billy House**

With millions of Americans set to commemorate Memorial Day weekend, the House is wrapping itself in military affairs this week, acting on legislation to boost accountability at the embattled Veterans Affairs Department and taking up the annual National Defense Authorization Act. In the Senate, the Armed Services Committee is expected to work on its own defense authorization bill, while the full chamber could resurrect efforts to take up the Finance Committee’s $84 billion tax-extenders bill and vote on President Obama’s nomination of Sylvia Mathews Burwell to be Health and Human Services secretary……..

**Senate Committee’s Turn to Mark up Authorization Bill This Week**
The Senate Armed Services Committee gets its turn to address the Pentagon’s plans for trimming force structure, eliminating weapons systems, cutting military pay and compensation, and holding a new BRAC round when it marks up its version of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill this week. On Tuesday, the Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee will mark up its portion of the annual defense policy measure, with the full committee taking up the legislation starting Wednesday.

For those who keep tabs on the drone industry, it should be no surprise why the Association for Unmanned Vehicles Systems International chose to move its annual unmanned systems conference and trade show out of the Pentagon's shadow in Washington, D.C., and into commercial hubs such as Orlando, Atlanta and New Orleans. Unmanned aerial systems manufacturers are at a crossroads. Industry is eager to sell the aircraft and associated services both globally and to the civil sector, but experts predict UAS integration into the national airspace is still years away.
The U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) has no intention of completely replacing humans with unmanned autonomous systems, says Jim Overholt, a senior scientist at the lab’s Human Effectiveness Directorate. However, AFRL does want to see people interact more effectively with machines so that both can work in “complex and contested environments.” Speaking at this week’s Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) conference in Orlando, Florida, Overholt illustrated the drawbacks of current human-machine operations by noting how many people it takes to support one MQ-1 Predator: 73, including maintenance crew and analysts.

Eglin AFB –

**Air Force: Military should expand training into state forests**


Northwest Florida Daily News © May 13, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Daily News

The Air Force has officially recommended the military be allowed to train on state forest lands in Northwest Florida. They warned in a recently released report that if the proposal does not go through, the region likely will not be able to sustain the increased demands for training space in the coming years. “We’ve done a study that told us all of the things we are looking to do in the near future can’t be done, we don’t have the space,” said Mike Spaits, environmental spokesperson for Eglin.

NS Mayport –
Mayport-stationed ship named best in the Atlantic Fleet


Jacksonville Business Journal © May 13, 2014

By Catherine Byerly

The Mayport-based guided-missile cruiser USS Gettysburg won the 2013 Battenberg Cup last week, an annual honor recognizing the best all around in crew achievement. Gettysburg is only the fifth ship of its kind in the last 106 years to receive the award, the cruiser competed against larger ships including aircraft carriers and amphibious ships. The competition began between American and British Sailors — in 1941, the same trophy that Gettysburg will receive, went down with the battleship USS West Virginia and was raised with her following the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Rep. Crenshaw And Assistant Navy Secretary Tour Naval Station Mayport


WJCT News © May 14, 2014

BY CYD HOSKINSON

U.S. Navy Assistant Secretary Sean Stackley and Florida Congressman Ander Crenshaw were in Jacksonville Tuesday on a fact-finding mission. The two visited Naval Station Mayport to assess current ship repair operations and to get an idea of what’s needed in the future when Mayport is home to more and bigger ships. Stackley says the workload will be substantial.........

Navy committed to keeping Mayport base vital

http://www.beachesleader.com/article_38ce2af0-dc3f-11e3-a284-0019bb2963f4.html

The Beaches Leader © May 15, 2014
It is unknown whether an aircraft carrier will be in Mayport Naval Station's future, but the Navy wants to keep the base vital and that means bringing ships here. Sean J. Stackley, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition), offered that assessment during a luncheon meeting Tuesday of the Jacksonville Area Ship Repair Association and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce - Beaches Division at the Casa Marina Hotel in Jacksonville Beach.

Tyndall AFB –

**New York Air National Guard Civil Engineers Heading to Florida for Specialized Training**


DVIDS © May 15, 2014

Thirty members of the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing's Civil Engineer Squadron will take part in the Air Force training program that prepares civil engineers and logisticians to establish forward operating bases around the world. The five-and-a-half day Silver Flag training program is run at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. The 107th Civil Engineer Squadron will be there from May 17 to May 23. Civil engineers are often the first Airmen on the ground setting up a contingency base. Silver Flag hones the skills air force support personnel need to support forward deployed Air Force units.

Other Items of Interest –

**Dempsey Wants to ‘Rebalance the Use of Military Power’**

By James Kitfield

At the top of the United States military’s vast, global bureaucracy sits the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the highest-ranking military officer in the land and the president’s senior military advisor. The chairman sits between the four-star service chiefs on one side, and the four-star combatant commanders on the other. The chiefs are responsible for developing, training and equipping the armed forces for the future…………

Opinion: Is There a Frigate in Your Future?

http://news.usni.org/2014/05/12/opinion-frigate-future

By: Adm. Robert Natter, USN (Retired)

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel’s recent direction to the Navy to develop proposals for a “capable and lethal small surface combatant, generally consistent with the capabilities of a frigate” could have a major affect on several Navy programs. The U.S. Navy has only 12 frigates in commission—four of them manned mainly by reservists. This compares with almost 100 frigates in commission when the Cold War ended in December 1991. Further, the surviving frigates no longer have critical anti-aircraft/anti-ship missiles.

Can a military base-closing round help Virginia?


In a surprising turnaround, a state commission charged with protecting Virginia's military assets wants to invite another federal base-closing round, something congressional leaders have opposed for several years running. The Commission on Military Installations and Defense Activities, which released its report Monday, said Virginia could stand to gain more than it loses by embracing BRAC, which stands for Base Realignment and Closure........
Four-Star Consolidations Coming

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © May 19, 2014

The Air Force will propose consolidation of its four-star general ranks, looking to reduce the dozen officers at that rank to nine or 10, with announcements possible within the next four months, a senior Air Staff official told Air Force Magazine. The service is in the process of briefing Congress on some of the proposals, which include making the commanders of Air Education and Training Command and US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa three-star billets. If approved, any changes would take effect after AETC Commander Gen. Robin Rand and USAFE-AFAFRICA Commander Gen. Frank Gorenc move on from those jobs........
May 27, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Meeting in Orlando** -- The next Task Force meeting will be Thursday, June 19, 2014 from 9 AM – 12:30 PM at the Doubletree Hotel, 60 South Ivanhoe Blvd., Orlando (Downtown). Because of the change of command scheduled for June 20, there will not be a tour of Team Orlando. On Wednesday evening June 18th, there will be a joint reception with Florida Defense Alliance members at the hotel from 5-7 PM. If you have not already done so, please let me or Marcy know if you will be attending the meeting and the reception. (Note: The Metro Orlando Defense Task Force will meet at the Doubletree beginning at 2 PM – soon after our meeting concludes.)

2. **Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) Meeting, June 18th** – This FDA semi-annual membership meeting will be held in Orlando – at the same Doubletree -- the day prior to the FDSTF meeting. This group contains approximately 70 representatives from state EDCs, chambers, and installations staff representatives. Their primary functions is ground up issue identification and vetting, and networking/best practices among the membership. TF members are invited to attend if convenient.

3. **Attachments** --

   - FDVA legislative summary
   - FDSTF legislative summary
   - FDA meeting agenda
   - FDSTF meeting agenda
   - Notes from TPG conference call

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**BRAC Dismissal Tops Long List of White House Objections to House Policy Bill**


Defense Communities 360 © May 19, 2014

Citing its rejection of the administration’s request for a new BRAC round along with a host of other cost-saving proposals, the White House on Monday threatened to veto the House version of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill. “The bill does not include meaningful compensation reforms and other cost saving measures, rejects many of the department’s proposed force structure changes, and restricts DOD’s ability to manage its weapon systems and infrastructure,” according to the statement of administration policy issued by the Office of Management and Budget……..

**Senate Panel Rebuffs Pentagon’s BRAC Request**


Defense Communities 360 © May 20, 2014

The Senate Armed Services’ Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee on Tuesday rejected the Obama administration’s request to hold a round of base closures in 2017 as it marked up its portion of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill. “The bill does not authorize a new BRAC round. Now is not the time to spend billions of upfront dollars on another BRAC round, especially as costs for the last one have dramatically exceeded expectations, and we’re still paying for the 2005 BRAC round,” said Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.), the panel’s ranking member……..

**Senators reject military base closures**
The Senate Armed Services Committee's 2015 defense policy bill will reject a new round of military base closures, according to leaders of the panel’s subcommittee on military readiness and management. “The readiness mark does not authorize another round [of closures],” said Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.), the subcommittee’s ranking member. “I know that the chair and I are on the exact same page on this.”

Smith Denied Opportunity to Offer BRAC Amendment

The House Rules Committee on Tuesday failed to accept an amendment to the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill from Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.) that would have approved a new BRAC round as well as reformed the base closure process. Smith, the ranking member on the House Armed Services Committee, brought up the provision for discussion when the full committee marked up the annual policy measure earlier this month, but withdrew the amendment before receiving a vote with the intention of offering it during floor debate for the bill.

DOD Budget Cuts –

White House threatens veto of defense bill

The White House is threatening a veto of the House version of a $601 billion defense bill over election-year moves to spare weapons systems and popular programs in the
face of limited budgets. In a statement on Monday, the Obama administration said that if the bill in its current form impedes the Pentagon from directing scarce resources to the military, senior advisers would recommend that the president veto the measure. The White House also complained about the bill's limits on the president's ability to transfer terror suspects being held at the U.S. facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba…….

**Hagel Stands by Austerity Measures in Budget**


Defense Communities 360 © May 20, 2014

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel will continue to defend the cost-cutting initiatives included in the department’s fiscal 2015 budget request as lawmakers debate the proposals over the coming months, Pentagon press secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby told reporters Tuesday. “[Hagel] stands firmly behind the tough decisions that were made in that budget proposal, decisions that he believes are necessary to preserve our military edge in a very difficult fiscal environment,” Kirby said…….

**OEA Offering Support for Communities Dealing with Reductions in Defense Spending**


Defense Communities 360 © May 20, 2014

Communities responding to the cancellation of a defense contract or a major reduction in DOD spending that results in a significant economic impact can apply to the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) for planning assistance, according to a May 20 Federal Register notice. To be eligible, state or local governments, or regional entities need to have experienced one of the following circumstances…….

**Military budget: Four ways US lawmakers are blocking Pentagon cost-cutting**


Christian Science Monitor © May 20, 2014
The Pentagon is under considerable pressure to cut spending, but while top defense officials and military analysts are in general agreement about where those cuts should be, Congress often balks. Lawmakers face pressure from lobbyists, after all, to keep expensive weapons programs going, particularly when they bring money and jobs to congressional districts. As the defense budget comes up for debate on Capitol Hill this week, the House Armed Services Committee has already voted to block many of the cost-saving measures proposed by the Pentagon……..

How Congress Is Hollowing Out the Military

Politico © May 21, 2014

By BRYAN CLARK and TODD HARRISON

While Jay Z and Jill Abramson were dominating the nation’s news coverage this week, members of Congress were quietly degrading — to little notice — the nation’s ability to fight a war. They weren’t doing it on purpose, of course, but at the rate they’re going, if there is ever another major conflict, America’s military forces might not be ready. By forcing the Department of Defense to maintain a larger force and, above all, more pet weapons systems than its budget can support, Congress is creating a military that is increasingly hollow, unfocused and unable to respond to the very real dangers facing the United States from Europe to East Asia…….

House defense bill ignores requested Pentagon cuts
http://www.militarytimes.com/article/20140522/NEWS05/305220055/House-defense-bill-ignores-requested-Pentagon-cuts
Military Times © May 22, 2014

By Leo Shane III

The House overwhelmingly passed its version of the 2015 defense annual authorization bill Thursday, rejecting Pentagon plans for benefits reductions, base closures and a host of program cuts all designed to rein in military spending. The bill would authorize total defense spending of about $600 billion next year — $521.3 billion in the national security base budget and $79.4 billion more for overseas operations — but has been criticized by both lawmakers and Pentagon planners as too small. That’s due to spending caps imposed by Congress earlier this year, and looming sequestration limits for future defense budgets…….
Personnel Costs Divide Senate, House Defense Bills


Defense One © May 23, 2014

By Kellie Lunney

A Senate panel approved legislation on Thursday that provides a smaller pay raise for military service members than the one the House agreed to. The Senate Armed Services Committee reported out its fiscal 2015 Defense authorization bill, which includes a 1 percent pay boost for troops next year – the same amount that President Obama has recommended. Also on Thursday, the House passed its version of the legislation, which tacitly supports a 1.8 percent across-the-board salary hike………..

House Passes Troop Pay Raise, Rejects TRICARE Reform and BRAC


Defense One © May 22, 2014

By Kellie Lunney

The House passed legislation Thursday that tacitly approves a 1.8 percent pay raise for military service members next year, and includes a number of other pay, benefits and workforce provisions. The chamber approved the fiscal 2015 National Defense Authorization Act by a vote of 325-98 before the start of the Memorial Day holiday weekend. The 1.8 percent pay bump for troops is in line with the automatic fiscal 2015 cost-of-living adjustment scheduled for the military; there is not an explicit provision regarding a pay raise in the legislation, but by staying silent, lawmakers are supporting the amount that would automatically take place under the law…….
Next-Gen UAVs: Armed, Modular and Smaller

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140519/DEFREG02/305190010/Next-Gen-UAVs-Armed-Modular-Smaller

Defense News © May 19, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

Walk around the show floor at the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) annual conference, and you can see unmanned systems — or drones, if you want to anger the attendees — of all shapes and sizes, for all mission sets. There’s no paucity of options for a discerning buyer, whether one wants a small, hand-launched device a soldier can carry in a backpack or a behemoth system capable of dropping a pinpointed missile from thousands of feet above………..

Why Elon Musk, others should build rocket engines in C. Fla.

http://www.bizjournals.com/orlando/blog/2014/05/why-elon-musk-others-should-build-rockets-engines.html

Orlando Business Journal © May 19, 2014

By Chris Thompson

The next frontier in Central Florida's space industry could be manufacturing rockets here. Since Russia doesn't want to play nice with NASA and the U.S.' space goals, it may be time to look elsewhere for help — specifically, maybe SpaceX founder Elon Musk or one of his other competitors in the U.S. commercial space industry. The politics behind the Russia/U.S. space situation can be a mess, but what is known right now is Russia doesn't want to participate in the International Space Station anymore — which leaves U.S. astronauts without a ride into orbit — and they are reportedly threatening to ban exporting Russian-made RL-180 rockets to the U.S…..

Space Industry Sees Opportunities, Possible Consolidation

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140520/DEFREG02/305200057/Space-Industry-Sees-Opportunities-Possible-Consolidation
By AARON MEHTA

In the defense industry’s ideal world, budget dollars would flow like Niagara Falls — quick and heavy. That’s obviously not the case, but the transition from the mid-2000s financial waterfall to a relative trickle in the post-sequestration era has the silver lining of forced innovation, according to a panel of top space CEOs who spoke Tuesday at the National Space Symposium………..

Team Orlando –

**Team Orlando Members Visit and Learn at FLETC Headquarters**


By Dolly Rairigh Glass

Just last week, on the heels of the 10-year anniversary celebration of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center’s partnership with Team Orlando, members of the Team Orlando Board of Directors (BOD) visited FLETC’s home site in Glynco, Ga., giving them the opportunity to meet some of the additional members of the FLETC team, as well as witness the amazing training systems resulting from the Team Orlando-FLETC partnership. The FLETC serves as an interagency law enforcement training organization for more than 90 federal agencies or Partner Organizations, and its mission is to “train those who protect our homeland.” Glynco is the headquarters facility for the FLETC, and is situated on 1,600 acres in southeast Georgia with modern conventional facilities such as classrooms, dormitories, and administrative and logistical support structures………..

MacDill AFB –
Conference key for Socom suppliers

http://tbo.com/list/military-news/conference-key-for-socom-suppliers-20140519/

Tampa Tribune © May 19, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

For commandos who rely on the latest equipment and technology delivered at the speed of special operations, and for a defense industry feeling the sting of the Pentagon budget axe, this week’s Special Operations Forces Industry Conference, being held at the Tampa Convention Center, is widely seen as the most important event of the year. Just how huge is the four-day conference, which will bring about 4,000 attendees to Tampa and more than 300 companies showcasing their wares in the convention center’s exhibition hall?............

Military training exercise continues today in downtown Tampa


Tampa Tribune © May 21, 2014

Military helicopters will be buzzing over downtown Tampa again today, and guns will be firing as the Special Operations Forces Industry Conference continues. The activity is part of an international training exercise at the Tampa Convention Center this afternoon. Folks around downtown Tampa can gather along Bayshore Boulevard to see the training, which begins at 1:30 p.m. It will feature a six-man SEAL team, four snipers on the roof of Tampa General Hospital, six-man teams inside the helos, a 14-man team converging on the “enemy encampment” along Harbour Island Boulevard by ground mobility vehicle and another 14-man team infiltrating via water on rigid-hull inflatable boat…….

House defense bill benefits MacDill


Tampa Tribune © May 22, 2014
By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

A 1.8 percent pay increase for service members, an increase in funding and authorities for U.S. Special Operations Command, fixing black mold problems at MacDill Air Force Base and money for the next round of replacements for the aging KC-135 refueling tanker jets are among provisions in the next defense spending act passed by the House of Representatives, according to U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor. The bill also addresses the issue of sexual assaults in the military.

Eglin AFB –

Guard and Reserve can now rent Eglin housing


Northwest Florida Daily News © May 8, 2014

By TECH. SGT. SAMUEL KING JR. / 919th Special Operations Wing public affairs

Single service members, National Guard and Reservists can now rent base housing on base. As part of a new policy by Corvias Military Living, the military housing privatization contractor, homes located here can be rented by single active duty, National Guard and Reservists. Married guardsmen and reservists can also rent the new homes. There are a variety of different homes and locations to choose from, according to Corvias.

Eglin Environmental named best in DOD


Northwest Florida Daily News © May 22, 2014

Eglin Air Force Base is the winner of the 2014 Secretary of Defense Environmental Award for Natural Resources Conservation, the Department of Defense announced. Eglin’s Natural Resources Team won the Natural Resources Conservation,
Fuels flight key to mission success

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/eglin/fuels-flight-key-to-mission-success-1.323422

Northwest Florida Daily News © May 23, 2014

By LOIS WALSH

When the Base Realignment and Closure Committee designated Eglin as the home of the first F-35 Lightning II, it gave the base more than aircraft. Before the first plane arrived, millions of dollars went into upgrading an aging infrastructure on the 33rd Fighter Wing side of the base. From those upgrades came a $19 million state-of-the-art foundation that houses the 96th Logistics Readiness Squadron’s Fuels Flight. The flight was recently recognized by the American Petroleum Institute as the top fuels flight in Air Force Materiel Command. ..........

NS Mayport –

USS New York Wins Battleship Fund Award


Mayport Mirror © May 21, 2014

By MC2 Cyrus Roson

The amphibious transport dock ship USS New York received the prestigious Marjorie Sterrett Battleship Fund Award for superior performance and battle efficiency among amphibious ships in U.S. Atlantic Fleet. The award is presented annually by the Chief of Naval Operations to one ship in the Atlantic Fleet and one in the Pacific Fleet based on overall readiness. New York's crew was cited for their indomitable spirit, superior performance and consistently high standards of readiness. “Our crew is honored to receive this prestigious award........
USS Carney returns to Mayport after 7 and half months deployment


First Coast News © May 25, 2014

By Mike Lyons,

It was a very happy day for hundreds of wives, children, moms, dads, and siblings Sunday when the USS Carney returned home from an overseas deployment. It was a sweet sight to see the USS CARNEY with more than 300 sailors aboard return to Mayport after a seven and half month deployment overseas. "I get my husband back today, It has been seven really long months," said Michelle Montgomery, holding back tears……………

Other Items of Interest –

Adversaries Outpace US In Cyber War; Acquisition Still Too Slow

http://breakingdefense.com/2014/05/adversaries-outpace-us-in-cyber-war-acquisition-still-too-slow/

Breaking Defense © May 20, 2014

By COLIN CLARK

The United States invented the Internet, but we may not rule it any more. “We are certainly behind right now. We are chasing our adversary, for sure,” one of the Air Force’s top cyber warriors, Col. Dean Hullings, told an audience of about 350 here at the National Space Symposium’s one-day cyber event. Hullings, chief of Air Force Space Command’s cyber superiority division, said the US is behind countries he declined to name when I asked him later
(OK, we all know it’s China and Russia and Israel and…) both in defense and in offense. This may be part of the reason recently retired Gen. Keith Alexander, former head of the National Security Agency and Cyber Command, poured so much money and passion into offensive cyber capabilities……..

The Army to Get 90MW of Solar for Less Than the ‘Avoided Cost’ of Fossil Fuels

http://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/georgia-power-to-build-solar-for-the-u.s.-army-at-below-the-cost-of-other-s

Green Tech Media © May 19, 2014

By Herman K. Trabish

Georgia Power, the state’s biggest electricity supplier, is planning to build three 30-megawatt PV solar installations for the U.S. Army for a remarkably low cost. The Army’s Georgia 3x30 initiative will build installations at Fort Stewart, Fort Gordon and Fort Benning. The forts will supply land for the arrays and distribution lines. The Army will be the offtaker through an existing contract with Georgia Power……..

Treat Veterans With Respect, Not Pity


Wall Street Journal © May 23, 2014

By Phil Klay

A couple of years ago, I spoke at a storytelling competition about some Marines I'd known during our deployment in Iraq and my feelings on getting out of the Corps. After I left the stage, an older woman in the crowd came up to me and, without asking, started rubbing my back. Startled, I looked over at her. "It was very brave of you to tell that
story," she said. "Oh, thank you," I said, a little confused by what was happening. "I'm OK." .............
June 9, 2014 – FDTSF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Meeting Next Week in Orlando** -- The next Task Force meeting will be Thursday, June 19, 2014 from 9 AM – 12:30 PM at the Doubletree Hotel, 60 South Ivanhoe Blvd., Orlando (Downtown). Because of the change of command scheduled for June 20, there will not be a tour of Team Orlando. On Wednesday evening June 18th, there will be a joint reception with Florida Defense Alliance members at the hotel from 5-7 PM. Orlando’s Mayor, Mayor Jacobs will be attending this reception. **If you have not already done so, please let me or Marcy know if you will be attending the meeting and the reception.** (Note: The Metro Orlando Defense Task Force will meet at the Doubletree beginning at 2 PM – soon after our meeting concludes.)

2. **Meeting Books for Members** – Meeting books will be mailed out to members on Friday, June 13th.

3. **Call In Number for Public Meeting** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

4. **Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) Meeting, June 18th** – This FDA semi-annual membership meeting will be held in Orlando – at the same Doubletree -- the day prior to the FDSTF meeting. This group contains approximately 70 representatives from state EDCs, chambers, and installations staff representatives. Their primary functions is ground up issue identification and vetting, and networking/best practices among the membership. TF members are invited to attend if convenient.

5. **Attachments** --

   - FDSTF meeting agenda
   - Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) meeting agenda
   - Letter to Governor Scott from SECDEF
   - Schedule of Governor’s Veterans Award Ceremonies

Regards, BG.
Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**BRAC Not Right around the Corner, House Staffer Says**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/brac-not-right-around-the-corner-house-staffer-says/#

Defense Communities 360 © June 8, 2014

Citing unanswered questions about the level of surplus DOD infrastructure and the extent to which the military’s force structure will come down, if at all, a staff member for the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) expressed doubt Friday that Congress would approve a new round of base closures in the near term. The Pentagon has requested permission each of the past three years to conduct a BRAC round so it can shed some of its estimated 24 percent excess capacity………………

**BRAC Not out of the Question in Future, Wittman Says**


Defense Communities 360 © June 5, 2014
The House Armed Services Committee’s rejection over the past three years of the Pentagon’s request for additional base closures may not be permanent, according to the chair of the panel’s readiness subcommittee. “We’re not saying never do a BRAC,” Rep. Rob Wittman (R-Va.) said Wednesday during the keynote lunch at the Defense Communities National Summit. But DOD should wait to conduct a new round until it first has taken a look at its long-term strategic and force structure needs.

**BRAC ‘Conversation Has Begun,’ Conger Tells Summit**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/brac-conversation-has-begun-conger-tells-summit/

Defense Communities 360 © June 4, 2014

Despite painting a bleak future for military construction and facilities sustainment funding, the Pentagon’s top installations official on Wednesday expressed some optimism regarding the timeline for a new base closure round. Congress is on a course to dismiss the Obama administration’s BRAC request for a third straight year, but some indications have emerged that lawmakers’ rejection can eventually be overcome.

**Need for Federal Strategy to Address Excess Defense Infrastructure Is Urgent, ADC Says**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/need-for-federal-strategy-to-address-excess-defense-infrastructure-is-urgent-adc-says/

Defense Communities 360 © June 4, 2014

Congress needs to grant the Defense Department sufficient authority to deal with its surplus of infrastructure, otherwise DOD will be forced to hollow out many of its installations and the economies of affected defense communities will suffer, according to a policy statement approved by ADC’s board of directors this week. ADC issued the policy statement as the Pentagon and Congress remain in a years-long stalemate over the need for a series of cost-saving reforms even as the defense budget is subject to stringent spending caps and the military draws down from 12-plus years of war.

**DOD Budget Cuts –**
Lawmakers: Sequestration, End of Arms Buys Could Weaken US Industrial Base

By JOHN T. BENNETT
US House members are worried about the impact of sequestration cuts and the scheduled end of some major weapon buys, warning the dual hit could damage the defense industrial base. The lower chamber's version of the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), passed May 22, contains a provision that raises concerns that the across-the-board defense budget cuts “will reduce procurement spending over the next several years, leaving some sectors of the national technical and industrial base with a limited number of viable suppliers,” states a report accompanying the legislation.

Sen. Durbin: Early July Is 'Goal' for Defense Spending Bill

By JOHN T. BENNETT
US Senate appropriators are aiming to take up their 2015 Pentagon spending measure just after Independence Day, says Sen. Richard Durbin, D-Ill. “First week of July,” the Senate Appropriations Defense subcommittee chairman said as he ducked into an elevator near the Senate chamber. “That's the goal.”

Wall Street Still Unclear on When Defense Spending Will Hit Bottom

Wall Street still unclear on when defense spending will hit bottom
Defense industry analysts have been perplexed in recent months by higher than expected outlays in the "modernization" portion of the military budget that funds research, development and procurement of weapon systems. As of April, modernization outlays were running 17 percent below the high-water mark reached in 2010, but almost 10 percent above what the Pentagon projected to spend in fiscal year 2014 based on its budget authority. Total modernization spending for the year is down about 3 percent, a fraction of the 18.5 percent drop projected by the Defense Department.

House Panel Deals US Defense Sector Another Winning Hand


Defense News © June 1, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The US defense sector is having a remarkable year on Capitol Hill. In fact, it is batting 1.000 so far, with three of four congressional defense panels protecting weapon programs and adding funds to buy platforms the military didn’t even request. Despite months of dire warnings and gloomy rhetoric about the ramifications of new rounds of across-the-board cuts, the House Appropriations Committee Defense (HAC-D) subcommittee on May 30 approved a 2015 Pentagon spending bill that would give the Defense Department $570.4 billion. It would add funds for fighter jets, electronic-attack planes and maintain 11 aircraft carriers.

Team Orlando –

Army cancels big program that could have meant new business for Orlando contractors


Business Week © June 4, 2014
The Army's Orlando simulation and training agency unexpectedly killed a contracting program this week that could have been worth billions, stunning the region's defense industry, which had mobilized to bid on the lucrative new business. Citing a need "to reassess its requirements portfolio," the Army training agency canceled its plan to award a large series of contracts worth billions of dollars over the next decade to develop new coursework and other training services for the armed forces.

Nelson wants answers on why Army canceled big training program

http://www.orlandosentinel.com/business/os-army-simulation-nelson-20140606,0,914172.story

Orlando Sentinel © June 6, 2014

By Richard Burnett, Orlando Sentinel

U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson said Friday he has asked military brass in Washington for a briefing on why the Army's Orlando training and simulation agency recently killed a multibillion-dollar program that offered the potential of lucrative work for Central Florida contractors. Nelson, a senior member of the Senate Armed Forces Committee, said he was as blindsided as local defense contractors were by the Army agency's cancellation of the TEACH program, a series of education-related training contracts expected to be worth more than $5 billion over 10 years.

Orange County, Simulation Leaders Discuss Orlando’s Future Workforce

http://www.teamorlando.org/orange-county-simulation-leaders-discuss-orlandos-future-workforce/

Team Orlando © June 2014

By Terri M. Bernhardt

Orange County Public Schools Career and Technical Education Department, in partnership with the Orange County Library Melrose Center, hosted a Simulation Summit to bring together the simulation community, and other local organizations. The
purpose was to consider, identify, and embrace more opportunities for Orange County youth through quality education and training. Lt. Gen. (ret) Tom Baptiste, President, National Center for Simulation, delivered the keynote address and spoke about the origins of simulation in Orlando and where it is today……..

MacDill AFB –

Jolly: Black Hawks to MacDill from St. Pete a 'win-win'


Tampa Tribune © June 2, 2014
By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

At first, U.S. Rep. David Jolly was prepared to fight the move of 23 Black Hawk helicopters from St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport to MacDill Air Force Base. Then he learned to stop worrying and love the scenario. That's because, working with the head of U.S. Army Reserve, Jolly has ensured there will be good economic news for both sides of the bay even at a time of dwindling defense dollars. MacDill will get the helicopters, the Pinellas airport will get Army Reserve fixed-wing aircraft and the attending crew and staff, and those helicopter crews and support personnel who were living in his district likely won't need to move……..

Eglin AFB –

Eglin takes delivery of final F-35A aircraft

Pensacola News-Journal © June 7, 2014
By Rod Duren

The 58th Fighter Squadron at Eglin became the Air Force's first complete F-35A Joint Strike Fighter squadron after welcoming the 26th and final F-35A on May 28. The arrival of the last Air Force variant scheduled to be stationed at the 33rd Fighter Wing squadron marked a shift in priorities for the 58th and its aircraft maintenance unit. "We've been in a growth mindset for the last few years, but we're more excited to dial-in all of our attention to training our team," said Fighter Squadron commander Lt. Col. Matt Renbarger via the base website……..
Eglin squadron deactivating as mission moves to Texas

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/top-story

Northwest Florida Daily News © May 28, 2014

By LOIS WALSH

The 96th Ground Combat Training Squadron will deactivate June 6 as the training mission moves to Fort Bliss, Texas. Currently, Security Forces conduct training at six U.S. locations, including Eglin Air Force Base. All will consolidate at Fort Bliss this year with the exception of Camp Guernsey, which specializes in security forces nuclear training. “The consolidation is not a reaction to recent budget cuts,” said Maj. James Habeck, GCTS commander. “They want to put it all under one roof.”

Final Hearing Regarding Military Training In Blackwater River State Forest


WUWF © June 5, 2014

BY SANDRA AVERHART

The Air Force is holding a series of public hearings this week to provide information and receive public comment regarding plans for additional military training in the Blackwater River and Tate’s Hell State Forests in Northwest Florida. The final hearing will be held this Thursday evening (June 6) at the Santa Rosa County Recreational Facility in Bagdad.


http://breakingdefense.com/2014/06/a-gods-eye-view-of-the-battlefield-gen-hostage-on-the-f-35/

Breaking Defense © June 6, 2014

By COLIN CLARK
If you want to stop a conversation about the F-35 with a military officer or industry expert, then just start talking about its cyber or electronic warfare capabilities. These are the capabilities that most excite the experts I’ve spoken with because they distinguish the F-35 from previous fighters, giving it what may be unprecedented abilities to confuse the enemy, attack him in new ways through electronics (think Stuxnet), and generally add enormous breadth to what we might call the plane’s conventional strike capabilities.

NS Mayport –

**USS Halyburton Returns to Mayport**

[http://navaltoday.com/2014/06/05/uss-halyburton-returns-to-mayport/](http://navaltoday.com/2014/06/05/uss-halyburton-returns-to-mayport/)

NavalToday.com © June 5, 2014

Deployed since Jan. 15, the officers and crew of Halyburton, in conjunction with Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light (HSL) 46 and U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement detachments, disrupted nine shipments of cocaine, totaling 1899 kilograms, in the Caribbean Sea off the coast of Central and South America as part of Operation Martillo. On Feb. 6, Halyburton assumed the role of search and rescue on-scene commander during the rescue of six Panamanians after a Panamanian navy helicopter crash-landed while monitoring an area of dense jungle terrain near where drug smugglers had beached their vessel.

**Navy's littoral ships will get $14M home at Mayport**


By Timothy Gibbons

Despite controversy over the Navy’s newest class of warships, the Pentagon is moving ahead with building them a home. Leebcor Services LLC of Williamsburg, Virginia, has been given a
$13.8 million task order to build a littoral combat ship logistics support facility at Naval Station Mayport……

Naval Air Station Pensacola –

The Emergency Room at Naval Hospital Pensacola is being converted into an Urgent Care Center.


WEAR-TV © May 30, 2014

Starting June 1st, the Urgent Care Center will be open seven days a week from 10 am - 9 pm for those who have Tricare. The switch from an ER to an Urgent Care Center comes as a way to reduce costs and better use resources. Capt. Maureen Padden-Commanding Officer, NHP "This has been a relatively low volume emergency room and actually a lot of the patients we've seen in the emergency room here in Pensacola over the years haven't had the requirements for an emergency room. Much has been at the level of an Urgent Care Center."……

NAS Whiting Field –

Military appreciated with massive picnic


Santa Rosa Press Gazette © May 23, 2014

By AARON LITTLE|SANTA ROSA PRESS GAZETTE

NAS Whiting Field hosted Military Appreciation Day with grilled hamburgers , the band Crosstown performing, and activities and jumping castles for the kids. Paul Kim, crime prevention coordinator with the Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office flipped burgers over a flame, he said, along with several detention officers. This was no small event. Multiple grills cooked enough burgers and hotdogs to feed an army. Food service lines took up the entire pavilion while families ate at picnic tables under a few large tents
Helo crashes in Florida training; injuries minor


Navy Times © June 5, 2014

A flight instructor and student sustained minor injuries Thursday morning after their helicopter crashed during a training flight in the Florida panhandle, a Navy spokeswoman said. The Marine Corps captain and Navy ensign trainee collided with trees when their TH-57 Sea Ranger helicopter went down in Outlying Landing Field Spencer at Naval Air Station Whiting Field in Pace, Florida, Naval Air Training Command spokeswoman Lt. Brynn Olson told Navy Times………

NAS Key West –

Beachgoers blast Navy project
http://keysnews.com/node/55987

Keys News.com © June 9, 2014

BY ADAM LINHARDT

In the days before the modern Overseas Highway, old State Road 4A followed the southern shoreline of Geiger Key to Boca Chica Key, where it eventually crossed over to Stock Island and followed what is now Maloney and McDonald avenues before linking back up with the old Overseas Railway route to Key West. The old bridge linking Boca Chica Key and Stock Island is no more, but people are still drawn to Boca Chica Beach along the old State Road 4A (now called Boca Chica Road) where it's usually free of tourist mobs. ………

Arrival of new fighter jet at least 4 years away
http://keysnews.com/node/55957

KeysNews.com © June 9, 2014

BY ADAM LINHARDT
The stealthy and controversial F-35C fighter jet will replace the F/A-18 Super Hornets commonly seen buzzing over Boca Chica Field, but the question is when. Their arrival appears to be at least four years away, but that figure is in no way set in stone. Navy leadership announced in March that it was cutting its order for the new jets nearly in half over the next five years, starting in the fiscal year 2015, due to budget concerns surrounding the jet, which has been plagued by cost overruns, delays and development problems.

Space Coast –

U.S. Air Force To Close Satellite Processing Facilities at Launch Sites


Space News © June 5, 2014

By Mike Gruss

Lockheed Martin’s recently announced acquisition of Astrotech Space Operations, which specializes in the prelaunch processing of satellites, comes less than two months after the U.S. Air Force said it plans to shut down its own processing facilities by the end of 2016. In a report given to congressional defense committees in April, the service said it “plans to shut down its organic processing capability and utilize commercial payload processing facilities.” The decision was made by Gen. William Shelton, commander of Air Force Space Command, according to the report, dubbed “Satellite Payload Processing Plan.”

Patrick AFB --

Rent increases at Patrick AFB housing upset some


Florida Today © June 7, 2014
By R. Norman Moody, FLORIDA TODAY
When rent went up at Patrick Air Force Base Family Housing, some retirees complained and a few moved out. But two-bedroom units — which saw the biggest rent increase — were quickly snapped up, leaving others on a waiting list. "There are some who think that rent should never go up," said Sophia Reeves, community director for Patrick Family Housing, the local subsidiary of Hunt, a company that manages some 69,000 privatized housing units for the Defense Department.

Defense Contractors –

**Defense Contractors Expect Another ‘War Budget’ Blowout**


Wall Street Journal © June 5, 2014

The Pentagon’s so-called war budget will likely come in higher than the $30 billion proposed by defense planners for fiscal 2016 even as the drawdown in Afghanistan continues, a senior executive at L-3 Communications Holdings said Thursday. Continuing U.S. operations abroad—including the 9,800 troops due to remain in Afghanistan after the end of this year—and contracts related to special operations forces are expected to generate outlays from the Overseas Contingency Operations, or OCO, budget, a supplement to core Pentagon spending that peaked at $162 billion in 2010.

**BAE Systems Awarded USS Carney Repair Contract Modification**


Marinelink.com © June 4, 2014

By George Backwell

The US Department of Defense informs that a US$9,270,465 Navy contract modification has been awarded to BAE Systems Mayport, Jacksonville, Florida, for ship repairs, hull, machinery, electrical, electronics, ship alterations, and piping alteration as required on USS Carney (DDG-64). The primary focus of this repair package is to accomplish structural repairs and habitability upgrades. Work will be performed in Jacksonville, Florida, and is expected to be completed by September 2014.
Other Items of Interest –

More US base consolidations on the way in Europe

Stars and Stripes © June 3, 2014

Recommendations for more base closures and consolidations in Europe will be submitted to Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel in a matter of weeks as part of an ongoing effort to shed unneeded facilities on the Continent, according to the Defense Department. Last month, the Pentagon announced it will close 21 outdated facilities in Europe — mainly housing and recreation complexes — for an annual savings of $60 million. But that is just the start, with the next round of closures expected to take aim at actual military installations as part of the European Infrastructure Consolidation review — a “BRAC-like” analysis launched more than a year ago.........
June 16, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Meeting This Week in Orlando** -- The next Task Force meeting will be Thursday, June 19, 2014 from 9 AM – 12:30 PM at the Doubletree Hotel, 60 South Ivanhoe Blvd., Orlando (Downtown). Because of the change of command scheduled for June 20, there will not be a tour of Team Orlando. On Wednesday evening June 18th, there will be a joint reception with Florida Defense Alliance members at the hotel from 5-7 PM. Orange County Mayor, Mayor Jacobs will be attending this reception.

2. **Call In Number for Public Meeting** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) Meeting, June 18th** – This FDA semi-annual membership meeting will be held in Orlando – at the same Doubletree -- the day prior to the FDSTF meeting. This group contains approximately 70 representatives from state EDCs, chambers, and installations staff representatives. Their primary functions is ground up issue identification and vetting, and networking/best practices among the membership. TF members are invited to attend if convenient.

4. **Attachments** --
   - FDSTF meeting agenda
   - Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) meeting agenda

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**Congress Likely to Resist Attempts to Close Bases outside of BRAC, House Staffer Says**


Defense Communities 360 © June 9, 2014

Congress most likely would oppose an attempt by the Pentagon to use its authority to close an installation outside of a BRAC round, a staff member for the House Armed Services Committee said last week at the Defense Communities National Summit. Section 2687 requires the defense secretary to give Congress 60 days to review proposed actions meeting certain thresholds…….

DOD Budget Cuts –

**House Appropriators Easily Kill Measure to Save A-10 Fleet**


Defense News © June 10, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

US House appropriators on Tuesday killed an amendment that would have kept alive the Air Force’s A-10 fleet, becoming the first defense panel to endorse the service’s cost-cutting plan. The House Appropriations Committee broke with the House and Senate Armed Services committees, which last month used budgetary cuts from elsewhere in the Pentagon’s budget to keep the A-10s flying for one more year…..
House Panel Approves Massive Pentagon Spending Bill


Defense News © June 10, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

A US House panel on Tuesday approved $570 billion in Pentagon spending for 2015, but became the first committee to support retiring the A-10 fleet. After several hours of debating and voting on amendments, the House Appropriations Committee easily approved a $491 billion defense appropriations bill and a separate $79.4 billion overseas contingency operations (OCO), or war funding, section……..

Stunned By Cantor’s Loss, HASC Leaders Will Still Battle Sequestration: Rep. Rogers


Breaking Defense © June 11, 2014

By COLIN CLARK

House Majority Leader Eric Cantor isn’t physically absent from here yet, but he is close to politically dead after last night’s stunning political defeat by a little known Tea Party supporter from the southern Virginia constituency. I spoke to half a dozen close watchers of defense politics this morning and all but one of them — a particularly devout Republican — agreed that Cantor fell because he had lost touch with his constituents. This wasn’t about the Tea Party, most of them said, though several thought it may be an indicator of a coming right-wing shift in the November elections……..
Sen. Corker Sees Chance for Sequester-Killing 'Grand Bargain' Next Year


Defense News © June 12, 2014
By JOHN T. BENNETT

Should the GOP win control of the US Senate, a window will open for lawmakers and the Obama White House to take one more shot at a sequester-killing fiscal deal, a key Senate Republican tells CongressWatch. Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., was involved in every effort to strike a “grand bargain” over the last few years. And despite a frustrating end to talks last September, Corker sees an opportunity early next year, when a new Congress is seated...........

Consideration of Milcon Spending Bill Pushed Back in Senate


Defense Communities 360 © June 12, 2014

The fiscal 2015 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs spending measure will not be among the first appropriations bills that go to the Senate floor, the chamber’s Appropriations Committee announced this week. Instead, a “minibus” of three other spending bills — Commerce, Justice and Science; Transportation-HUD; and Agriculture — will go to the Senate floor next week, delaying debate of the milcon bill until later in June or July, reported CQ. The House passed its milcon spending bill, H.R. 4486, on April 30...........
**CentCom vastly overstaffed**

http://www.voltairenet.org/article184203.html

Voltairenet© June 11, 2014

According to a report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Central Command has expanded considerably during the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. It should significantly reduce its staff in keeping with the new U.S. budgetary rules. This chart shows the progression of permanent staff, broken down by civilians and military...........

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**Eglin AFB –**

**VA audit adds Eglin Air Force Base to investigation along with Mobile and Biloxi**


WEAR TV © June 10, 2014

An internal audit by the Department of Veteran’s Affairs shows Eglin Air Force Base is now under investigation.Eglin and three other clinics in Florida are being looked into for allegedly manipulating appointment schedules to hide long wait times. The audit also found there are more than 8500 new patients in Florida who have been waiting three months or longer for an appointment at a health facility. The audit shows more than five thousand veterans who enrolled in VA health care over the past ten years have never had appointments........

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**UPDATE 1-Pentagon sees progress on F-35 jet; software still a concern**

http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/06/12/lockheed-martin-fighter-idINL2N0OT1US20140612
WASHINGTON, June 12 - Lockheed Martin Corp's F-35 fighter jet is making steady progress but needs further work to accelerate software development, increase reliability and lower the cost of operating and maintaining the new warplanes, the Pentagon's chief weapons buyer said on Thursday. Frank Kendall, undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, told reporters the Pentagon was looking at a series of measures, including incentives tied to future payments and investments in process improvements, to cut the cost of building, operating and maintaining the planes.

**Ask the Maintainers**

http://www.airforcemag.com/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Air Force Magazine © June 16, 2014

Senior F-35 program leaders met at Eglin AFB, Fla., last week in part to see training operations with the strike fighter and to have a chance to talk to its pilots and maintainers. The maintainers have offered many good suggestions, Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan, F-35 program executive officer, told reporters on a teleconference on June 12 following those meetings. It’s been determined that oil needs to be checked less frequently on the F-35, and maintainers have asked for permission to overrule the computerized aircraft health monitoring system if they know the jet is OK, but the system is being overly conservative. Consequently, turn time between a landing and the next takeoff has dropped from four-and-a-half hours last year to three hours this year, and "we hope to bring it down more," said Bogdan.

**NS Mayport –**

**Contract awarded for $13.8 million Mayport support facility**
The beleaguered littoral combat ship program is pushing ahead at Mayport Naval Station, slated to be the East-Coast hub for the ships. Leebcor Services, LCC, of Williamsburg, Va., was awarded a $13.8 million contract to construct the logistics support facility for the littoral combat ship squadron and other organizations that will support it. The facility will also serve as headquarters for the squadron’s administration and extra crews………

NSA Panama City –

**Audit flags area VA clinics**

http://www.newsherald.com/military/audit-more-than-8-500-awaiting-initial-va-visits-in-florida-1.330527

News Herald © June 9, 2014

By WENDY VICTORA

A nationwide audit of the Veterans Administration health care system flagged four of the five clinics in the Gulf Coast Veterans Healthcare Systems as needing further investigation for “suspected willful misconduct.” The Gulf Coast VA includes the Panama City Outpatient Clinic at the Navy base in Panama City Beach, as well as centers in Pensacola, Eglin Air Force Base, Mobile and Biloxi. All but the Panama City Beach facility were flagged........

**Navy Uses 3D Modeling, Laser Scanning to Develop Cougar Family of Vehicles for Marines**

http://www.seapowermagazine.org/stories/20140611-3d.html

Seapower Magazine © June 11, 2014

By DAN BROADSTREET
Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division (NSWC PCD) Cougar 3D Project Engineer Randy Whitehead showcased a 3D model of the Mine Resistant Ambush-Protected (MRAP) Cougar May 15 to U.S. Marine Corps’ Program Executive Office — Land Systems MRAP Family of Vehicles (FoV) Lead Systems Engineer Brent Ingraham. Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City (NSWC PCD) stood up an Expeditionary 3D Modeling and Laser Scanning Center in early 2014 to support warfare systems required by joint forces and the Department of the Navy for expeditionary maneuver warfare......

Scientist honored at Pentagon

http://www.newsherald.com/military/scientist-honored-at-pentagon-1.332345

News-Herald © June 12, 2014

A Panama City scientist was honored as a 2013 Top Scientist of the Year in a memo signed by the assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisitions. James Prater, a Panama City native, is a project manager of the Advanced Acoustic Sensor Program at the Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division, leading efforts to develop algorithms used in the Small Synthetic Aperture Minehunter family of systems

Florida National Guard –

SecDef Hagel Defends Guard Cuts To Governors


Breaking Defense © June 11, 2014
By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

In the emotionally charged debate over the Army National Guard, the “don’t cut our Guard!” side has been much louder than the pro-cuts camp. That’s why it’s interesting to read this pretty low-key letter from Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel defending the cuts. The simple fact it’s Hagel’s signature on the letter speaks to the administration’s desire to de-escalate, because the people he’s writing to had wanted an answer from the president. Dated June 2nd, Hagel’s letter is the administration’s public — but unpublicized response — to a high-profile appeal signed by all 50 state governors and addressed directly to Barrack Obama.

Other Items of Interest –

Cantor’s Stunning Defeat Removes 'Only Leader' on Defense in GOP's Top Ranks


Defense News © June 11, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

US House Majority Leader Rep. Eric Cantor’s stunning primary defeat is a huge blow to the US defense sector, and could allow an up-and-coming GOP deficit hawk to replace Cantor, or even become House speaker, sources say. Cantor announced he would resign as House majority leader July 31, according to the Washington Post.

Authorization Bills Call for Similar Reviews of Army Size, Force Structure

Independent commissions that would be created under the House and Senate versions of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill to assess the proper end strength of the Army and mix between its active and reserve components would be largely similar. Support for creating a commission to study the Army’s future structure gained momentum on Capitol Hill after the service released its plan earlier this year to trim the size of the National Guard below 350,000 soldiers and shift its fleet of 192 AH-64 Apache attack helicopters to the active component.

Appropriators Envision Larger Role for Energy Conservation Program

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/appropriators-envision-larger-role-for-energy-conservation-program/#

DOD’s Energy Conservation Investment Program (ECIP) should shift from an initiative focused on small, rapid-payback projects to one that funds larger energy security and renewable energy projects, according to the report from the Senate Appropriations Committee accompanying the fiscal 2015 military construction and veterans affairs spending bill. “The committee urges DOD and the services to compete projects that will produce significant ‘game-changing’ improvements to reduce carbon emissions, energy consumption and energy costs, as well as projects to enhance installation energy security,” the report states.
June 23, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Change in Date and Location for July Task Force Meeting** -- The Chairman has approved changing the date and location for the next meeting. The next Task Force meeting will be Thursday, July 31, 2014 from 9 AM – 12:30 PM at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, 225 E. Coastline Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32202. Please confirm your attendance with me or Marcy.

2. **Attachment**


Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –
White House Opposes Defense Spending Bill over BRAC, Compensation Reform


Defense Communities 360 © June 17, 2014

The White House on Tuesday said it “strongly opposes” House passage of the fiscal 2015 defense spending bill over its failure to include a variety of cost-saving reforms, but fell short of issuing a veto threat. “Without congressional support for meaningful compensation reforms and other cost-saving measures, force structure changes, and flexibility to manage weapon systems and infrastructure, there is an increased risk to the department’s ability to implement the president’s defense strategy, which will contribute to a military that will be less capable of responding effectively to future challenges,” according to the statement of administration policy issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

House Votes to Oppose BRAC, Preserve A-10 Fleet

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/house-votes-to-oppose-brac-preserve-a-10-fleet/

Defense Communities 360 © June 19, 2014

In two votes that succinctly summarize the challenge the Pentagon faces in planning for mandated budget cuts, House lawmakers voted Thursday night to bar DOD from spending any funds to plan for or carry out another BRAC round, and to prevent it from implementing the Air Force’s proposal to retire its fleet of A-10 close air support aircraft. The two votes came during House debate of the fiscal 2015 defense spending bill. Final passage of the bill is expected today.

Despite Long Odds, BRAC Still Worth Fighting For, James Says


Defense Communities 360 © June 18, 2014

Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James is pessimistic about the prospect that Congress will approve the Pentagon’s request for a new BRAC round in 2017, but believes DOD will continue trying to persuade lawmakers of its importance at a time when it is coping with stringent
spending caps. “As a person who came out of business, the last things a corporation would do is spend money on facilities that are no longer needed,” James told defense reporters Wednesday. “You would never, never, never run a business this way. ..........

Army to Release Initial Findings from Basing Analysis

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/army-to-release-initial-findings-from-basing-analysis/

Defense Communities 360 © June 19, 2014

The Army is expected shortly to release its preliminary analysis of the local impacts that would result from a reduction in its active-duty end strength to a range of between 440,000 and 450,000 soldiers. The analysis follows a similar exercise officials conducted before deciding last June how to restructure forces after shrinking end strength by 80,000 soldiers and deactivating brigade combat teams at 10 U.S. installations. That drawdown is now under way and will leave the Army with 490,000 troops by the end of 2015....... 

DOD Budget Cuts – 

US House Passes Appropriations Bill, Senate Looks Deadlocked


Defense News © June 21, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY

In a flurry of activity that wrapped up early on the afternoon of June 20, the US House of Representatives pushed through several controversial amendments to the $570.4 billion 2015 defense appropriations bill before handing its version off to the Senate for its own markups this summer. The legislation included several hot-button amendments opposed by the Pentagon and the White House.............
House Bucks Appropriators; Forbids A-10 Retirement
http://breakingdefense.com/2014/06/house-bucks-appropriators-forbids-a-10-retirement/

Breaking Defense © June 20, 2014
By COLIN CLARK
Election fears ruled the day on Capitol Hill when the full House of Representatives voted to stop the Air Force from retiring the venerable and venerated A-10 aircraft in the chamber’s version of the defense appropriations bill. While we heard little of the backroom chatter and didn’t see the emails that doubtless flew as the bill’s sponsors urged their colleagues to vote against the Air Force’s attempt to save $3.7 billion by retiring the A-10 fleet, it didn’t take a rocket scientist to ascertain why members voted as they did……..

MacDill AFB –

Marcent gets new commander in MacDill ceremony

Tampa Tribune © June 18, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

On his first day at his new job as commander of Marine Corps Forces Central Command, Marine Lt. Gen. Kenneth “Frank” McKenzie has a lot on his plate. An amphibious troop ship with more than 500 Marines and several V-22 Osprey tilt-wing aircraft just entered the Persian Gulf as Iraq is in turmoil with Sunni insurgents swarming toward Baghdad. A drawdown in Afghanistan that increases risk to troops as their numbers get smaller. A bloody revolution in Syria, battles with al-Qaida forces in Yemen and the myriad challenges posed by Iran and Pakistan among other ongoing problems...........
Eglin AFB –

**Officials Tap Maintainer Ideas to Reduce F-35 Costs**


Northwest Florida Daily News © June 20, 2014

_By AMAANI LYLE / American Forces Press Service_

The Pentagon will continue to seek aircraft maintainer suggestions and industry partner investments to reduce operating and sustainment costs by 10 to 20 percent as F-35 Lightning II joint strike fighter improvements develop, the undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics said yesterday in a conference call with reporters......

NS Mayport –

**FRCSE DET Mayport Holds Change Of Charge Ceremony**


Florida Times-Union © June 18, 2014

By Kaylee LaRocque

Lt. Cmdr. Claude Taylor assumed command from Cmdr. Michael Barriere during a change of charge ceremony held at Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) Detachment (DET) Mayport June 6. “When I walked into work this morning with my family, I had Sailors thanking me throughout the hallways,” said an emotional Barriere. “Knowing that you made an impression on your team is the best reward for anyone in a leadership position. I offered guidance and sage advice but everyone here made it all happen.” ............
Other Items of Interest –

**Defense spending in Florida down 20 percent since 2010**


Tampa Tribune © June 18, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

With the war in Iraq over, the war in Afghanistan winding down, and downward spending pressures on the Pentagon, the Florida defense industry is feeling the squeeze. Defense spending in the state dropped by about $3 billion over three years, according to the Florida Defense Contractors Association. That represents about a 20 percent cut since 2010, when more than $14 billion in military contracts were awarded. The association has not yet crunched the numbers for 2014…………..

**Virginia Should Welcome a BRAC Round, State Official Says**


Defense Communities 360 © June 22, 2014

The commonwealth of Virginia should embrace a looming round of base closures as a way to increase missions at state installations, particularly in Hampton Roads, John Harvey Jr., Virginia’s secretary of veterans and defense affairs, said last week. Harvey, a retired admiral who headed Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk, argued that Virginia is likely to come out ahead in the next BRAC round. “There is no other state that has the inherent advantages, geographic advantages, the institutional advantages, the type of workforce that supports the services that Virginia does,” he told the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, reported WVEC. “Virginia is perfectly postured for the future.” ……………………………
July 8, 2014 – FDTSF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **July Task Force Meeting in Jacksonville** -- The next Task Force meeting will be **Thursday, July 31, 2014 from 9 AM – 3:00 PM at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, 225 E. Coastline Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32202**. The meeting will run from 9 AM – Noon and will be followed by a tour of NAS Jacksonville from 12: 30 – 3:00 PM. If you have already not done so, please confirm your attendance with Marcy and let us know if you will be available for dinner on Wednesday night and participating in the tour of NAS Jacksonville Thursday afternoon.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Numbers** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachment** – Notes from last week’s TPG conference call

Regards, BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**

DOD Budget Cuts –
Forget terrorism. The Pentagon’s best chance to field the best military with the smaller budget imposed by sequestration may just lie in preparing for nuclear war with Russia and China. According to a new study, United States defense leaders should focus more on a “great power conflict” reflective of a newly aggressive Russia and rapidly modernizing China. Doing so would force the Defense Department to modernize its existing force and invest significantly in maintaining technological advantages at the expense of unlikely-to-be used ships, aircraft and soldiers.

With the Pentagon’s budget slated to drop 21 percent from 2012 to 2021, the military’s priority should be to modernize its existing forces and to ensure it maintains its technological superiority in preparation for a conflict with Russia or China, according to a new study from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Preparing for a “great power conflict” would mean maintaining its nuclear triad of long-range bombers, submarines and intercontinental ballistic missiles. Such an approach also would call for an emphasis on special operations forces and heavy ground units, along with a focus on surveillance in air and space, reported Defense One. The strategy would come at the expense of aircraft carriers, F-35 Joint Strike Fighters and other lower priority ships and aircraft.

MacDill AFB –
Funding has major impact at MacDill

http://tbo.com/list/military-news/funding-has-major-impact-at-macdill-20140630/

Tampa Tribune © June 30, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

As always when something emanates out of the nation’s capital relating to defense or intelligence, I parse it for the effect on Tampa. With two military commands headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base that oversee operations in one of the world’s most dangerous regions and one that sets the tone for commando activities worldwide, that’s not really a stretch. Which brings me to President Barack Obama’s unveiling last week of details of his war funding and Counterterror Partnership Fund plans………

Eglin AFB –

Air Force base outgrows its 460K acres, weighs invasion of Fla. forests

http://www.eenews.net/stories/1060002019

EE News © June 26, 2014

By William Rabb, special to Greenwire

At 460,000 acres, Eglin Air Force Base is considered the largest air force installation in the free world, with forest and beaches stretching across three Northwest Florida counties. And in the last decade, this mega-base has grown in stature as well, becoming a crown jewel for the U.S. military, with more missions, more special forces, more weapons testing, and its newest star: the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter aircraft, the most expensive weapon system ever built………

Air Force limits F-35 flights over Valparaiso due to noise concerns

The Air Force has decided to continue to limit F-35 flights over Valparaiso in response to residents' concerns over noise. The decision, announced Friday morning, overruled a previous recommendation to lift the restrictions. “This decision allows the Air Force to accomplish our training mission while mitigating noise impacts on the local community,” said Kathleen Ferguson, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Environment and Logistics. “We believe we were able to reach a win-win for the Air Force and the communities surrounding Eglin Air Force Base.”

DoD Grounds Entire F-35 Fleet; Plane Might Not Make UK Debut


Defense News © July 3, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The European debut of the Lockheed Martin F-35 joint strike fighter is now in question after the Pentagon grounded the entire fleet late Thursday based on the initial findings of an investigation into a fire that broke out on one of the jets last month. The US Defense Department says it is still making preparations to send the jet to the Farnborough International Airshow and Royal International Air Tattoo in the UK, but would not make a final decision until “early next week.” The Pentagon says it is still investigating the cause of the June 23 fire the broke out in the rear of an Air Force F-35 during takeoff at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida.

Secretary of Defense to visit Eglin


Northwest Florida Daily News © July 7, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE
The Secretary of Defense will be making a rare appearance at Eglin Air Force Base on Thursday. Chuck Hagel will visit with members of the F-35 training wing to speak about Department of Defense priorities and answer questions from airmen. Officials couldn't remember the last time a Secretary of Defense visited the base........

Hurlburt Field –

RPA UNIT MOVES TO ‘EMERALD COAST’

HTTP://GLOBALAVIATIONREPORT.COM/2014/07/03/RPA-UNIT-MOVES-TO-EMERALD-COAST/

GLOBAL AVIATION REPORT © JULY 3, 2014

The 919th Special Operations Wing welcomed the 2nd Special Operations Squadron, its remotely piloted aircraft unit, to the Emerald Coast. The 2nd SOS, comprised of about 140 Air Force reservists formerly located at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., began RPA operations in its new facility at Hurlburt Field, Fla., June 14. Although the unit is at Hurlburt Field, none of the aircraft will be located there. The RPAs are flown in various combat theaters throughout the world........

NSA Panama City –

Navy Nominates Bay Defense Alliance for Fisher Award


US Navy Public Affairs © June 30, 2014

By MC1 Elliott Fabrizio, Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

The Chief of Naval Personnel announced June 30 that Bay Defense Alliance is the Navy’s nominee for the Calendar Year 2013 Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher
Distinguished Civilian Humanitarian Award. The 30-member non-profit organization of community leaders works to improve, preserve and enhance Naval Support Facility (NSF) Panama City, Florida, and military installations in the surrounding area by leveraging the abilities and skills of volunteers.

Florida National Guard –

Commander of the Florida Army National Guard Retires after 45-year Military Career


WCTV © June 27, 2014

The Florida Army National Guard's highest ranking officer was honored today by friends, family and military peers, as his 45-year military career came to an end. Maj. Gen. James "Don" Tyre, who served concurrently as the commander of the Florida Army National Guard and Assistant Adjutant General of Florida for Army, was recognized during a retirement and military ceremony at the historic St. Francis Barracks. Adjutant General of Florida Maj. Gen. Emmett Titshaw presented Tyre with the Florida Cross and the U.S. Army Distinguished Service Medal during the ceremony, and lauded him for his years of service to the Army National Guard.

Defense Contractors --
What motivates defense contractors? Four lessons for government leaders


Washington Post © June 29, 2014

By Amrita Jayakumar

Competition was the main theme of the Defense Department’s second annual report on acquisition performance, released earlier this month. Declining budgets may be pushing defense contractors to look for work outside the government, but the Pentagon’s emphasis remains on promoting competition, according to Frank Kendall, the undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics. The report analyzed contractors’ cost and schedule performance over more than a decade to see what motivated them to produce better results........

International Partners Key To DoD's New R&D Strategy

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140707/DEFREG02/307070008/International-Partners-Key-DoD-s-New-R-D-Strategy

Defense News © July 7, 2014

By ZACHARY FRYER-BIGGS

The US Defense Department is set to roll out a new strategy this week that is designed to make sure researchers know about ongoing technological developments around the world, and can take advantage of spending by close allies to fill gaps in capabilities and cut costs. The document, called the “International S&T Engagement Strategy,” aims to use advances in big data technology to create easily searchable databases for use by the Pentagon’s “communities of interest,” 17 groups of experts from across the services and Pentagon offices focused on specific areas of technology........
Other Items of Interest –

**U.S. Navy Warns It Can’t Meet 30-Year Funding Needs**


Bloomberg News © July 7, 2014

By Tony Capaccio

The U.S. Navy can’t meet its funding needs for surface warships and a new class of nuclear attack submarines from 2025 to 2034, according to the service’s latest 30-year shipbuilding plan. The congressionally required blueprint, submitted late last week and obtained by Bloomberg News, says the Navy’s plan “requires funding at an unsustainable level” unless spending on shipbuilding is increased. The document outlines challenges facing the plan to increase the Navy fleet to 306 vessels from the current 289 while building 12 new Ohio-class submarines, part of the nation’s nuclear triad of air, land and sea weapons……

**Report: DOD lacks realistic plan to cut costs at management headquarters**


Stars and Stripes © June 27, 2014
By Wyatt Olson

The Pentagon has produced no realistic plan for cutting costs at its many management headquarters, according to a report released Thursday by the Government Accountability Office. The Department of Defense was mandated by Congress to develop and submit a plan by the end of this month for HQ budget cuts for the years 2015-2024, which was to include combatant commands. It remains unclear, however, “how the department will provide reliable information to Congress,” concluded the report by the GAO, a government watchdog agency that advises lawmakers.

Decommissioning plan pulls all frigates from fleet by end of FY '15


Navy Times © July 2, 2014

By David Larter

Start saying goodbye to the frigates. By October 2015, the fleet will be devoid of frigates for the first time in more than 70 years, according to the Navy’s latest decommissioning plan. The Navy plans to retire all of the remaining frigates, as well as five ships and two subs, during fiscal year 2015, the service announced Tuesday. The last Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate to be decommissioned is the Kauffman, scheduled for Sept. 21, 2015.

Burlington Residents Sue Air Force over New F-35 Guard Unit

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/burlington-residents-sue-air-force-over-new-f-35-guard-unit/

Defense Communities 360 © July 7, 2014

A local group opposed to a decision to base 18 new F-35 fighter jets at Burlington Air Guard Station, Vt., filed a lawsuit last week against Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James to stop the move. The suit — filed in federal court by the Stop the F-35 Coalition — contends the aircraft
will generate noise in excess of 65 decibels averaged over a day-night basis, reported the Burlington Free Press. The lawsuit had been expected since the Air Force selected Burlington International Airport in December as the first Air National Guard location for the fifth-generation aircraft despite opponents arguing the new aircraft will be significantly louder than the F-16 it will replace and present a potential safety risk…….

N.C. House Passes Bill to Keep BRAC Deliberations Secret


Defense Communities 360 © June 29, 2014

The North Carolina House last week approved legislation allowing state officials, including the state Military Affairs Commission, to withhold information from the public about deliberations conducted to protect the state’s military installations during a BRAC round. Meetings to discuss such matters could be closed under the bill, which received no advance notice before emerging in committee June 25, reported the Fayetteville Observer. It passed unanimously on the House floor that afternoon. It now heads to the state Senate for a vote…….
FDSTF Members –

1. **July Task Force Meeting in Jacksonville** -- The next Task Force meeting will be Thursday, July 31, 2014 from 9 AM – 3:00 PM at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, 225 E. Coastline Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32202. The meeting will run from 9 AM – Noon and will be followed by a tour of NAS Jacksonville from 12:30 – 3:00 PM. *If you have not already not done so, please confirm your attendance with Marcy and let us know if you will be available for dinner on Wednesday night and participating in the tour of NAS Jacksonville Thursday afternoon.*

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Numbers** –
   
   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 8784566


4. **Attachment** – Notes from this week’s TPG conference call

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget Cuts –

**Hagel urges Congress to reverse defense cuts**


The Hill © July 9, 2014
By Kristina Wong

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel said Wednesday that deep defense budget cuts keep him up at night. "Sequestration has been devastating to this institution. It's something that our leaders and I work with every day trying to convince Congress to change that," he told troops at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay in Georgia. Under sequestration, the Pentagon faces $500 billion in cuts over the next decade. The cuts have been partially relieved since they went into effect last year, but are scheduled to hit full force again in 2016. Only lawmakers can relieve the cuts, but so far, a majority of members have been unable or unwilling to overturn them.

**US Navy to Congress: We Can't Guarantee a Safe Nuclear Fleet**


Defense News © July 9, 2014
By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

Fighting back at repeated budget cuts to its nuclear power budget requests, two of the US Navy's top leaders warned Congress on Monday that the cuts can't go on. “This approach is no longer sustainable,” wrote Adm. Jon Greenert, chief of naval operations, and Adm. John Richardson, commander of Naval Reactors (NR), the entity responsible for all aspects of the Navy’s nuclear power program. They sent the letter to chairmen and ranking members of multiple House and Senate committees.
Pentagon gives pink slips to thousands of soldiers, including active-duty officers


The Pentagon is laying off thousands of military officers, including those serving or who have recently served in Afghanistan. Defense Department officials said the reductions are the result of mandatory spending cuts imposed by sequestration and are part of their larger plan to reduce the number of U.S. soldiers from 520,000 to 450,000. Roughly 2,600 captains and other officers have or will be laid off, with more expected, Fox News learned Friday……..

Hagel Hits The Road To Pressure Congress On Sequester


Breaking Defense © July 11, 2014
By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Defense Secretaries always “try to get out of Washington and visit as many of our bases and talk to as many of our people” as they can, as Sec. Chuck Hagel said this week at Kings Bay submarine base in Georgia. But when you’re SecDef, you always take Washington with you. Physically, that means the entourage of one general, one admiral, and myriad lesser aides, bodyguards, and even ragtag reporters (e.g. me) that accompanies the Secretary almost everywhere he goes except the bathroom. Politically, it means every word the Secretary says is said with Washington much in mind……..

MacDill AFB –

Southeast Air Base Renovation

http://www.dvidshub.net/news/135660/southeast-air-base-renovation
By Senior Airman Melanie Bulow-Gonterman

By the order of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Southeast Air Base was opened and built as a World War II strategic air base position. Using the federal relief program created during the Great Depression, our flightline was constructed. A lot has changed since the opening of Southeast Air Base in 1939. For starters, it is now called MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. Through the years, Tampa and the community have witnessed this base become a significant part of their economy from the Airshow, building contracts and the economic boost the troops give to the community. Nevertheless, the community and base support have supplemented each other equally………

Eglin AFB –

**F-35 Negotiations “Moving Forward”**


Air Force Magazine © July 10, 2014

BY JOHN A. TIRPAK

Bargaining between the Pentagon, Lockheed Martin, and Pratt & Whitney regarding Lot 8 of F-35 strike fighter production continues, even as an investigation into the June engine fire that grounded the fleet proceeds. “Negotiations are not suspended, as you may have heard. We are moving forward,” Kyra Hawn, a system program office spokeswoman, said Wednesday. Program manager Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan said last month he expected Lot 8 to be concluded this summer. “Information derived from the accident investigation will inform any actions needed to address future modifications that may be required,” according to an SPO statement provided by Hawn. The SPO is gathering information about the accident to ensure there is “language” in the eventual contract “that protects the government” in case some new fault is discovered that must be corrected on the production line, she explained………
Air Force to Impose Limits on F-35 Training Flights at Eglin

Air Force officials have decided to impose operational limitations on F-35 training flights at Eglin Air Force Base on the Florida Panhandle to reduce noise over the city of Valparaiso, according to a record of decision published Wednesday. Officials selected the “no action alternative” for the basing of up to 59 F-35s at the Eglin joint training site, which represented the environmentally preferred alternative. “The Air Force listened to the community’s concerns and worked hard to find a solution that meets mission requirements and also reduces noise impacts,” said Kathleen Ferguson, acting assistant secretary for installations, environment, and energy........

F-35 Engine Fire May Be One-Time Incident, U.S. Says

The engine fire that led the Pentagon to ground its fleet of F-35 fighters may have been caused by an isolated flaw, according to the Defense Department’s top weapons buyer. “There is a growing body of evidence that this may have been an individual situation, not a systemic one,” Undersecretary for Acquisition Frank Kendall told a House panel today. The Pentagon said July 3 that the combined fleet of 97 Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps jets would be grounded pending a comprehensive safety review after a fire on an Air Force version of the aircraft caused its takeoff to be aborted........

Hagel Talks with F-35 Pilots, Maintainers at Eglin AFB

Hagel Talks with F-35 Pilots, Maintainers at Eglin AFB

Hagel Talks with F-35 Pilots, Maintainers at Eglin AFB
By Cheryl Pellerin, DoD News, Defense Media Activity

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel was busy here yesterday on his first visit to this Air Force base on the Florida panhandle, talking to pilots from the 33rd Fighter Wing, meeting with and thanking service members and briefing local and national reporters. The visit was one of three stops on a two-day trip that also included visits to Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay in Georgia and Fort Rucker, Alabama. Announcing the trip earlier this week, Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby said Hagel wants to ensure the Defense Department stays focused on long-term concerns affecting American interests and allies in Asia, Europe and worldwide........

Pentagon: 'Growing Evidence' F-35 Incident Not Systemic

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140714/DEFREG02/307140022/Pentagon-Growing-Evidence-F-35-Incident-Not-Systemic

Defense News © July 14, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

Pentagon officials are increasingly confident that a fire that heavily damaged an F-35A joint strike fighter on June 23 was the result of an isolated issue and not a fleet-wide design flaw that will require redesign or replacement of parts. However, the F-35 fleet remains grounded and the window to appear at the Farnborough International Airshow grows slimmer each day. “There is a growing body of evidence that this is not a systemic, major design problem, that the problem is a manageable problem,” Frank Kendall, the Pentagon’s top acquisition official, told reporters on Monday. “We have not found a similar problem on any of the other engines that are in service, so that’s encouraging.........

Hagel Visits Eglin in Show of Support for F-35

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/July%202014/July%202014%202014/Hagel-Visits-Eglin-in-Show-of-Support-for-F-35.aspx

Air Force Magazine © July 14, 2014
With the fleet still grounded in the aftermath of a recent engine fire at the base, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel paid a visit to Eglin AFB, Fla., last week to tout the program and declare his support for the next generation fighter. Hagel said he wanted to meet with pilots and maintainers privately to not only get a sense of the capabilities of the jet, but also what they think of its capabilities and progress. “I know there are issues. I don’t know of a platform that we’ve ever had ... and then put into service that didn’t go through issues,” Hagel said in remarks to troops at Eglin. He added that he received a “good report” from pilots and maintainers regarding the engine, and would not rush a decision on clearing the fleet to fly until the separate safety inspection and accident investigation is complete………

F-35 Cleared For Flight

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140715/SHOWSCOUT15/307150016/F-35-Cleared-Flight

Defense News © July 15, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The F-35 might make it to Farnborough after all. A Pentagon official told Defense News that the F-35 fighter fleet has been cleared by air worthiness authorities. A decision on attending the show has not been made but the official said DoD is “hopeful” it can make the trip. A statement released by Rear Admiral John Kirby, Pentagon Press Secretary, confirmed the news. “Yesterday the air worthiness authorities for the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force approved the F-35 fleet to return to flight,” Kirby said in the statement. “This is a limited flight clearance that includes an engine inspection regimen and a restricted flight envelope which will remain in effect until the root cause of the June 23 engine mishap is identified and corrected.”………..

Hurlburt Field –

Northwest Florida to lose few jobs as part of Air Force cuts

A small number of jobs will be eliminated in Northwest Florida as part of an Air Force effort to cut nearly 3,500 positions over the next five years. Hurlburt Field will cut 22 positions and Eglin Air Force Base will cut one, according to an announcement made Monday. The local bases will be some of the least impacted by the cuts. The largest loss, 742 jobs, will come from Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Virginia………

First drone unit arrives at Hurlburt; no aircraft move with it


A new remotely piloted aircraft unit has arrived in Northwest Florida. The 2nd Special Operations Squadron is the first of its kind at Hurlburt Field. They operate the remotely piloted MQ-9 Reapers, also known as unmanned aerial vehicles or drones. While the arrival brought about 140 Air Force reservists from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., no aircraft came along with them………

Tyndall AFB –

Team Tyndall’: 44th Fighter Group activated in ceremony


News Herald © July 12, 2014

By JENNIFER HARWOOD | The News Herald
Col. Scott Crogg assumed command of the Air Reserve Component 44th Fighter Group — and a little piece of history — in a formal ceremony Saturday. “Col. Crogg is the perfect warrior and leader we need to transition from Holloman to Tyndall,” said Col. John Breazeale, commander of the 301st Fighter Wing. “He knows how to successfully integrate our active and reserve components.” The 44th FG, previously a detachment of the 301st FW at Holloman Air Force Base, N.M., is the newest unit to be activated under the 325th Fighter Wing at Tyndall. The 325th FW began integration of the group earlier this year. Although geographically separated, the 44th FG still will operate under the 301st FW, now based at Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base in Texas……..

Florida National Guard –

US Army General: Black Hawks Better Suited for Guard Mission


Defense News © July 12, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The US Army’s plan to shift National Guard AH-64 Apaches into the active duty in exchange for UH-60 Black Hawks will allow governors to better respond to state disasters, the general in charge of training the service’s helicopter pilots said. Lawmakers have opposed the controversial Army plan to swap the aircraft. But the Army says the move is necessary due to defense budget cuts and plans to cut Army end-strength from 510,000 soldiers to between 420,000 and 450,000 soldiers, depending on funding levels……..

Defense Contractors --

Competition Is Declining in Pentagon-AWARDED Contracts

“Competition is the single best way to motivate contractors to provide the best value,” according to the Pentagon’s latest annual report on the state of the Defense acquisition system, released in June. Unfortunately, the Defense Department has been losing ground for the last six years in the percentage of contracted work being let competitively each year. In 2008, 64 percent of Defense contract dollars were spent through competitive awards; by 2013, that rate had fallen to 57 percent.

Other Items of Interest –

F-35 Stumbles While New Long-Range Strike Bomber Starts In Secret

Even as Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel flew here with much fanfare to reaffirm his “strong, strong confidence” in the troubled F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the Air Force quietly let slip they have started a competition for the Long-Range Strike Bomber. The two programs could hardly be more different. JSF is the military’s massive investment – its over-investment, critics argue – in replacing its aging fleet of short-ranged but flexible fighters. LRS-B involves a much smaller number of much larger planes with the bomb load, range, and stealth to revive the long-neglected long-range bomber force.
July 21, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Task Force Meeting in Jacksonville Next Week** -- The next Task Force meeting will be **Thursday, July 31, 2014 from 9 AM – 3:00 PM at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, 225 E. Coastline Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32202.** The meeting will actually run from 9 AM – Noon and will be followed by a tour of NAS Jacksonville from 12: 30 – 3:00 PM. **More information to follow later this week on Wednesday dinner location.**

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Numbers** –
   
   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Support Task Force 2015 Grant Application Process Underway** ---
   The grant application process for FY 2015 grants was released last week on July 16th. The deadline for submissions is August 22, 2014. Task Force members should be expected to be contacted concerning being sponsors for 2015 grant applications.

Regards, BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**

**DOD Budget Cuts –**
Air Force to cut thousands of installation support jobs, create new command for surveillance


Air Force Times © July 14, 2014
By Brian Everstine

The Air Force is cutting thousands of manning and organization officers, and creating a new numbered Air Force to oversee intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions, the service announced today. A total of 3,459 positions will be cut in an effort to save $1.6 billion over the next five years. The move comes about a year after Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel directed the services to cut headquarters staff by 20 percent..........

Border crisis puts strain on military budget


The Hill © July 15, 2014
By Kristina Wong

Lawmakers warn President Obama is shortchanging the military by calling it into action at the U.S. border without providing a boost in funding. “President Barack Obama has already decimated the military with budget cuts and the lack of overall strategy; now he’s asking them to do more,” said Senate Armed Services Committee ranking member James Inhofe (R-Okla.) in an op-ed published Monday. ADVERTISEMENT

Obama last week requested $3.7 billion from Congress to respond to the flow of children crossing the border but that did not include additional funding for the military, which is housing thousands of immigrant children and trying to contain the violent drug trade........

US Senate Panel Proposes Keeping A-10, 11 Aircraft Carriers With $547.9B Defense Bill

A US Senate panel on Tuesday approved nearly $550 billion in military spending as part of a bill that would keep alive weapon systems the Pentagon wanted to retire. The chamber’s Appropriations Defense subcommittee unanimously approved legislation that would give the Pentagon $489.6 billion in base spending and $58.3 billion in war funding. It would block a long list of weapon system retirement proposals or Pentagon plans to not purchase systems next year to save money.

US Congressman: DoD Needs To Put War Money in Base Budget


By MARCUS WEISGARBER

A US congressman called on the Pentagon Tuesday to shift dollars from its war spending accounts back into its base budget. The comments by Rep. Rob Wittman, R-Va., come a day before the House Armed Services Committee and two days before the House Budget Committee receive testimony from Defense Department officials on the Pentagon’s $58.6 billion 2015 overseas contingency operations (OCO) spending request. Wittman is the chairman of the House Armed Services Readiness subcommittee.

Ending Sequestration?

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/July%202014/July%202016%202014/Ending-Sequestration.aspx

Air Force Magazine © July 16, 2014

BY OTTO KREISHER
A leading congressional “defense hawk” said he is working to educate his colleagues on the fact that “you can’t disproportionately cut defense—taking 50 percent of the cuts in 18 percent of the budget.” Rep. Rob Wittman (R-Va.), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee’s readiness panel, said the Defense Department “has given and given” with a total of $1.3 trillion in cuts in the last several years. “No other part of the budget has gotten anywhere near that much,” Wittman told reporters July 17 in Washington, D.C. “You can’t balance the budget on the backs of the men and women in the military……….

Air Force to Cut 3,459 Headquarters Positions


Air Force Magazine © July 16, 2014

The Air Force plans to eliminate 3,459 positions in headquarters as part of the directive to reduce costs and staff levels by at least 20 percent. Echoing previous plans to offer voluntary separation agreements to those eligible, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James said, USAF would “aggressively” pursue “reductions within the first year” in an effort to ease the pain on personnel. Air Force Acting Deputy Chief Management Officer Bill Booth said the reductions will allow the Air Force to bolster personnel at the wing levels and maintain optimal readiness……….

If the Pentagon Buys Less, It Needs to Invest More

http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2014/07/if-pentagon-buys-less-it-needs-invest-more/88909/

Defense One © July 16, 2014

By Gen. Norton A. Schwartz and Col. Tom Harrison

The United States defense budget is in transition, adjusting to new realities following more than a decade of war. As we have observed in past drawdowns, typically the first casualty of peace is Pentagon spending on research, development, test and evaluation, known as RDT&E. This is inevitable: spending is protected for military personnel needs, buying legacy weapons already in production, and to fund sustainment programs – but research and development typically pays the bill, and that is unfortunate……….
A US Senate panel on Thursday approved nearly $550 billion in military spending, while also proposing to keep alive weapon systems the Pentagon wanted to retire. But senior members made clear it may never see the Senate floor. The chamber's Appropriations Committee unanimously approved legislation that would give the Pentagon $489.6 billion in base spending and $58.3 billion in war funding. It would block a long list of weapon system retirement proposals, or Pentagon plans to not purchase systems next year to save money.

The Senate Appropriations Committee on Thursday approved a $490 billion fiscal 2015 defense spending bill that rejects many of the Pentagon's cost-savings proposals intended to comply with the Budget Control Act spending caps. The measure blocks DOD’s plan to slash subsidies for military grocery stores by $200 million in FY 2015; however, it embraced one of the department’s reforms — limiting housing allowances below the rate of inflation. The plan to slow the growth in the basic allowance for housing would save $8.8 billion in personnel costs over the next five years, according to a committee summary of the spending bill.

Despite Opposition, US War Funding Likely To Pass
Republicans and Democrats showed a rare display of bipartisanship last week when members of both parties criticized the Pentagon’s $58.6 billion war budget request, but experts say Congress will likely approve the measure. US lawmakers directed the majority of their frustration at a $5 billion White House request for the newly created counterterrorism partnership fund. Of this total, $4 billion is part of the Pentagon’s $58.6 billion overseas contingency operations (OCO) budget request that was sent to Congress in late June. The remaining $1 billion is in the State Department's OCO request.

Space Coast –

The US Air Force won’t even admit it’s certifying SpaceX to launch satellites


Quartz © July 15, 2014

By Tim Fernholz

It took four days, but the Air Force now agrees that SpaceX has completed the three flights needed to officially demonstrate it can compete for national security contracts; further technical reviews and audits will continue before full certification is granted. “I applaud SpaceX on achieving the three flights,” Lieutenant General Sam Greaves said in a statement. “With this significant part of the agreed-to path in certifying the Falcon 9 v1.1 launch system complete, we look forward to working with SpaceX to complete the remaining certification activities and providing SpaceX with the opportunity to compete for EELV missions.”

Air Force seeks space launch proposals from industry

The Air Force this week opened competition for a national security space launch for the first time in a decade. The service on Tuesday released a request for proposal from industry for the procurement of a National Security Space mission in 2016. This would be the first Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle competition in a decade and “a significant milestone in the Air Force’s efforts to bring competition into the EELV program,” Air Force spokeswoman Capt. Erika Yepsen said in a statement........

U.S. Air Force Picks 14 Companies To Support Hosted Payload Efforts
http://www.spacenews.com/article/military-space/41223us-air-force-picks-14-companies-to-support-hosted-payload-efforts

By Mike Gruss

The U.S. Air Force awarded contracts to 14 space companies to facilitate the placement of military payloads aboard commercial satellites, a key step in the service’s ongoing exploration of alternative ways to deploy space-based capabilities. Through the Hosted Payload Solutions program, HoPS for short, the Air Force is aiming to create a contracting vehicle to standardize the processes and interfaces for placing dedicated military capabilities aboard commercial satellites........

MacDill AFB –

School choice: Works for students and parents, and will work for MacDill

Tampa Tribune © July 17, 2014
BY RICHARD PAGE

The Florida Department of Education just released its annual grades for the state’s elementary and secondary schools. There will be enough headlines about failing schools, but let me point to real areas of progress in hopes of generating more options for families — especially military families. As a member of the team at Charter Schools USA, I have been extremely active in Hillsborough County trying to open new schools and monitoring progress of our existing charters. Last year MacDill Air Force Base submitted plans for an on-base charter school to help improve the quality of life for military members and their children.

Eglin AFB –

It’s Official: F-35 Not Flying To Farnborough


Defense News © July 15, 2014

By AARON MEHTA and MARCUS WEISGERBER

The F-35 joint strike fighter will not be flying at the Farnborough International Airshow, to the disappointment of attendees, program supporters and partnered militaries. It was a whirlwind day of emotion for the program on Tuesday, talk of which has dominated both Farnborough and last week’s Royal International Air Tattoo despite the jets having missed their planned international debut.

Spinning Up at Eglin

http://www.airforcemag.com/DR Archive/Pages/2014/July%202014/July%202016%202014/Spinning-Up-at-Eglin.aspx

Air Force Magazine © July 16, 2014

By JOHN A. TIRPAK
Given the Pentagon's clearance to resume "restricted" flying of the F-35 after a three-week grounding, it will take "about a day and a half" for training flights to resume at Eglin AFB, Fla., base spokeswoman 1st Lt. Hope Cronin told Air Force Magazine. "We are waiting for official notification" that flights can resume from the three major commands that control the F-35A fleet, she said: Air Education and Training Command, Air Force Materiel Command, and Air Combat Command. The Navy will send its own notification for F-35B and C models, she added. Once notification comes, the day and a half delay in resuming flying will allow "maintenance spin up" and the necessary inspections to take place, Cronin noted. .......

F-35s to soar again


Northwest Florida Daily News © July 15, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE

The military has cleared F-35 jets to return to flight, though it will likely still be days before they take to the skies again over Northwest Florida. The entire fleet of F-35s nationwide was grounded earlier this month after one caught fire during takeoff on the runway at Eglin Air Force Base on June 23. The flight clearance is a limited one, cautioned Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby, the Pentagon’s press secretary, in a statement early Tuesday morning.......
native of Mattituck, New York and a 2003 graduate of Boston University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations and Political Science, and was commissioned through the NROTC Program........

Tyndall AFB –

**Tyndall commander completes ‘fini-flight’**

News Herald © July 17, 2014

By CHRIS OLWELL

In 20 years in the Air Force, Col. David Graff has spent more than 2,000 hours in the cockpits of various fighter jets. On Thursday, he spent his final 40 minutes in an official capacity in the cockpit of a T-38. Graff, the commander of the 325th Fighter Wing at Tyndall Air Force Base, will officially retire next week, but he made his final flight — or, as the airmen say, his fini-flight — Thursday morning. He and his co-pilot flew east along the coast toward Eglin Air Force Base and out over the Gulf of Mexico........

Florida National Guard –

**Senate derails Army bid to take Guard helicopters**
http://bigstory.ap.org/article/senate-derails-army-bid-take-guard-helicopters

Associated Press, The Big Story © July 16, 2014

By LOLITA C. BALDOR

FORT RUCKER, Ala. Copyright 2014 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed. The Army has lost an initial Senate skirmish over a hotly disputed plan to take Apache attack helicopters away from National Guard units in a budget-cutting move that has
infuriated governors and state military leaders. The proposal, which would transfer dozens of the sleek Apache combat aircraft to active-duty units and give larger, multiuse Black Hawk helicopters to the Guard, has gotten high-level support at the Pentagon, including a visit to the Army's aviation center at Fort Rucker last week by Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel………..

Defense Contractors –

Survey: U.S. Defense Industry Fears Losing Competitive Edge

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=7c996cd7-cbb4-4018-baf8-8825eada7aa2&ID=1556&RootFolder=%2Fblog%2FLists%2FPosts

National Defense Magazine © July 14, 2104
By Sandra I. Erwin

The export of China's armed drones illustrates how a country can succeed in the international arms market even when its technology is not the world's best. China's drone exports are an example of availability trumping technology, says a new industry survey. Foreign nations' ability to rush products to market and lax export controls are giving the U.S. defense industry a run for its money, according to a recent survey of 350
Boeing reshapes military strategy in the face of US defence cuts

http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/72db6d64-0a90-11e4-ac2a-00144feabdco.html?siteedition=uk#axzz37Xm3r9q8

Financial Times © July 13, 2014

By Andrew Parker

James McNerney, Boeing chief: 'We have to shape [the defence, space and security] business to remain profitable' Boeing has admitted its defence business is unlikely to increase its revenues before the end of the decade because of spending cuts by western governments, but pledged to compete aggressively for new US military contracts that could provide growth after 2020. In an interview ahead of the Farnborough air show, which starts on Monday, James McNerney, Boeing’s chief executive, said the aerospace and defence group would seek to win US contracts for a next generation long-range bomber and a trainer jet for the air force, and a surveillance drone for the navy that will fly off aircraft carriers..........

USAF Secretary: New Groups Will Focus on Industry Cooperation


Defense News © July 15, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The US Air Force is in the process of standing up two study groups to understand how to streamline the acquisition process, according to the service’s secretary. Deborah Lee James told reporters at the Farnborough International Airshow here that she is seeking better relations with industry to understand how the service can become more nimble in its interactions with business........
Pentagon’s Strained Relationship With Vendors Getting Worse
http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=7c996cd7-cbb4-4018-baf8-8825eada7aa2&ID=1560&RootFolder=%2Fblog%2FLists%2FPosts

National Defense Magazine © July 16, 2014
By Sandra I. Erwin

Like many Pentagon contractors, Robertson Fuel Systems prides itself on its long history of selling hardware to the U.S. military. But the company says it is now on the verge of exiting a presumably lucrative market because the burdens increasingly are outweighing the benefits. Robertson makes auxiliary fuel tanks that are installed in helicopters to extend their range and endurance. The company has sold the tanks to the Defense Department for nearly four decades, and it is now questioning whether it should continue to bid on military deals following the adoption in recent years of stringent contracting policies.......

Other Items of Interest –

Shifting Threats Spur Demand for Fighter Jets

New York Times © July 14, 2014
By DANIEL SOLON

On Bastille Day in Paris 100 years ago, spectators at the traditional military parade could scarcely have imagined the scale of destruction that was about to be unleashed on much of Europe, including the first use of military air power. Since then, control of airspace has become a basic strategic doctrine. But which airspace, and how to control it in a period of game-changing developments in weapons, sensors and cybersystems, are questions as challenging as at any time in the past century.........
Military Bases Face Hurdles in Climate Change Adaptation


Climate Central © July 14, 2014

By Brian Kahn

The Department of Defense has 7,600 military installations across all 50 states and 40 foreign countries. They perform diverse functions, but they have one thing in common: climate change could cost them big in the coming decades unless adaptation measures are taken soon. The military has already taken some action. Planning for climate change impacts is being folded into base Master Plans around the world. And renewable energy projects have popped up on a few installations, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing power separate from the grid…….

Measure Keeping BRAC Documents Secret Goes to North Carolina Governor


Defense Communities 360 © July 17, 2014

Documents used by North Carolina officials pertaining to the state’s military installations in relation to a BRAC round can be withheld from public view, under the final version of legislation approved unanimously by both chambers of the North Carolina General Assembly on Wednesday. The measure now goes to Gov. Pat McCrory (R) for his signature. State Rep. Elmer Floyd (D), whose district includes Fort Bragg, said the bill would exempt information about the state’s strategy in a future base closure round from being disclosed through state public records laws and public meeting laws, reported the Fayetteville Observer………….
1. **Task Force Meeting in Jacksonville This Thursday** -- The next Task Force meeting will be **Thursday, July 31, 2014 from 9 AM – 3:00 PM at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, 225 E. Coastline Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32202.** The meeting will actually run from 9 AM – Noon and will be followed by a tour of NAS Jacksonville from 12: 30 – 3:00 PM. State Senator Audrey Gibson will be attending this meeting.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Numbers** –
   
   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Support Task Force 2015 Grant Application Process Underway** ---
   The grant application process for FY 2015 grants was released last week on July 16th. The deadline for submissions is August 22, 2014. Task Force members should expect to be contacted concerning to be sponsors for 2015 grant applications.

4. **Attachments:**
   
   - Florida Chamber Foundation – Military Summit – August 13, 2014
   - Schedule of Upcoming Governor Scott Veterans’ Awards Ceremonies
   - Notes from Bi-Weekly TPG Conference Call
   - Agenda for July 31st Task Force Meeting

Regards,  
BG.

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**House Readiness Chair Reiterates Stance on New BRAC Round**


Defense Communities 360 © July 23, 2014

At a summit on maintaining military readiness under spending constraints, Rep. Rob Wittman (R-Va.), chairman of the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee, reiterated his position that Congress shouldn’t consider approving a new round of base closures until the Pentagon clarifies the future direction of force structure and its objectives for the next BRAC. “And if we’re going to get this right, we need to finish some things, we need to understand where’s end strength going to end up, how are we going to properly resource in the face of sequester, in the face of transitioning out of [the overseas contingency operations account],” Wittman said last week at the Center for Strategic and International Studies event………………

DOD Budget Cuts –

**Sen. Levin Green-Lights Work on 'Fallback' Bill Should Senate Fail on NDAA**


Defense News © July 22, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT
US Senate staffers have the “green light” to start preliminary talks about a compromise version of a Pentagon policy bill that could quickly pass both chambers later this year. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin, D-Mich., told reporters Tuesday he is hesitant to use the word “pre-conferencing” because “that’s too formal.” It also runs a risk of sending a signal to other members that he has lost hope that the upper chamber can put aside years-old bitterness about amendments and floor process and pass his panel’s version of a 2015 Pentagon policy bill.

Prospect of CR at Start of FY’15 Approaches near Certainty


Defense Communities 360 © July 21, 2014

Congress almost certainly will resort to a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the federal government running starting Oct. 1 as the Senate is unlikely to take up any of the fiscal 2015 spending bills that have been approved by the Appropriations Committee, including the defense and military construction-veterans affairs measures. The Senate has not debated any spending bills this year, a record of total gridlock that can be attributed to a failure of the chamber’s Democratic and Republican leaders to allow virtually any legislation to advance.

Senate May Move Milcon Spending Bill after August Recess


Defense Communities 360 © July 24, 2014

Senate Appropriations Chairwoman Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) has revived talk of advancing a fiscal 2015 spending bill before Oct. 1, with the military construction-veterans affairs measure looking like the chamber’s best shot. Senate Democrats possibly could combine the milcon bill with other spending measures or, even, focus their efforts on approving the defense spending measure, reported CQ. Milcon is viewed as the leading candidate for action because of the difficulty Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) would have attaching an amendment blocking a recent
Environmental Protection Agency proposal regulating carbon emissions from existing power plants............

Senate's Top Republican Appropriator Doubts 2015 Defense Bill Reaches Floor

Defense News © July 25, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

Can the US Senate put aside a years-long procedural impasse and pass a Pentagon spending bill? The top Republican on the Appropriations Committee has his doubts. “If [Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid] wants it to come to the floor after recess and after the elections, it’ll come to the floor,” Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., the panel’s ranking member, told CongressWatch. “He has that prerogative.”........

Space Coast –

Delta IV Set To Launch From Canaveral Today At 7:03 p.m.

Space Coast Daily © July 23, 2014

A Delta IV Medium rocket will launch a mission for the U.S Air Force on Wednesday, July 23, from Space Launch Complex 37 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. Blastoff is planned for 7:03 p.m. EDT, and a live webcast can be viewed on SpaceCoastDaily.com beginning at 6:43 p.m. EDT. Launch Notes: AFSPC-4 will be the 33rd ULA mission for the U.S. Air Force. It will be the eighth of 15 planned missions ULA is slated to launch in 2014, and ULA’s 85th since the company formed in 2006........
MacDill AFB –

MacDill among best bases in rankings by Air Force Times

Tampa Tribune © July 22, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

MacDill Air Force Base, the only military installation in the world home to two U.S. combatant commands, may be loved in the Tampa area, but it was tied for sixth best in the Air Force Times’ ranking of 68 Air Force bases. MacDill, home to U.S. Central Command, U.S. Special Operations Command, the 6th Air Mobility Wing, the 927th Air Refueling Wing, the Joint Communications Support Element and other mission partners, was tied with Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota……..

MacDill may get $32 million in upgrades for new jets

Tampa Tribune © July 22, 2014

By Howard Altman

MacDill Air Force Base will likely receive about $32 million in upgrades to accommodate eight new KC-135 refueling jets scheduled to arrive here over the next few years, according to U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor. Castor, who hosted a bipartisan meeting between Tampa’s Congressional delegation and a top Air Force official on Tuesday, said that the delegation was advised about the needed infrastructure improvements by Kathleen Ferguson, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Environment and Logistics……..
Eglin AFB –

Transfer of Marine F-35s to South Carolina has begun


Northwest Florida Daily News © July 25, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE / Northwest Florida Daily News

Most of the Marines who have been stationed at the F-35 training center here have moved to South Carolina. The move is part of the relocation of VMFAT-501 from Eglin Air Force Base to Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, which has been part of the plan for some time, officials said. The squadron was welcomed to their new base late last week.....

Rough Ride for the F-35

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/26/opinion/Rough-Ride-for-the-F-35.html?_r=0


By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

The F-35 fighter jet was expected to be exhibited at an international air show a few weeks ago — a chance for America to showcase its state-of-the-art war plane, the world’s most expensive weapons project. But, in an embarrassing turn of events, the star-crossed, single-engine F-35 was a no-show. Instead of making its debut at the event in Farnborough, England — where government officials, defense contractors and experts gather annually to ogle new aviation technology — the plane was back in the United States, crippled by the latest in a series of setbacks. Despite this tormented history, Congress is still pouring money into a program that is intended to produce more than 2,400 F-35s for the Air Force, the Navy and the Marines through 2037.........
NS Mayport –

**Jacksonville environmentalists, fishers concerned about East Coast oil exploration decision**


Florida Times-Union © July 24, 2014

By **Meredith Rutland**

Oil companies and environmentalists are going head-to-head after the federal government decided last week to allow oil exploration off the East Coast of the U.S., including off Northeast Florida’s shores. Members of Jacksonville’s environmental community and fishing industry are concerned the search itself, as well as the drilling that could follow, will kill or injure dolphins, whales, fish and other aquatic species………

Tyndall AFB –

**France assumes top spot at Tyndall**


The News-Herald © July 24, 2014

**By CHRIS OLWELL | The News Herald**

Col. Derek C. France assumed command Thursday of the base where he learned to fly F-15s 20 years ago. “Coming back to Tyndall is kind of like coming home,” France said after the ceremony, standing with his wife, Amanda, before the 325 Fighter Wing’s Flagship. Airmen had just revealed his name on a panel under the cockpit where his predecessor Col. David Graff’s
name had been. Francetakes over leadership of the world’s largest contingent of F-22 Raptors
and the more than 4,000 personnel who fly, maintain and support them ..........

Florida National Guard –

Army Hates To Take Guard Apaches, But It ‘Must Happen’: Under Secretary Carson


Breaking Defense © July 23, 2014
By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

This hurts us more than it hurts you. That’s the essence of the regular Army’s message to the
National Guard about the Aviation Restructure Initiative (ARI), a controversial cost-cutting plan
that — among other things – strips the Guard of all its AH-64 Apache attack helicopters. Pain is
on its way for all of us, leader after leader told me, and ARI is the least worst way to allocate it.
But can they convince a skeptical Congress? ..........

Naval Air Station Pensacola –

Perdido chamber sponsors NAS Pensacola’s 100th Anniversary & Reunion

http://mulletwrapper.net/perdido-chamber-sponsors-nas-pensacolas-100th-anniversary-reunion/

Mullet Wrapper © July 23, 2014
The Perdido Key Chamber has joined forces with the Pensacola Chamber Foundation to sponsor the Naval Air Station Pensacola’s 100th Anniversary and Reunion. The $5000 Perdido Key sponsorship is funded from the Gulf Tourism Promotional Grant that PK Chamber received to help boost tourism to the Gulf Coast. The anniversary weekend will include a golf tournament at Marcus Pointe on August 21; a Reunion at Seville Quarter on August 22 and a Blue Wahoos game on August 23. For more information, contact Debi@pensacolachamberfoundation.com.

Pictured: Command Master Chief Jeff Grosso, NASP; Tina Morrison Director PKCOC; and Jack Williams, General Manager of Seville Quarter and NASP 100th Committee Chair

Patrick AFB –

**ACC commander shares AF vision**


Patrick AFB © July 18, 2014

by Staff Sgt. Sarah Pullen, 920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Gen. Mike Hostage, Air Combat Command commander, and wife Kathy Hostage visited with the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida July 15. Hostage encouraged Airmen to aim high while the Air Force adapts to the changes and challenges that will accrue over the next 10 years. "We are the best Air Force in the world and we know how to do business," said Hostage. "We will adapt to the challenges to get the mission done." During Hostage's stay with the 920th RQW he toured the flightline, the 920th Aeromedical Staging Squadron and the 308th Rescue Squadron. Airmen had the opportunity to address concerns with Hostage during an enlisted members' lunch and again at an all call.
Ten-Hut! Enlistees prepare for military life

Florida Today © July 17, 2014

By R. Norman Moody

A dozen trainees do push-ups in unison. Later, they pivot 180 degrees on their feet and, on command, exchange the customary military salute. These trainees, most of them recent high school graduates, are future airmen signed up on delayed entry and who have not yet started basic training. But they are already preparing to become part of the U.S. Air Force Reserve’s 920th Rescue Wing. They prepare for service at Patrick in the Development and Training Flight, a program designed to introduce them to the military and provide essential knowledge and training to help them successfully complete basic training.

West Point graduate assumes command of DEOMI

Patrick AFB © July 1, 2014

by Bryan Ripple

Army Col. Reese Turner assumed command of the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, during an assumption of command ceremony June 27, 2014, at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. Army Lt. Gen. Michael Linnington, Military Deputy to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, presided over the ceremony. Turner is the 15th military commandant to lead the Defense Department’s Center of Excellence for human relations education, training, and research. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, in 1988, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Engineering and was commissioned a field artillery officer. He also earned a Master’s of Organizational Management Degree from the University of Phoenix, Las Vegas, Nevada, in 1999, and a Master’s in National Security
Defense Contractors --

DEFENSE FIRMS TO SEE $26B MORE IN OUTLAYS BY SEPT. 30, DOD SAYS


BLOOMBERG NEWS © JULY 22, 2014

By Tony Capaccio and Holly Rosenkrantz | July 22, 2014 07:30AM ET

Revised Pentagon mid-year projections call for $26b more in procurement, research outlays by Sept. 30 than first estimates, according to newly disclosed figures. Pentagon’s on-paper estimate now projects spending $110.7b on procurement by end of fiscal yr, up from $92.1b April forecast; as well as $63.3b in research, up from $56b, according to Pentagon spokesman Navy Commander Bill Urban. Military personnel outlays drop to $149.5b from $154.2b; operations and Maintenance slip to $246.3b from $272.8b……..

U.S. Military Superiority Requires Broader Supply Base, Real Acquisition Reform


Breaking Defense © July 22, 2014

By BILL LYNN

The U.S. defense industry, being reshaped by declining post-war budgets, globalization, and the increased pace of technological change, must work with the Pentagon and take proactive steps to maintain our historic preeminence on the battlefield. Our industry does not easily embrace change. In fact, history demonstrates that shifts in the defense industry have largely been triggered by major external events – World War II or the end of the Cold War. We stand at a similar point now given the drawdown of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, combined with the
impact of commercial and international technology on defense, especially in the realm of telecommunications, cybersecurity and drones.........

**Advisers to DoD: Help Private-Sector Innovators Help You**

[http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140726/DEFREG02/307260019](http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140726/DEFREG02/307260019)

Defense News © July 26, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY

It's well past time for the Pentagon to revamp its acquisition processes so the private sector can boost its role in technology development, a key Pentagon advisory panel said on Thursday. At a Pentagon meeting, the Defense Business Board unanimously approved far-reaching recommendations meant to improve DoD's business dealings with the private sector, particularly companies that have not traditionally sought defense contracts.........

**US Doubles Down on Foreign Military Sales**


Defense News © July 19, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The United States military-industrial complex, battered by budget cuts and drops in domestic procurement, made it clear at this year’s Farnborough International Airshow that it is targeting the world market as never before. There were more than 230 US exhibitors at the show, ranging from major companies such as Lockheed Martin and Boeing down to producers of small avionics. The American presence was impossible to avoid, with large “International US Pavilion” signs hanging from many booths.......
Report Advocates Overhaul of Combatant Commands

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/July%202014/July%2023%202014/Report-Advocates-Overhaul%20of%20Combatant%20Commands.aspx

Air Force Magazine © July 23, 2014

BY OTTO KREISHER

A panel of former senior military and diplomatic officials is advocating a substantial change to the organization and focus of the military’s geographic combatant commands, arguing the current structure and function “are relics of a bygone era.” The report, issued July 22 by the Atlantic Council, calls for a much greater role for the State Department in the command structure and functioning of the six regional COCOMs in order to apply a “whole of government” approach to the nation’s international security challenges. With only the military commands empowered “to execute foreign and defense policy in key regions of the world,” the report reads, “US government regional actions often are uncoordinated and disconnected.”

Blue Angels add XO, screening after misconduct report


Navy Times © July 22, 2014

By Mark Faram and Meghann Myers

In the wake of a high-profile misconduct investigation of the Blue Angels, the Navy’s top aviator announced sweeping changes to the flight demonstration squadron’s unique structure — changes officials hope will yield a better-run squadron. The Blue Angels will get an executive officer for the first time in the squadron’s history and the member selection process will be overhauled to include more oversight from personnel officials, Vice Adm. David Buss, the head of Naval Air Forces, ordered as part of changes announced Tuesday.
Boeing Eating KC-46 Overrun


Air Force Magazine © July 25, 2014

BY JOHN A. TIRPAK

The Air Force won’t bear any costs stemming from a previously undisclosed redesign and necessary rework of KC-46 tanker test models being built by Boeing, the service said Thursday. Company CEO James McNerney, in a telecom with financial reporters, revealed Wednesday the company is taking a $272 million charge against earnings in the second quarter to cover the cost of fixing a problem with wiring harnesses on test and production aircraft. USAF spokesman Ed Gulick said “all costs above the $4.9 billion ceiling” on the fixed-price program “will continue to be Boeing’s responsibility” and government costs “will not go up as a result” of Boeing’s announcement. McNerney said the problem is “well understood” and the fix is being installed to keep the program “on track to the next major milestone,” which he said will be the first flight of the “fully provisioned tanker” near the end of the third quarter……..

‘$1 Billion-Plus Short’: Hill’s Amphib Add Isn’t Enough, So Navy Wants To Repurpose It


Breaking Defense © July 25, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Sometimes $800 million is not enough. Congress really, really wants the Navy to buy a 12th San Antonio-class amphibious warship. The Marine Corps really, really wants the ship, which would be designated LPD-28. And of course shipbuilder Huntington-Ingalls really, really wants the contract, which would help fill a multi-year gap in amphib construction. But the Navy’s top acquisition official, Sean Stackley, made clear today the service dares not sign that contract until it’s confident that it will eventually get full funding to buy the ship, over $2 billion……..
FDSTF Update – August 4, 2014

FDSTF Members –

1. **Task Force Conference Call Meeting on August 21st** -- The Task Force will conduct its next meeting via conference call from **10:00 – 11:00 AM EDT on Thursday, August 21, 2014**. This conference call meeting is open to the public.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Number** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Support Task Force 2015 Grant Applications** -- The grant application process for FY 2015 grants was released on July 16th. The deadline for submissions is August 22, 2014. All grant applications must be sponsored by a Task Force member. Task Force members should expect to be contacted concerning sponsorship for 2015 grant applications.

4. **Attachments:**
   - TPG monthly report
   - USAF Strategy 2014
   - REPI Information

Regards, BG.

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Inhofe pleads with GOP to file defense amendments now


By Ramsey Cox

Senate Armed Services Committee ranking member James Inhofe (R-Okla.) warned Republicans that if they don’t file amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) now, they might not get a vote. “No one should complain later on about not having their amendments heard if they’re not sending them down right now,” Inhofe said on the Senate floor Wednesday. “There is no reason to put it off. We don’t want to go through what we had to last time.”

Sen. Reid Wants To Complete NDAA in September; Says Weekend Work Likely


By JOHN T. BENNETT
US Senate Majority Leader Sen. Harry Reid signaled Thursday that the chamber will take up its version of a 2015 Pentagon policy bill in September. The Nevada Democrat kicked off perhaps the final day of legislative work before a five-week recess with a floor speech laying out the chamber’s priorities for September, noting there is “a lot to do” before Congress leaves again for all of October to campaign for the midterm elections……..

**National Defense Panel Slams Sequester – But Can It Change Minds?**


Breaking Defense © July 31, 2014

By **SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.**

This afternoon, a congressionally chartered panel of prestigious defense experts denounced sequestration as “self-defeating” and a “serious strategic misstep” that “Congress and the President should repeal…immediately.” But will it preach to anyone not already in the choir?

While bipartisan, the National Defense Panel is most heeded by House Republicans. They see it as a valuable alternative to the Obama administration’s Quadrennial Defense Reviews, which House Armed Services Chairman **Buck McKeon in particular considers so inadequate as to violate the law**. (There were NDPs under Clinton as well, but not during the Bush years). Both the **2010 NDP** and this one call for more defense spending in general and a stronger Navy in particular……..

**Amid Squabbling, a Glimmer of Hope on Senate Defense Bill**

US lawmakers spent the days before a five-week legislative break trading barbs and moving bills with little chance of becoming law. But just before they departed, the US defense sector received a glimmer of hope. There was a new feeling on the Senate side of the Capitol late last week that the chamber would begin work on the Senate Armed Services Committee-passed 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) in September. 

Space Coast –

**US satellites launched to spy on China's space program: Global Times**


WantChinaTimes © July 26, 2014

A Delta IV rocket carrying two US Air Force satellites was launched on the evening of July 23 at Cape Canaveral Air Station, Florida, according to US newspaper Stars and Stripes, which China’s nationalistic Global Times says is an attempt to spy on China’s space infrastructure. The satellites are equipped with a Geosynchronous Space Situational Awareness Program (GSSAP) which enables the air force to observe the satellite’s surroundings in space, including US and foreign space infrastructure. They will be the first satellites to be launched with the system installed.

**2 military satellites launched on Delta 4 rocket**

[http://www.bigstory.ap.org/article/2-military-satellites-launched-delta-4-rocket](http://www.bigstory.ap.org/article/2-military-satellites-launched-delta-4-rocket)

AP © July 28, 2014
A Delta 4 rocket has lifted off from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station carrying two satellites for the U.S. Air Force. The United Launch Alliance rocket was launched Monday evening. It will place a pair of satellites into orbit for the Air Force. The twin spacecraft will support U.S. Strategic Command space surveillance operations. They will also be used to help track space debris.

MacDill AFB –

Scott DeThomas: MacDill AFB charter school would greatly improve quality of life for members, families, city


Tampa Tribune © July 31, 2014

As I approach the end of my two-year tour, I want to thank Hillsborough County School Board members for the continued support of the 25,000 family members of veterans enrolled in Hillsborough County Public Schools. These children represent a unique group of young men and women whose parents chose military service in defense of our nation. Although these children move two to three times more than their civilian counterparts, or to six to nine schools during the normal K-12 experience, these children benefit from a community that supports their needs and is willing to address the unique challenges faced by military families.

MacDill Charter School proposal was properly rejected

http://tbo.com/list/news-opinion-commentary/macdill-charter-school-proposal-was-properly-rejected-20140729/

Tampa Tribune © July 29, 2014

BY ROBIN R. JONES

In his recent op-ed (“School choice works — and it will work for MacDill AFB,” Other Views, July 17), Richard Page, executive vice president of Charter Schools USA, a large, multi-state,
for-profit charter school development and management corporation, challenged the Hillsborough County School Board’s unanimous rejection of their attempt to open a franchised school at MacDill Air Force Base. True to his corporate dedication to private profit rather than public education, Page’s piece was more advertising than informed discussion. Most obvious is his failure to address the primary reason the application was rejected, which was its lack of a local nonprofit board that would provide arm’s length oversight of the for-profit management company……..

MACDILL GROUP MAKES ANOTHER BID FOR A BASE CHARTER SCHOOL


TAMPA BAY TIMES © JULY 31, 2014

By MARLENE SOKOL

A group representing the MacDill Air Force Base community submitted a second application Thursday to open a kindergarten-through-eighth grade charter school at the base. The Hillsborough County school district said no to their first plan in December, raising questions about governance. At issue was the nonprofit organization that applied for the charter, Florida Charter Educational Foundation, and the for-profit management company, Charter Schools USA. Both are based in Fort Lauderdale, and they work closely together....... 

Eglin AFB –

Opinion: Missing Shows Points To Bigger JSF Problems

http://aviationweek.com/defense/opinion-missing-shows-points-bigger-jsf-problems

Aviation Week © July 28, 2014

By Bill Sweetman / Aviation Week & Space Technology

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter will survive its failure to show up at two major international air exhibitions this month. It was a good thing, in that the non-event showed that the U.S. and British military airworthiness experts had the authority and common sense to
put safety first. The no-show does point to issues with the program. Despite some rhetoric, there is no such thing as an "isolated" failure on the scale of the June 23 fan-stage breakup that caused the recent grounding. The purpose of mishap investigations is to learn lessons that will reduce the incidence of similar events; at the very least, the component that failed was designed at the same time as the other engine parts that have failed, by the same team and using the same tools……..

**Analyst: F-35C to Cost $337 Million Apiece in FY15**


DOD Buzz © July 30, 2014

By Brendan McGarry

A longtime defense analyst and critic of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program says taxpayers next year will pay between $148 million and $337 million per jet, depending on the model. Winslow Wheeler, a staff member at the Project On Government Oversight who has worked on national-security issues for the Senate and the Government Accountability Office, detailed his cost estimates for the Lockheed Martin Corp.-made fifth-generation stealth fighter in a recent article on Medium.com. Wheeler puts the per-plane production price tag at $148 million for the Air Force’s F-35A, which can take off and land on conventional runways; $251 million for the Marine Corps’ F-35B, which can fly like a plane and hover and land like a helicopter; and $337 million for the Navy’s F-35C, which can take off and land on aircraft carriers. The average cost for all three variants is $178 million, he wrote……..

**Poseidon completes debut deployment**

http://www.navytimes.com/article/20140802/NEWS04/308020039/Poseidon-completes-debut-deployment

Navy Times © August 2, 2014

By Mark D. Faram

Patrol Squadron 16 returned to Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida, after a seven-month deployment to Kadena Air Base on Okinawa, Japan. The squadron’s last P-8A touched down at NAS Jacksonville on July 16, signaling the beginning of the end for the
venerable P-3C Orion, which will phased out over the rest of the decade. “The P-8 Poseidon either met or exceeded any expectations I had for that aircraft,” said Cmdr. Daniel Papp, VP-16’s commanding officer......

NAS Key West –

**Navy, Air Force air traffic controllers cross-train for emergencies**


DVIDS © July 27, 2014

Air National Guardsmen with the 245th and 259th Air Traffic Control Squadrons conducted air traffic control training at Naval Air Station Key West July 21-25. Air Force maintainers and air traffic controllers were transported from South Carolina and Louisiana, respectively, by the 172nd Airlift Control Flight for cross-training with Navy air traffic controllers. The ATC squadrons are two of 10 that respond to Federal Aviation Administration requests to support the influx of air traffic during large-scale events such as the 2013 Super Bowl in Hammond, Louisiana, or natural disasters such as Hurricane Andrew which caused an estimated damage of $25 billion in South Florida......

Avon Park –

**Air Force Range’s impact: $68 million**


Highlands Today © July 25, 2014

By Gary Pinnell | Highlands Today
Drive northeast to the front gate of Avon Park Air Force Range. “You don’t see a blasted thing,” Stephen Weeks said. “You come up to a gate, and you are not going to see anything more than when you go out to Highlands Hammock State Park. All the stuff is in the back. “What we’ve got is a training base, and it’s one of the few in the nation of its size,” said Weeks, executive director of Highlands County Industrial Development Authority and Economic Development Commission..........

Defense Contractors --

Defense Industry Funds Flow to Contenders for Key House Chairmanships

http://blogs.rollcall.com/five-by-five/defense-industry-funds-flow-to-contenders-for-key-house-chairmanships/?dcz=

By Tim Starks

In politics, money flows to power. Apparently it flows to the potential for power, too. Four of the top five candidates for the chairmanships of the House Armed Services and Intelligence panels have raised considerably more money this election cycle than they did at a similar point in 2012. The same four have also raised much more money from the defense industry than before – in some cases, more than doubling their takes. Most of them, too, have raised more money in the first full quarter since the departures of the incumbent chairmen became official, and donated more to other candidates and GOP party committees than in the last cycle........

Other Items of Interest –

GAO: Littoral Combat Ship Too Fat
Moving from the construction phase into testing, it turns out the littoral combat ship has gotten too heavy, and that has slowed it down, according to the Government Accountability Office. The LCS is a reconfigurable Navy vessel that can be focused on surface warfare, mine countermeasures and anti-submarine warfare. The GAO report on the LCS released Wednesday is a public version of one deemed too sensitive for public distribution, and that was sought by the fiscal 2014 defense policy law. “Outstanding weight management and concurrency risks related to buying ships while key concepts and performance are still being tested continue to complicate LCS acquisitions,” the report summary states……..


By AARON MEHTA

The US Air Force is calling for closer ties to industry, better relations with Congress, and increased flexibility for both airmen and acquisitions — all part of a 30-year strategy document unveiled Wednesday. Titled “America’s Air Force: A Call to the Future,” the document is part of a broader strategic overview ordered by Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh this year. Welsh announced his goal of taking a longer look into the future during February’s Air Force Association conference in Orlando, Florida……..

Future of US Fast Supply Ships Questioned
By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS
While lawmakers routinely question the US Navy about aircraft carriers, submarines, cruisers and other warships, it's rare that the lowly combat logistics force comes into the congressional viewfinder. But on Wednesday, the future of the ships that bring ammunition, fuel and food to fighting ships at sea came under scrutiny, even as the Navy wrestles with whether to take some of its most capable support ships out of service as an economy measure………

A Wake Up Call to Washington on Defense

By Mackenzie Eaglen

While lawmakers are set to leave for the August recess this week and presume their work in Washington is done for the summer, a bipartisan blue-ribbon commission report out Thursday has a different message and stark warning. The bottom line: The Budget Control Act, with its massive defense cuts totaling almost $1 trillion, has harmed America’s military, and immediate reversal is required. The force is nearing high-risk status, and the outcomes could be disastrous for those in uniform, the nation, and its interests. Defense heavyweights – including Bill Clinton’s Secretary of Defense, former defense policy chiefs to Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush, and the former Senate Seapower chairman – just sent over their “stress test” of the Pentagon’s latest defense strategy to Capitol Hill……
FDSTF Members –

1. **Task Force Conference Call Meeting on August 21st** -- The Task Force will conduct its next meeting via conference call from **10:00 – 11:00 AM EDT on Thursday, August 21, 2014**. This conference call meeting is open to the public. During this conference call, the Task Force will consider 2 proposals from the Principi Group for projects that will assist in the mission of preserving, protecting and enhancing Florida’s military installations. These proposals will be sent out as “read-aheads” later this week.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Number** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Support Task Force 2015 Grant Applications**--- The grant application process for FY 2015 grants was released on July 16th. The deadline for submissions is August 22, 2014. All grant applications must be sponsored by a Task Force member. Task Force members should expect to be contacted concerning sponsorship for 2015 grant applications.


5. **Attachments:**

   - Notes from Bi-weekly TPG call
   - Flier for this week’s Military, Defense and Veterans’ Summit in Orlando

Regards, BG.

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**Bruce Grant**  
Defense Consultant  
Enterprise Florida, Inc.  
101 North Monroe Street, Suite 1000  
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Articles of Interest:

FDSTF –

**Military friendly task force tours base**


By Clark Pierce

Members of the Florida Defense Support Task Force (FDSTF), a legislatively mandated council, were welcomed aboard NAS Jacksonville July 31 by Community Planning Liaison Officer Matt Schellhorn. The group came to tour Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE), the Jacksonville area’s largest industrial employer, as well as VP-45, the third maritime patrol squadron to transition to the Navy’s new P-8A Poseidon maritime and patrol aircraft………..

**NAS Jacksonville Earns Praise from Visitors**


Defense Communities 360 © August 6, 2014

The Florida Defense Support Task Force came aboard Naval Air Station Jacksonville last month to tour the Fleet Readiness Center Southeast and a maritime patrol squadron as part of its duties to promote the state’s military installations. According to consultants interviewed by the Florida Times-Union, the air station is well positioned to survive future base closings and, possibly, grow. “As for the future, I can confidently say that NAS Jacksonville will not close. The base may lose some military billets due to sequestration — which may also reduce base operating funds,” said Charlie Battaglia
with the Principi Group. James Hinkle of the Spectrum Group praised the readiness center’s extensive capabilities to work on multiple aircraft, including the F/A-18 and P-3. “And don’t forget the base’s growing support for unmanned aerial vehicles. You can see that people take good care of this base and that it’s ready for more growth,” he said.

Space Coast –

**SpaceX launches Falcon 9 rocket**


Bay News 9 © August 4, 2014

By Greg Pallone, Brevard County Reporter

After aborting a launch attempt early in the countdown, SpaceX was able to launch their Falcon 9 rocket early Tuesday morning. The 1:25 a.m. attempt was aborted for an unexplained technical issue. After evaluating the situation, launch officials decided to make a second attempt before the window closed at 4:11 a.m. SpaceX is delivering a satellite to space for the AsiaSat Company, which serves two-thirds of the world’s population……..

**Will Florida Get Pushed Out of the New Space Age?**


City Lab © August 6, 2014

By Laura Bliss
In the early 1960s, the Florida Development Commission released a short film promoting Cape Canaveral and Project Mercury, the glorious human spaceflight program taking shape there. According to the well-assured narrator, the Cape—the “Moonport of the free world”—was “so well suited for its role in the space age, it is almost as though it has been destined through the centuries just for this moment in history.” Today, that destiny has become something of an encumbrance. The Space Coast, as the region just east of Orlando is often called, is still home to the Canaveral Air Force Base, NASA’s Kennedy Space Center (KSC), and countless companies set up to service these federal entities.

NOTU Orlando –

**Training brings U.S. Navy to Port Canaveral**


Florida Today © August 4, 2014

By R. Norman Moody

Petty Officer 3rd Class Mark Hooper was among several sailor in battle dress uniform setting up a trailer-mounted radar equipment Monday outside a tent at the Naval Ordnance Test Unit. Some 200 sailors, reservists with the Coastal Riverine Force Squadron 10, are at the port for an annual training that prepares troops for deployment to conduct maritime security for different military operation and to protect high-value military assets. "It's immersing me in the culture of the Navy expeditionary community," Hooper said. "We don't always get this kind of experience."

MacDill AFB –

**MacDill’s Col. DeThomas discusses his command as it reaches end**
A week before assuming command of the 6th Air Mobility Wing two years ago, Col. Scott DeThomas got a taste of what he was in for as the officer in charge of MacDill Air Force Base, a 5,700-acre facility with more than $2 billion in assets and more than 14,000 military and civilian employees. “I was getting my wing commander’s orientation and there was a knock on the door and they pulled the boss out,” says DeThomas, “and he came back and cleared the room and said, ‘everyone leave except you colonel.’ And then he proceeded to tell me what had happened.”

Centcom orders Iraq airstrikes as Tulley takes MacDill command

As Air Force Col. Daniel Tulley assumed command of the 6th Air Mobility Wing in a ceremony at MacDill Air Force Base on Friday morning, the importance of the base and its mission was highlighted by events taking place nearly 7,000 miles away in Iraq. About two hours before Tulley took over from the retiring Col. Scott DeThomas, U.S. Central Command, headquartered at MacDill, ordered a strike against Sunni insurgents in Iraq, who have been overrunning Iraqi government troops. Just before 7 a.m., two F/A-18 Hornets dropped 500-pound laser-guided bombs on a mobile artillery piece near Irbil, according to the Pentagon.

Hurlburt Field –

Update on Hurlburt overpass
About a year after it began, construction on the U.S. Highway 98 overpass at the base’s entrance is well underway, though bad weather has set the project several months behind. “The storms we had in April, the whole Northwest Florida panhandle was affected by that,” said Dan Wilcoxen, chief of military construction for Hurlburt Field.

NS Mayport –

**Increased military presence from Mayport to Blount Island**

Beginning Monday, commuters in the Mayport and Blount Island areas will notice an increased military presence as the Navy Marine Corps conducts its biggest yearly exercise on the east coast. As part of “Bold Alligator 2014,” the Navy Marine Corps will offload supplies from a Maritime Prepositions Force ship anchored off the coast near the mouth of the St. Johns River. “So we will be offloading and you’ll see a great, big ship,” says Rear Admiral Cindy Thebaud. “All sorts of amphibious craft will be coming ashore.”

**Navy to base 6 littoral combat ships at Mayport**

By Steve Patrick
The Navy made it official Thursday: Six littoral combat ships will be homeported at Mayport Naval Station starting in 2016, and more of the Navy's newest ships could be assigned there by 2020. The six ships would bring 900 sailors and support personnel to the Mayport area. The ships are the future Little Rock, Sioux City, Wichita, Billings, Indianapolis and LCS 19 (name pending). "Naval Station Mayport should be the rightful home of the Navy's cutting edge ships and technologies, and I'm pleased by what the LCS will mean for Florida and Jacksonville's military community," said Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Florida. "With this announcement the Navy is again demonstrating how vital Mayport is to U.S. national defense and our maritime security posture."

SBR Returns To Mediterranean


Mayport Mirror © August 6, 2014

By Ensign Evan Albright

The Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58) departed Naval Station Mayport, June 16, for a deployment to the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa. Following the ship’s transatlantic voyage to the Mediterranean, Samuel B. Roberts’ first port visit was Augusta Bay, Sicily. While in Augusta Bay, crew members took the opportunity to explore nearby towns like Sigonella and Catania……

NS Mayport, Florida Homeport of Six LCS from 2016


Naval Today © August 8, 2014

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus officially announced Aug. 7 that six Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) will be homeported at Naval Station (NS) Mayport, Florida beginning in 2016. The decision to homeport the ships in Mayport follows previous discussions to expand training and infrastructure to support the continued development of the program. “LCS was designed for naval operations today and tomorrow, and will be a key component of our fleet for a long time to come,” Mabus said. “The assignment of these six ships underscores just how important the First Coast is to our national defense, and how committed we are to the strategic
dispersal of our Fleet. Mayport will soon be a hub for small surface combat ships, and will continue to serve as an important Navy partner.”

2 ships will bring 1,300 sailors to Mayport in August; 6 more ships coming in 2016


Florida Times-Union © August 9, 2014

By Clifford Davis

The USS Iwo Jima and the USS Fort McHenry, along with their 1,300 sailors, will arrive at their new home port of Mayport Naval Station on Sunday, Aug. 17. The two ships will join the USS New York — a vessel that landed here in December — to complete the three-ship San Antonio Amphibious Ready Group, or ARG. “We are excited,” said the Iwo Jima’s commanding officer, Capt. Jim McGovern. “We found out about coming down to Mayport in June of 2012 and shortly after we found out we started getting orders from sailors who were already in Mayport who wanted to come to the ship.”

SOUTHCOM –

SOUTHCOM Launches Annual Panama Canal Exercise

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/August%202014/August%202014/SOUTHCOM-Launches-Annual-Panama-Canal-Exercise.aspx

Air Force Magazine © August 11, 2014

US Southern Command launched its annual Panamax 2014 on Aug. 8. Air Forces Southern airmen based at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., along with personnel from Marine Corps Forces South, Navy Forces South, and SOUTHCOM, joined 16 allied nations in the seven-day exercise, which is focused on defending the Panama Canal, according to an Aug. 8 release. Participants will “use simulations to command and control multinational sea, air, cyber, and land forces defending the vital waterway and surrounding areas against threats from violent extremism, natural disasters, and
pandemic outbreaks.” Panamax 2014 will also feature a B-52 Stratofortress “to support maritime detection and monitoring—the first time in three years a live military asset [has been deployed] during exercise scenarios,” states the release. Participating countries are from the Caribbean islands, Central America, parts of South America, and France.

Tyndall AFB –

Air Force earns majority of federal energy awards

AF Mil News © August 6, 2014
By Jennifer McCabe

It's a banner year for the Air Force with the Department of Energy recently announcing that service won a lion's share of 2014 Federal Energy Management Program awards. The Air Force won its most ever: eight of the 25 projects or programs selected as deserving of this year's coveted FEMP awards. In total, 10 government agencies won awards including the Navy with four and the Army with one. The Air Force Civil Engineer Center received 29 nomination packages from across the Air Force and culled them down to 15, the maximum accepted by DOE......

Patrick AFB –

Senior leader visits; summer safety reminders

Patrick AFB © August 1, 2014

Commentary by Brig. Gen. Nina Armagno, 45th Space Wing Commander

Let me begin by saying what an honor it was for the Sharks of the 45th Space Wing to host Lt. Gen. John W. Raymond, and his wife, Mollie earlier this week. Gen. Raymond serves as the commander of the 14th Air Force, (Air Forces Strategic), Air Force Space Command; and also as
the commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Space, U.S. Strategic Command, Vandenberg Air Force Base, California. In other words, there are not many leaders in our Air Force who understand better than Gen. Raymond the importance of what we do here at Team Patrick-Cape, and I was so happy to have him be able to meet and talk with so many of you………

**Despite SpaceX plans, Nelson pushes for Brevard launches**


Florida Today © August 5, 2014

U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson on Tuesday downplayed the news that SpaceX CEO Elon Musk selected Texas for the site of a private launch complex. Nelson, an Orlando Democrat, told FLORIDA TODAY many of SpaceX's launches would remain here and that the Cape is taking steps to welcome more commercial launches. "I think you're going to see a lot of commercial activity that is going to be there and on the Kennedy Space Center," Nelson said in an interview at his Orlando office. "So I think we have a robust future."……

Other Items of Interest –

**Air Force Establishes Provisional Installation Support Center at JB Andrews**


Defense Communities 360 © August 7, 2014

The Air Force on Friday will stand up a provisional version of the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, the new organization that will consolidate policy and oversight of installation and mission support activities now performed at 10 major commands and two direct reporting unit staffs. The center’s temporary headquarters will be at Joint Base Andrews, Md., with Maj. Gen. Theresa Carter as its provisional commander, officials announced Thursday. Carter has been developing the strategy and implementation plan for the center while serving as the special assistant to the commander of Air Force Materiel Command. AFMC will be the parent organization for the center……..
August 18, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Task Force Conference Call Meeting This Thursday** -- The Task Force will conduct its next meeting via conference call from **10:00 – 11:00 AM EDT on Thursday, August 21, 2014**. This conference call meeting is open to the public. During this conference call, the Task Force will consider 2 proposals from the Principi Group for projects that will assist in the mission of preserving, protecting and enhancing Florida’s military installations. These proposals were sent out last week as “read-aheads” and are attached to this email. FOR TASK FORCE MEMBERS – If you have not already done so, please let Marcy or me know if you will be on the conference call so we can verify a quorum.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call In Number** –

Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
Access Code: 8784566

3. **Florida Defense Support Task Force 2015 Grant Applications** --- The grant application process for FY 2015 grants was released on July 16th. The deadline for submissions is August 22, 2014. All grant applications must be sponsored by a Task Force member. Task Force members should expect to be contacted concerning sponsorship for 2015 grant applications.


5. **Attachments**:

- 2 proposals from The Principi Group
- Remarks from Secretary Principi at the Florida Chamber Foundation Military, Defense and Veterans Opportunity Summit

Regards, BG.

Bruce Grant
Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

**CR Likely to Extend into December**


Defense Communities 360 © August 11, 2014

A continuing resolution (CR) needed to keep the federal open starting Oct. 1 likely would provide funding until the middle of December. Extending a stopgap spending bill through the second week of December would allow lawmakers to put off any difficult votes until after the midterm elections while giving House and Senate appropriators time to reach a deal on a fiscal 2015 omnibus, reports CQ........

Space Coast –

**Melbourne air show includes Thunderbirds, jump team**
By David Berman, FLORIDA TODAY

Organizers of the Melbourne Air & Space Show on Monday unveiled the lineup for the Oct. 4-5 event. In addition to the previously announced U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, the air show will include such acts as the U.S. Army Silver Wings parachute jump team, as well as aerobatic demonstrations from Greg Connell, Gary Ward and Kent Pietsch, who lands his airplane on top of a moving motor home during his act. Other performances will feature an F-4U Corsair demo, an L-39 Jet demo, a Super Decathlon and a Wild Waco biplane.

Hyten Takes Charge of Space Command

Gen. John Hyten became the 16th commander of Air Force Space Command, succeeding Gen. William Shelton in a ceremony at Peterson AFB, Colo. Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh presided over the Aug. 15 ceremony, according to a command release. Hyten, who had been AFSPC's vice commander since May 2012, received his fourth star prior to taking charge. He now oversees the Air Force's space and cyber forces, some 42,000 airmen and civilians worldwide. Hyten attended Harvard University on an Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship. He graduated in 1981 with a bachelor's degree in engineering and applied sciences and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. Shelton is retiring from the Air Force after more than three and a half years as AFSPC's leader and a career of 38 years in uniform.
MacDill AFB Job Center Helps Transitioning Airmen Stay in Tampa

A new career center at MacDill Air Force Base is offering separating service members assistance with their job search needs as they transition into post-military careers. Its services — including job search assistance, resume review, employer information sessions and recruitment events — also are expected to make it easier for more Air Force veterans to stay in the Tampa area. “Right now, we know that about six out of every 10 who transition out of the military at MacDill end up somewhere else than Tampa,” said Scott DeThomas, the outgoing base commander said at the center’s opening last week. “There are a lot of great resources that want to help. Unfortunately, the military does not have a lot of resources to make available,” he said, reported the Tampa Tribune.

MacDill hurricane hunters to get $35 million overhaul

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

“Miss Piggy” is getting new wings. “Kermit,” too. The two old, lumbering Orion P-3 propeller driven aircraft that fly into hurricanes out of MacDill Air Force Base for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, will be getting a major overhaul over the next three years. But the $35 million refurbishing job won’t take the planes, named for beloved Muppet characters, out of service this hurricane season, Nor will it drastically affect NOAA’s ability to gather information on storms, officials say.

Eglin AFB –

Further Restrictions Lifted for F-35 Test Fleet; Army Awarded Contract

By AARON MEHTA

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter test fleet will be able to fly six hours between engine inspections for weapon test and refueling missions, as restrictions on the fifth-generation fighter continue to ease. Previously, the entire F-35 fleet was limited to three hours of flight time before an engine inspection was required as an investigation continues into a fire that heavily damaged an F-35A model on June 23. The test fleet is made up of 20 F-35 fighters. The remaining 79 F-35s are still operating under the full restrictions.

Florida Panhandle Welcomes New Marriott Property

Meetings Focus © August 2014
The 112-suite TownePlace Suites by Marriott in Fort Walton Beach, Fla., is scheduled to open Friday, Aug. 15, 2014. Located at 843 Eglin Parkway, the TownePlace Suites Fort Walton Beach – Eglin AFB will operate as a Marriott franchise, owned and managed by InterMountain Management, LLC of Monroe, Louisiana. Located five miles from Northwest Florida Regional Airport and six minutes from the beach, the hotel offers guests access to Eglin AFB, Air Force Armament Museum and Gulfarium. Rates vary depending on length of stay.

Editorial: JSF Program Has Some Explaining To Do

Aviation Week © August 12, 2014
The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program will certainly recover from the embarrassment of missing its intended international debut in the U.K. last month after an engine fire grounded the fleet for 13 days. But numerous questions remain to be
answered before we can be equally confident that the most costly weapons procurement in history is back on course. The engine-related grounding—the program’s fourth since January 2013—must not be approached merely on narrow technical grounds if, as we fear, there prove to be lessons to be learned about program management, as well……..

Team Eglin supports Army Apache testing

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/eglin/team-eglin-supports-army-apache-testing-1.358909

Northwest Florida Daily News © August 14, 2014

“Can you hear me now?” Similar to popular cell phone advertisements, Team Eglin’s engineers are demonstrating how they provide a connection between different contacts to create a joint network. This network environment being created tests the AH-64E Apache, the Army’s first airborne platform equipped with the Link 16 communications system. Testing began here Aug. 4. The overall goal of the testing is to assess the helicopter’s Block 3 capability to include recent upgrades of an air-to-air-ground video relay, embedded diagnostics, external fuel tank system and the newly integrated Link 16……..

NS Mayport –

New ships mean business boom for Mayport


Action News Jax © August 11, 2014

By Lorena Inclán

Mayport is set to get a huge influx of sailors starting this Sunday with the home-porting of the Iwo Jima and the Fort McHenry. Businesses say its their much-needed break, while ship repair companies are gearing up to hire more employees. All signs point to an economic boost for the
often-forgotten part of Duval County. On any given day, it’s likely you’ll find sailors eating at Jim Snyder’s Home Plate Diner on Mayport Road……..

**LCS To Mayport: SECNAV Identifies Six Ships to Homeport In 2016**


Mayport Mirror © August 13, 2014

*From the Office of the Chief of Information*

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus officially announced Aug. 7 that six Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) will be homeported at Naval Station (NS) Mayport, Florida beginning in 2016. The decision to homeport the ships in Mayport follows previous discussions to expand training and infrastructure to support the continued development of the program. “LCS was designed for naval operations today and tomorrow, and will be a key component of our fleet for a long time to come,” Mabus said. “The assignment of these six ships underscores just how important the First Coast is to our national defense, and how committed we are to the strategic dispersal of our Fleet. Mayport will soon be a hub for small surface combat ships, and will continue to serve as an important Navy partner.”

**USS Iwo Jima crew prepares for move to Mayport**


News 4 Jax © August 14, 2014

By *Kent Justice*

A two-year effort to bring more warships to Northeast Florida comes to fruition this weekend as the final two-thirds of the Iwo Jima Amphibious Readiness Group will arrive in Mayport on Sunday. News4Jax will give a sailor’s perspective from Thursday until the ships arrive. The USS Fort McHenry and USS Iwo Jima will join the USS New York, which arrived in Mayport in December. News4Jax anchor Kent Justice will be aboard the USS Iwo Jima as it sails down the Atlantic Coast from Norfolk, Virginia…….
Naval groups arrive in Mayport for war training exercises


Action News © August 14, 2014

NATO Maritime Group Two landed in Mayport on Thursday for fleet exercises. The naval exercises will include testing multiple war fighting skill sets called FLEETEX. Ships from the U.S., Canada, Germany and Turkey will be involved in the exercises. This training is the first time in several years that a NATO task force has met for long haul operations in North America. The events give multiple opportunities for training at a high level of maritime operations……..

Hundreds welcome USS Iwo Jima, USS Fort McHenry to their new homes in Mayport


Florida Times-Union © August 17, 2014

By Jim Schoettler

Lisa Hart couldn’t contain her excitement glancing side-to-side at the sailors manning the rails of the USS Iwo Jima as the amphibious assault ship inched closer to its new home at Mayport Naval Station early Sunday afternoon. “I see him,” Hart said, jokingly, of Petty Officer 1st Class Ryan Hart. “He’s the one in white. He’s up there. I know he’s there.”

Defense Contractors --

Boeing expects most of defense unit cost cuts from supply chain


Reuters © August 11, 2014
The head of Boeing Co's (BA.N) defense, space and security business said on Monday that nearly two-thirds of the $6 billion in cost cutting the unit is undertaking will come from savings found in its network of suppliers. "Out of the $6 billion, probably 66 percent of that will come out of the supply chain, maybe more," Chris Chadwick, chief executive of Boeing Defense, Space and Security, said in response to Reuters following a speech sponsored by the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. Boeing already has cut $4 billion in costs from the defense unit, which has annual sales of $33 billion. The company has said it plans to cut an additional $2 billion........

Other Items of Interest –

**Law seeks to expand in-state tuition for all**


Military Times © August 11, 2014

By George Altman

A bill signed into law by President Obama on Aug. 7, dedicated primarily to overhauling veterans’ health care, also includes a major victory for education advocates. A provision of the new law seeks to push public colleges and universities to charge all recently separated veterans in-state tuition rates, which are fully covered by the Post-9/11 GI Bill, rather than out-of-state rates, which typically cost thousands of additional dollars that the benefit doesn’t cover........

**Office Depot lists hundreds of jobs on Military.com**


South Florida Business Journal © August 11, 2014
Office Depot announced a partnership with Military.com on Monday that is expected to provide job opportunities to South Florida veterans. The Boca Raton-based office supplies company has posted about 400 jobs on the military and veteran organization's website earlier in the month. Openings are available in departments including sales, e-commerce, IT, human resources and marketing.

Security Emerging as Critical Issue in Defining ‘Base of the Future’


Defense Communities 360 © August 14, 2014

Next month’s Defense Policy Forum is expected to broach a number of pressing issues that will influence changes in how DoD manages its installations in the coming decades, including access, utilization of excess capacity and community-military partnering. One issue that will drive the look of the “Base of the Future” is security. DoD will need to find more flexible models for access so that installations housing intelligence and cyber missions aren’t required to have the same security posture as a facility focused on training new recruits, said Lucian Niemeyer, a former staff member for the Senate Armed Services Committee who will be speaking at the Sept. 15 event in downtown Washington.

Doing The Math: Saving A-10s By Cutting F-35s


Breaking Defense © August 12, 2014

By LT. COL. DAN WARD

In February 2014, Secretary of Defense Hagel briefed that retiring the A-10 fleet would save $3.5 billion over five years. That equals a savings of $700 million per year, not exactly chump change. A few months later, in April, the Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Mark Welsh, actually bumped the estimate up by exactly $700 million, to $4.2 billion. This means either the A-10’s
annual operating expenses went up by 20% to $840 million per year, or the new savings is calculated over six years instead of five. Either way, the intended message was unambiguous: Air Force leadership did some math and made a logical decision. Retiring the A-10 fleet will save a lot of money, and these days saving money is a necessity, not an option……..

Military valued during, after service: My Word


Orlando Sentinel © August 12, 2014
By Ron Poland
Throughout the country, we honor military members, veterans and defense workers for their service to the nation. Their efforts enhance national security and contribute to the vitality of local economies across the United States. Currently, 1.6 million veterans call Florida home. More than 85,000 military and civilian personnel and 750,000 jobs contribute more than $70 billion to our economy. With 20 major military installations, Florida's armed-services and defense companies are vital economic contributors. In 2013, Florida's economy surpassed $800 billion, in part because of the contributions of those military installations and the diverse businesses supporting defense programs……..

Florida group meeting on growth strategies for defense industry

http://tbo.com/list/military-news/florida-group-meeting-on-growth-strategies-for-defense-industry-20140812/

Tampa Tribune © August 12, 2014
By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

In 2012, military spending in the three-county Tampa region accounted for nearly $14 billion in economic output, 141,000 jobs and represented about 7 percent of the economies of Hillsborough, Pinellas and Polk counties, according to the Florida Chamber Foundation. Statewide, defense spending brought in about $70 billion, or about 10 percent of the gross domestic product that year, according to the foundation’s recently released Industry Analysis: Military & Defense report. That translated into more than 750,000 jobs statewide, according to
the report, which also shows that there are about 85,000 military and civilian personnel living in Florida………..

**Georgia Utility to Add Sub Base to Its Military Portfolio**


Defense Communities 360 © August 14, 2014

The Georgia Power Co. is planning to build a solar energy project at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay in southeastern Georgia, making it the fourth solar project the utility is planning to develop at a military installation in the state. In May, the Army announced plans to develop 30-megawatt, alternating current, solar photovoltaic arrays at three installations in the state — Forts Stewart, Gordon and Benning. “The Navy is following the Army’s footsteps,” Norrie McKenzie, vice president of renewable energy development for Georgia Power, told the state Public Service Commission Thursday…….

**Florida, Alabama and Texas are among the most enthusiastic recipients of surplus military gear**


Washington Post © August 15, 2014

By Christopher Ingraham

The Defense Department's [excess property program](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/08/15/florida-alabama-and-texas-are-among-the-most-enthusiastic-recipients-of-surplus-military-gear/) provides state and local law enforcement agencies with hundreds of millions of dollars worth of unused military equipment annually. The Defense Logistics Agency, which runs the program, provided me with a dataset giving detailed numbers on every equipment transaction going back to 2006. These figures show exactly what kinds of equipment are being provided, where the equipment is going (down to the county level), and how the flow of equipment has increased dramatically over the past eight years........
FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** -- The Task Force will conduct its next meeting on **Thursday, September 18, 2014 from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM** at the Doubletree Hotel, 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee. This meeting will be devoted primarily to the review of FY 2015 grant applications. Please let Marcy or me know if you will be attending.

2. **Attachments:**

   - Notes from bi-weekly TPG conference call

Regards, BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**

DOD Budget–

**After Months on Back Burner, Sequester Fears Return**

For the past three years, US military officials have frequently voiced opposition to defense budget caps that went into effect in 2013. But for the past eight months, US defense officials have spoken less about sequestration and more about immediate plans for this year and next. After all, Congress agreed on a budget plan for 2014 and 2015 that boosted Defense Department spending by more than $30 billion above the levels mandated under the Budget Control Act.

Here’s How the Pentagon’s Bean Counters Are Managing on a Tight Budget

Rising responsibilities and declining budgets are forcing Defense Department financial managers to better incorporate the tools of data analytics in the proverbial quest to do more with less, a survey released on Wednesday showed. Nearly 67 percent of all leaders interviewed in person for the survey said reliance on analytics is significant, according to the 12th survey of some 1,000 mostly civilian leaders and financial managers by the American Society of Military Comptrollers and Grant Thornton LLP.

Levin Sees 'Coming Together' of Forces on Bill to End Sequestration

One key Democratic US senator believes lawmakers soon will find a way to get rid of across-the-board defense cuts so loathed by many on the political right and left.
The Pentagon and US defense industry have been dealing with sequestration cuts to all non-exempt accounts for several years. So far, the best Congress has been able to do was a budget deal that provided some relief in the level of cuts for 2014 and 2015. But the ever-optimistic Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin, D-Mich., believes Republicans and Democrats are poised to do something substantial on sequestration.........

Eglin AFB –

Hawaii's Navatek sells high-speed vessel 'Bladerunner' to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida


Pacific Business News © August 18, 2014

By Duane Shimogawa

Navatek Boat Builders, the Honolulu-based shipbuilder and designer whose parent company built the popular dinner cruise boat that bears its name, has sold and delivered its “Bladerunner 35” high-speed vessel to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida for use as a military target support boat, a spokesman for Navatek told PBN. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. The 35-foot rigid-hull inflatable boat was built in 2006 by Navatek Ltd. in Honolulu, the parent of Navatek Boat Builders……..

Fla. Panhandle military beach is little-known gem


Miami Herald © August 20, 2014

BY MELISSA NELSON-GABRIEL
Alabama tourist Lance Du Bose has long enjoyed taking his family to a little-known spit of beach underneath a highway bridge on the Florida Panhandle, where there’s sand, shade and shallow water and fewer visitors than the beaches in nearby Destin. The only drawback: occasional encounters with military police armed with AR 15 assault rifles.

It's part of more than 20 miles of prime costal property that have been under the control of Eglin Air Force Base since before World War II. Just a small stretch of Eglin's beaches are open to the public. Military police keep a close watch on the area and have been known to run off private vendors who rent jet skis or paddle boards without permission……..

**Marine colonel to lead Eglin analysis team**


Pensacola News Journal © August 23, 2014

Marine Col. Brian P. Annichiarico, who will come to Eglin Air Force Base as officer in charge of the U.S. Joint Deployable Analysis Team, relinquished the reins of command Aug. 13 to Marine Corps Base Hawaii. Annichiarico was the 35th commandeer of MCB Hawaii from November 2011 through August. The U.S. Joint Deployable Analysis Team is a subordinate division of the Deputy Director for Cyber and Command, Control, Communications and Computers Integration and designed to assist the war-fighters by recommending fact-based solutions to identified integration and interoperability issues……..

**NS Mayport –**

**Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 Enters Mayport, Florida**


Naval Today © August 18, 2014

FLEETEX are multi-warfare naval exercises designed to promote force integration and test multiple war fighting skill sets. Ships from the U.S., Canadian, German and Turkish navies will participate in the exercises. This port visit and FLEETEX are part of a series of training exercises in which SNMG2 will participate during its deployment to the Western Atlantic. This is the first time in several years that a NATO task force has conducted transatlantic operations in North
America. These events offer multiple opportunities for training at the highest levels of maritime operations.

**Bring On The Ships!: USS Iwo Jima, USS Fort McHenry Complete ARG Homeport Shift To NS Mayport Basin**


Mayport Mirror © August 20, 2014

By Lt.j.g. Lily Hinz

Naval Station Mayport’s pier was filled with friends, families and the local community to welcome the newest ships to the basin. More than 1,300 Sailors can officially call Mayport and Jacksonville “home” as of Sunday afternoon when USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) and USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) changed homeport from Naval Station Norfolk to Naval Station Mayport on Aug. 17. All three ships that make up the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) have made the shift to NS Mayport after much preparation and planning. USS New York (LPD 21) was the first to make the move in December and received a similar welcome from the Mayport and Jacksonville communities.

**Tyndall AFB –**

**Military exercise to continue through Friday**


News Herald © August 13, 2014

Bay County residents may observe later flights departing Tyndall Air Force Base and hear exercise alarm messages played over the voice broadcasting system as the 325th Fighter Wing continues an exercise through Friday to test capabilities of projecting combat air power. The wing typically exercises a variety of situations six times per year ranging from hurricane preparations to emergency response scenarios.
Tyndall Wraps F-22 Simulated Deployment Drill

BY MARC V. SCHANZ

The 325th Fighter Wing at Tyndall AFB, Fla., recently concluded a two phase exercise at the base to simulate a week-long deployment and employment of F-22 Raptors. Over 500 personnel, including planners, maintainers, and inspectors, participated in the event which ran from Aug. 11-15. Phase one of the exercise tested the wing’s ability to deploy combat aircraft quickly, including the 95th FS— the base’s first combat coded F-22 squadron, which achieved initial operational capability in April this year. During the second phase, 95th FS F-22s were tested in simulated combat, as if they were flying from a deployed location, with some 64 sorties planned over three days, even simulating base alarms as though the installation was under a deployed threat. The exercise marks the first time Tyndall has simulated a deployed location, and saw the base process more cargo, people, and aircraft for a deployment than in any previous effort, said Lt. Col. Jeremy Durtschi, the 325th FW inspector general. “This exercise focused on projecting combat air power,” said Frank LaBroad, the 325th FW exercises plans chief.

‘Beagles’ to be reactivated

By CHRIS OLWELL | The News Herald

A storied fighter squadron will be reactivated to help train F-22 Raptor pilots. During a reactivation ceremony on the base, Lt. Col. Derek Wyler will assume command of the 2nd Fighter Training Squadron. The ceremony will begin at 10:02 a.m. — not 10:01 or 10:03 — in a nod to the 2nd squadron, and it will be held in Hangar 2 on Friday, which just happens to Aug. 22. “Airmen are very proud of their squadron, its heritage and everything it stands for,” Lt. Col. Karl Schluter, 325th Operations Group adversary air director of operations, said in an email. “Therefore, everything associated with the 2nd will, within reason, involve a 2 — hence 10:02 for the start of the ceremony.”
**Our View: For Tyndall, the water bill still looms**


News Herald © August 22, 2014

Recently, Tyndall Air Force Base poured a bucket of ice cold water over the Bay County Commission and announced it would appeal the U.S. Court of Federal Claims ruling against the base. The ruling ordered Tyndall to pay Bay County $450,516 in damages along with $303,589 in interest over unpaid water bills. The judgment only covers the amount owed from 2007 through February of 2011 and Tyndall will also have to pay an additional amount for water it received from Bay County from February of 2011 until now. Tyndall maintains the language in one of its county contracts provides a rate-increase exemption but for the most part they have stayed silent on the issue in public. The county’s position on this issue seems clear: All users of the system are subject to price increases............

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**Florida National Guard –**

**Equipment Balance: Air National Guard Juggles National, Local Demands**


Defense News © August 20, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The US Air National Guard has always been defined by its ability to fulfill both military and civil missions. But with budget draw downs, the service faces increasingly tough choices about how to spend what remains of its modernization budget while serving two masters. A March report by the Pentagon warned that "many support equipment items
critical to daily operations are rapidly nearing the end of their expected lives and are becoming increasingly difficult to sustain economically. Air Guard assets are an average of 25 years old.

**USAF Chief: Expect Further Integration of Guard, Active**

[http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140824/DEFREG02/308240010/USAF-Chief-Expect-Further-Integration-Guard-Active](http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140824/DEFREG02/308240010/USAF-Chief-Expect-Further-Integration-Guard-Active)

Defense News © August 24, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The US Air Force's top uniformed official expects to see the lines between the active, guard and reserve components continue to come down as the service looks for ways to operate effectively under limited budgets. “If we can become more efficient as an Air Force without losing operational capability, by putting more things in the air guard and reserve component, then why wouldn’t we?” Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh said Saturday at the 136th General Conference of the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS).

Patrick AFB –

**AFTAC wins national design award**


Florida Today © August 12, 2014

By Norman Moody

The Air Force Technical Applications Center has won the National Award of Merit from the Design-Build Institute of America for significant achievement in the area of design, process and teaming. The award specifically recognizes civic building construction ventures that showcase how the project teams go above and beyond to achieve cost, schedule and quality goals, while demonstrating unique applications of design-build best practices in the construction industry.
Avon Park –

VMU-2 refines operational readiness at Avon Park

Marines.mil © August 12, 2014

By Cpl. J. R. Heins

Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 2 conducted training at Avon Park Air Force Range, Fla., July 28 – Aug. 8., working with Marine Special Operations Command and several Air Force fighter wings to refine their interoperability with joint-service ground and air assets. VMU-2 coordinated with MARSOC and the Air Force’s 75th and 93rd Fighter Wings to perform close air support during the training, according to Capt. Jonathan C. Putney, an unmanned aerial vehicle commander with VMU-2.

MCSF Blount Island –

Honeywell's Blount Island contract boosted by $71.9 million

Jacksonville Business Journal © August 21, 2014

Honeywell Technology Solutions Inc. has had its contract to support the Marines at Blount Island increased by $71.9 million. This will be the sixth year the company has provided
prepositioning and logistics support services for the Blount Island Command, which is responsible for filling ships with everything the Marines need when they go into combat.

Defense Contractors –

**Commentary: Improve DoD Acquisition With Better Buying Power, Should-Cost Analysis**


Defense News © August 18, 2014

By CHRISTIAN HAGEN

Earlier this summer, Frank Kendall, US undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, updated Congress on the Better Buying Power (BBP) initiative, started four years ago to improve the DoD’s acquisition process. BBP is helping the process change for the better, he said, also noting that significant progress has been made in selected areas of the should-cost analysis, a key component of BBP.

**Nearly 8 out of 10 ‘Small’ Federal Contractors Are Actually Giants**


Defense One © August 19, 2014

In the sixth of its annual studies, a small business advocacy group has again blasted the government for allegedly awarding contracts to major corporations when policy intends for them to go to legitimate small businesses. The Small Business Administration offered other possible explanations for the apparent discrepancies. The
Petaluma, Calif.-based American Small Business League’s new study of fiscal 2013 procurement data concluded that of the top 100 companies receiving the highest-valued small business federal contracts, “79 were large companies that exceeded the SBA’s small business size standards, five were anomalous and 16 were legitimate small businesses.”

Exclusive: Lockheed, suppliers brainstorm how to lower F-35 operating costs


Reuters © August 21, 2014

BY ANDREA SHALAL

WASHINGTON Lockhead Martin Corp met with 90 key suppliers last week to brainstorm ways to lower the long-term cost of operating and maintaining the F-35 fighter jets from the Pentagon's current forecast of $1.02 trillion through 2065. Top officials from the Pentagon's Defense Contracts Management Agency and the Defense Contracts Audit Agency were also on hand during two days of talks in Fort Worth, Texas. Tom Owen, vice president of F-35 sustainment strategies for Lockheed, told Reuters the meeting was "an initial, early step" toward mapping out specific measures to cut the plane's hefty sustainment costs.

Other Items of Interest –

Commentary: Strategic Budget Choices
Within the complicated universe of military acquisition is a relatively new method of decision-making that forces the US Department of Defense and the military services to make choices that balance want versus need. A reversal of sequestration is still needed — specifically in the area of national defense — to sustain adequate investment in the military systems of the future. But if there is one silver lining, two years after the sequester was triggered, it is that the Pentagon for the first time in a long while is being forced to prioritize and make tough choices.

Public-Private Partnerships – An Alliance For Progress That Works

A new model of economic development involving public-private partnerships is helping drive economic revitalization, create jobs and transform aging central cities into vibrant, livable hubs of activity that attract new business, private investment and people. Across the country, successful public-private partnerships (also known as PPPs or P3s) are emerging as an alternative path to economic success for traditional state-run economic development agencies and/or departments of commerce.

Navy Ships Will Get $2.5 Billion in Cyber and Intelligence Upgrades

Navy ships will receive $2.5 billion in cyber and intelligence upgrades.
The Navy today awarded five companies eight-year contracts valued at $2.5 billion to install standardized shipboard networks. The Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command tapped BAESystems Technology Solutions & Services, General Dynamics C4 Systems, Global Technical Systems, Northrop Grumman Systems Corp. and Serco, Inc. for the indefinite-delivery, indefinite-quantity, firm-fixed-price, cost-plus-fixed-fee contracts for the Navy’s Consolidated Afloat Networks and Enterprise Services.

**Base contractor slaps Fairbanks borough with property tax lawsuit**


Alaska Dispatch News © August 20, 2014

By Dermot Cole

When the Air Force looked for a contractor to own and operate housing at Eielson Air Force Base and five other installations, it advised the company to "assume full payment of property taxes" and include a one-year cash reserve in its financial plan to pay the tax bill. But Corvias Military Living, the company that took control of more than 900 housing units at Eielson last year, said it never assumed that it would have to pay property taxes nor made plans to pay property taxes.

**Energy Quote of the Day: Turning to Renewable Energy to ‘Become Better Warfighters’**

http://breakingenergy.com/2014/08/20/energy-quote-of-the-day-turning-to-renewable-energy-to-become-better-warfighters/

Breaking Defense © August 20, 2014

By JARED ANDERSON

It’s no secret the US military seeks to increase its renewable energy production capacity as a way to reduce reliance on the sometimes unreliable civilian power grid while decreasing liquid petroleum consumption which is expensive and dangerous to transport. And unlike purely
commercial renewable energy projects competing for high profit margins, the military is in many cases willing to pay a premium for the increased security that comes with generating its own electricity and transport fuel, but that ironically means the Pentagon often requires private project finance support in order to reach its energy goals
September 2, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** -- The Task Force will conduct its next meeting on **Thursday, September 18, 2014 from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM** at the Doubletree Hotel, 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee. This meeting will be devoted primarily to the review of FY 2015 grant applications. If you have not already done so, please let Marcy or me know if you will be attending.

2. **FDSTF FY 2015 Grant Applications** – The Task Force has received 14 applications for funding for FY 2015. Task Force members are currently reviewing and evaluating all applications.

3. **Farewell to Dr. David Goetsch** – The Task Force bids a sad farewell to Dr. David Goetsch who has served on the Task Force since its inception in 2011. Dr. Goetsch served as the first Task Force Chairman from January – July 2012 and subsequently as Vice Chairman from February 2013 – August 2014. Dr. Goetsch resigned his position to care for an ailing family member. His crisp, no-nonsense leadership style and efficient meeting protocols were greatly appreciated by the entire Task Force. Dr. Goetsch expertly led the Task Force through its initial organization and development of a strategic plan. He kept the Task Force focused on the key missions and set the tone and direction for success in accomplishing its goals. Dr. Goetsch has performed a tremendous service to the Task Force and the state of Florida and will be greatly missed. We wish him all the best.

4. **Welcome to Newest Task Force Member** – On behalf of all Task Force members, we would like to welcome James Montgomerie to the Florida Defense Support Task Force effective August 26, 2014. James is currently serving as the CEO of Vertol Systems Company, Inc of Destin. He has extensive experience in leading and managing a variety of large, diverse and complex aircraft operations in the U.S. and overseas. His bio is currently posted to the Task Force web site at: [http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/](http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/) James is replacing Dr. David Goetsch who resigned from the Task Force last month.

5. **Attachments:**

- SECAF letter to Rep. Rooney on space infrastructure
- FDSTF appointment letter for James Montgomerie
- Air Force CPI Directive
Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

Hagel: Iraq Crisis May Require DoD To Rethink 2015 Budget  

Defense News © August 21, 2014

By MARCUS WEISGERBER

The Pentagon might have to retool its $555 billion 2015 budget proposal to account for the threats posed by and actions taken against the Islamic State, US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said Thursday. “[Y]ou’re constantly shaping a budget to assure that resources match the mission and the mission and the resources match the threat,” Hagel said during a briefing at the Pentagon……..
House Republicans Likely to Push for Longer CR

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/house-republicans-likely-to-push-for-longer-cr/#

Defense Communities 360 © August 25, 2014

While both parties agree on the need to pass a stopgap spending bill in September, a dispute may break out over how long it should last. With the potential for Republicans to gain control of the Senate next year, some House Republicans may push for a fiscal 2015 continuing resolution (CR) to extend until sometime in 2015. Democrats, however, want the stopgap to end in December so lawmakers can hash out a deal on an omnibus after the midterm elections. “This could lead to a real standoff,” a senior House Republican leadership aide told Government Executive. Until recently, leaders on both sides of the aisle acknowledged that Congress would need to pass a CR in September that extended funding through mid-December. But with the prospect of taking over both chambers, some Republicans want to eliminate the opportunity for Senate Democrats to block Republican changes to the FY 2015 spending measures before a new Congress opens, according to the story……..

DoD Plans Overhead Cuts

http://www.federaltimes.com/article/20140826/MGMT02/308260012/DoD-plans-overhead-cuts

Federal Times © August 26, 2014

By Andrew Tilghman

The Pentagon is gearing up a new effort to cut overhead and administrative costs. Specifically, the initiative will target the “Fourth Estate” — everything other than the military services and combatant commands, according to Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work. Targeted components for cuts include the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the 16 defense agencies, including the Tricare Management Agency and the Defense Logistics Agency. Those account for about 20 percent of the overall defense budget….
Work on Syria Strikes Resolution Would Delay - or Kill - Pentagon Policy, Spending Bills


Defense News © August 28, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

With only about a dozen legislative days left before November's midterm elections, a US congressional debate and vote on a Syria strikes authorization measure could further delay work on two defense bills. The House and Senate are slated to get back to work the second week of September. But both chambers are expected to leave again before that month ends so members can focus exclusively on the campaign trail in October………..

Pentagon Embarks on New Streamlining Campaign

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/pentagon-embarks-on-new-streamlining-campaign/

Defense Communities 360 © September 1, 2014

The Defense Department is preparing to launch a new initiative to reduce overhead and administrative costs in the office of the secretary of defense and the 16 defense agencies, according to Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work. The effort, which will bypass the military services and combatant commands, will partially rely on outside experts from the Defense Business Board and Business Executives for National Security, Work told Federal Times. With the threat that the Budget Control Act spending caps will be imposed again starting in fiscal 2016 still lurking, the uncertainty as to whether the Pentagon will need to reduce force structure to worst case-scenario levels remains…………

Could Global Threat Picture Restore US Defense Increases?

President Barack Obama put the Islamic State terrorist group on the “varsity” team of US foes. America’s top general, Martin Dempsey, has spoken of the group’s “apocalyptic” visions. And Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has said the Pentagon might have to retool its $555 billion 2015 budget proposal to account for the threats posed by and actions taken against the Islamic State. “[Y]ou’re constantly shaping a budget to assure that resources match the mission and the mission and the resources match the threat,” Hagel said on Aug. 21. Defense insiders are abuzz about the prospect of a congressional mea culpa on defense spending. The collective hope stems from a world picture that suddenly includes several burgeoning threats that were on Obama’s “junior varsity” list at the start of the year……..

Space Coast –

British sub crew visits Port Canaveral, Cocoa Beach

Florida Today © August 29, 2014

By R. Norman Moody

Sailors moved about Thursday morning in the tight quarters of the United Kingdom’s HMS Ambush, a fast-attack submarine visiting Port Canaveral. The Royal Navy submarine is making the one-week stop at the Naval Ordnance Test Unit for maintenance, to resupply and to allow the crew of more than 100 sailors to take shore leave in Cocoa Beach and surrounding areas. "This is a great place to berth," said Lt.
Cmdr. Alan Rose, the weapons engineer. "Some of the crew had been here before. Being able to visit Cocoa Beach has been fantastic."……..

MacDill AFB –

**Gen. Votel takes over Soom command**


Tampa Tribune © August 28, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

As the 10th commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, a job title that became official Thursday afternoon in a ceremony at the Tampa Convention Center, Army Gen. Joe Votel assumes leadership in what he and his predecessor called “the golden age” of special operations. But he takes command at a time of flux……..

Eglin AFB –

**USAF Chief: Pratt Close To Developing F-35 Engine Fix**


Defense News © August 28, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

Engine manufacturer Pratt & Whitney is close to performing tests on a potential design change for its F135 engine following a June incident that led to the devastation of an F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. The June 23 fire was caused by “excessive” rubbing of a fan blade inside the engine of an F-35A model as it prepared to take off for a test flight at Eglin Air Force Base…….
Hurlburt Field –

**We are America's Air Commandos**

http://www.afsoc.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123422664#.VACEZg0fixg.email

AFSOC © August 27, 2014


"Air Commandos, we are one component of a very powerful joint special operations team," said Lt. Gen. Brad Heithold, commander of Air Force Special Operations Command. "We want to ensure that our teammates can always depend on us." This message resonated clearly during a recent offsite where the command team got together to assess AFSOC's priorities. After a review of the National Security Strategy, Defense Planning Guidance, Air Force Strategy and U.S. Special Operations Command Strategy, the staff arrived at four command priorities……..

**Base housing construction update: Paving way**


Northwest Florida Daily News © August 29, 2014

By STAFF SGT. SARAH HANSON | 1st SOW Public Affairs

Whether you are just passing through or heading to work on base, U.S. Highway 98 drivers can see different tractors, cranes and trucks and hear the sound of construction workers shouting to one another here. What is all the commotion? When will it end? Corvias Military Living, contracted by Hurlburt Field, is paving the way and preparing the base for new housing……..
US Army Sees 'Megacities' As the Future Battlefield

When the US Army looks to the future, it sees cities. Dense, sprawling, congested cities where criminal and extremist groups flourish almost undetected by authorities, but who can influence the lives of the population while undermining the authority of the state. And the service is convinced that these “megacities” of 20 million or more people will be the battleground of the future. The problem from a military strategists’ point of view, however, is that no army has ever fought it out in a city of this size………

Patrick AFB –

Patrick AFB gives military visit Royal treatment

Before he'd even wrapped up his two-week exchange visit to the Air Force Reserve 920th Rescue Wing here on the Space Coast, the British airman felt confident saying: it would be a highlight of his career. "I have been in the military for a long time," said
United Kingdom's Royal Auxiliary Air Force Flight Lt. Harry Spry-Leverton, 61, a reservist who has served since 1976. "I would certainly put this down as one of the best times in my career. To come to America for two weeks is out of the ordinary." The UK US Reserve Forces Exchange Program, which also sends U.S. military personnel to Britain, allows participants an opportunity to gain practical experience and insight into the structure, operation, equipment and operational doctrine of the Armed Forces of the partner country……..

NAS Key West –

**Chief of Navy Ops visits air station**
[http://keysnews.com/node/57659](http://keysnews.com/node/57659)

Key News © August 28, 2014

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff

It was all hands on deck Wednesday at Naval Air Station Key West as one of the highest ranking officers in the country visited the base to hear directly from his sailors. Four-star Adm. Jonathan Greenert, the chief of Naval Operations, is the most senior officer in the Navy. He is accountable only to the Secretary of the Navy (as well as the White House) and is a member of………

**Navy talks Sigsbee improvements**
[http://keysnews.com/node/57747](http://keysnews.com/node/57747)

By Adam Linhardt

When Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert visited Key West last week, he gave his sailors a sort of State of the Navy speech, and in that talk he mentioned needed improvements at Sigsbee Park. It was a curious side note amid a talk that mainly focused on the overall naval war-fighting machine and where Naval Air Station Key West falls in that paradigm………
Defense Contractors –

Southerland addresses defense contractor summit


News Herald © August 25, 2014

By CHRIS OLWELL | The News Herald

U.S. Rep. Steve Southerland addressed a group of defense contractors Monday with a speech that was part recruitment speech and part policy discussion during the National Small Business Defense Contracting Summit at Gulf Coast State College. Southerland was the keynote speaker during the day-long conference that also featured business development seminars and networking opportunities for the various companies represented there. Since many had traveled from other states, Southerland used the opportunity to pitch Florida as a sunny place to do business……..

The incredible shrinking defense industry


Politico © August 25, 2014

By AUSTIN WRIGHT and LEIGH MUNSIL

Major defense contractors are shrinking — big time. The number of employees at the five largest U.S. defense firms has dropped 14 percent from a peak in 2008 — and 10 percent over the past decade, according to a POLITICO analysis of employment figures filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Lockheed Martin, the world’s largest defense company, has shed close to a quarter of its employees since 2008. Raytheon, Boeing’s defense unit and Northrop
Grumman have also shed thousands of workers over the past five years, seeking to maintain profits even as defense spending contracts.

**Opinion: A&D Industry Stuck In Antiquated Mud**


Aviation Week © August 28, 2014

*By Antoine Gelain | Aviation Week & Space Technology*

It is a striking feature of the aerospace & defense (A&D) industry that, by and large, it is still dominated by the same companies as 30 years ago, while in so many other industries historical players have long been challenged, and sometimes defeated: General Motors, Digital Equipment, Xerox, Motorola, Texas Instruments and Eastman Kodak are a few of the Fortune 500 companies of the 1990s that faced major challenges during the last two decades.

Other Items of Interest –

**CNO's Losing Battle to Avoid a Hollow Navy**

[http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2014/08/26/the_cnos_losing_battle_to_avoid_a_hollow_navy_107392.html](http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2014/08/26/the_cnos_losing_battle_to_avoid_a_hollow_navy_107392.html)

Real Clear Defense © August 26, 2014

*By Bryan McGrath*

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral Jonathan Greenert has adopted the lingo of marine navigation to bring organization to his thinking about fleet priorities. His “Sailing Directions” provide top-line guidance, with occasional “Navigation Plans” to indicate programmatic implementation of the Sailing Directions. Then there are the periodic “Position Reports” to take
It’s Time to Sink the Littoral Combat Ship


Defense One © August 25, 2014

By William D. Hartung and Jacob Marx

It is more important than ever that the Department of Defense spend taxpayer money wisely as the United States economy struggles and the Pentagon budget comes down from its post-World War II peak. This is particularly true for the Navy, which many strategists see assuming an expanded role in protecting U.S. global economic and security interests. Though the optimal scope of the Navy’s mission is up for debate, it’s clear that U.S. leaders envision diverse objectives requiring diverse maritime capabilities. What should be equally clear is that there is no need for the littoral combat ship………

James Makes Air Force Community Partnership Program Official Policy


Defense Communities 360 © September 1, 2014

The Air Force has embraced DOD’s new authority allowing installations to enter into intergovernmental support agreements with host communities since it become law in January 2013, and now the service’s Community Partnership Program has become official with Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James’ signing of a new policy directive. The service has been applying the new section 331 authority — which allows installations to enter into agreements with local governments to provide, receive or share support services for most municipal functions — at dozens of locations in an effort to trim base operating costs………
As fifth-generation fighters outgrow the US Air Force’s premiere combat training exercise, the service should look to virtual training for pilots to test the limits of the F-22 and F-35, the outgoing head of Air Combat Command said. Red Flag exercises, held four times a year at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, train more than 27,000 people who fly or support air operations of 1,200 aircraft and 20,000 sorties each year, according to the base. But Gen. Mike Hostage said a shift from live combat training to virtual training would expose pilots to real-life scenarios that can’t be practiced in the Nevada skies.............
September 8, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** – The Task Force will conduct its next meeting on **Thursday, September 18, 2014 from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM** at the Doubletree Hotel, 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee. This meeting will be devoted primarily to the review of FY 2015 grant applications.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call in Number** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **FDSTF FY 2015 Grant Applications** – The Task Force has received 14 applications for funding for FY 2015. Task Force members are currently reviewing and evaluating all applications.

4. **Attachments:**

   - Agenda for September meeting
   - TPG monthly report
   - Articles on ISIS
   - Notes from bi-weekly TPG call

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

**Clean CR, Sequestration Hopes: Fall Hill Predictions**

Breaking Defense © September 2, 2014
By [COLIN CLARK](mailto:colin.clark@defense.gov)

Summer is done. Elections loom. Senators and representatives spent August wining and dining donors and kissing babies in pursuit of a job. In the next few days most of Capitol Hill’s workforce will return from the summer recess and most efforts will be focused on winning reelection and ensuring the primacy of whichever tribe one favors. I spent a few hours last week chatting with lobbyists and the few Hill staff I could reach to get some read on what is the likely course of events through Christmas……..

**Global Unrest Creates Possible Opening to Relax Spending Caps**

Defense Communities 360 © September 2, 2014

The rise of the Islamic State along with other emerging threats could provide an opening for lawmakers to reverse defense cuts, or at least offer the Pentagon additional flexibility to respond to the threats, but it’s not yet clear that such an effort could succeed at this point, budget experts say. As the number of hotspots expands across the globe, talk about various options Congress could pursue to pay for a military response — including ongoing airstrikes in Iraq and possible ones in Syria — has been on the upswing……..

'Not Much Drama': McConnell Predicts Passage of Bill To Avert Govt. Shutdown
Defense News © September 3, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT
The US Senate’s embattled top Republican is predicting Congress will pass a funding measure that the president would not veto. The government will run out of operational funding on Sept. 30. The House and Senate could be long gone by then for another lengthy break, this one to campaign for November’s midterm elections. Since they are not due back in session until the second week of November, both chambers this month need to pass something Obama will sign to avoid another government shutdown.

Defense bill awaits Congress' return
Military Times © September 4, 2014

By Leo Shane III

When Congress returns to Capitol Hill on Monday, members will have three weeks of work scheduled — and a year’s worth of work to finish. The annual defense authorization act and the 2015 defense appropriations measure await full Senate votes before they can move forward. Lawmakers also will be discussing possible action on U.S. involvement in Iraq, Syria and Ukraine. And both chambers have promised continued oversight of the ongoing Veterans Affairs Department scandals, to ensure promised reforms are being made.

LRS-B, Next Boomer May Force Weapons Cuts
Breaking Defense © September 4, 2014

By COLIN CLARK
It won’t happen tomorrow, but the Pentagon may have to start eating its young to pay for two of the most expensive weapons in US history: the Air Force’s Long Range Strike bomber and the Navy’s replacement for the Ohio class nuclear missile submarine. That’s the estimation of Todd Harrison, the top budget expert at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment. His conclusions are based on a new detailed report, Analysis of the FY 2015 Budget Request being released as you read this........

Analyst Sees $200-$300 Billion Gap between Defense Needs, Budgets

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/September%202014/September%205%202014/Analyst-Sees-$200-$300-Billion-Gap-between-Defense-Needs,-Budgets.aspx

Air Force Magazine © September 5, 2014

BY OTTO KREISHER
There is a $200 billion to $300 billion gap between the missions, force structure, and procurement programs called for in the national defense strategy and the funds allowed under sequestration, argued Todd Harrison, an analyst with the Center for Strategy and Budgetary Assessments. Harrison said the Administration should present Congress with that “stark choice” and challenge it to either increase defense funding to meet the stated needs, or change the strategy to conform to the available funds. The later choice, he said, would mean even deeper force reductions than planned, cancellation or cuts in major procurement programs, and withdrawal from some of the military’s current global missions........

The Pentagon Is $200 Billion Short of What It ‘Needs’ forFY15, Study Shows


Defense One © September 4, 2014

Despite some loosening of spending caps in the past year, Pentagon budget planners need to present Congress with some stark choices, an experienced specialist said on Thursday in releasing a new analysis of President Obama’s fiscal 2015 defense budget. “We’re at a fork in the road,” said Todd Harrison, senior fellow at the
Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, noting a significant gap between the Defense Department’s likely future budgets and its long-term strategy described in the Pentagon’s 2012 guidance and reaffirmed in the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review. Neither of those documents took into account the 2011 Budget Control Act’s since-modified spending caps, he said……..

**House Looks to Move Clean CR**


Defense Communities 360 © September 4, 2014

The short-term continuing resolution (CR) the House takes up next week to keep the government running after Sept. 30 will largely be free of pet provisions requested by lawmakers. As the only legislation Congress is likely to advance before the November elections, the stopgap will attract numerous requests from members to include favored projects or other policy riders, but only a handful of special provisions are likely to be included, reports CQ. House Republicans likely will include several “anomalies” in the CR, including a short-term extension of the Export-Import Bank and, possibly, extra funds to fight wildfires and to handle border security……..
Pentagon Spending Plans Far Exceed Budget Caps, Analyst Says


Defense Communities 360 © September 4, 2014

When defense officials rolled out the department’s five-year spending plan in March, they acknowledged it exceeded the 2011 Budget Control Act limits by $116 billion and would require congressional action to relax the caps. The actual cost of funding the Pentagon’s fiscal 2015-2019 budget may require $200 billion to $300 billion in additional spending, however, due to a number of assumptions that are unlikely to be realized, according to a new report from the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

Eglin AFB –

F-35 Head Bogdan Explains The F135 ‘Bad Rub’ Fix


Breaking Defense © September 3, 2014

By COLIN CLARK

It hasn’t been tested yet, and the “root cause” for the problem has not yet been identified, but Lt. Gen. Chris Bogdan, head of the F-35 program, expects upcoming tests to demonstrate a fix for the engine problem discovered when an Air Force F-35A engine exploded early this summer. The fix will be made to the fan module, which will be replaced in all the 156 engines should the tests prove out, Bogdan said at the annual ComDef conference.

Florida National Guard –
Budget crunch impacts National Guard training


Tampa Tribune © September 4, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

Thanks to budget cuts, this month’s weekend training for most of the 9,000 Florida Army National Guard troops won’t be mandatory. Once a month, those troops — who commit one week a year and one weekend a month for training — set up their schedules so they can live up to their commitment. But because of a $101 million budget shortfall at the national level, Army National Guard units from all 50 states and four territories are feeling a pinch. The cuts do not affect Air National Guard. In Florida, that’s meant rearranging the training schedule this month, which has troops scrambling to figure out ways to attend……..

NAS Key West –

CNO Visits NAS Key West

http://www.dvidshub.net/news/140632/cno-visits-nas-key-west

DVIDS © August 27, 2014

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert visited Naval Air Station Key West for an all-hands call Aug. 27 and tour of enlisted housing. Greenert’s visit was part of a Southeast U.S. tour which included stops at Southern Command, Joint Interagency Task Force-South, Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Central Command and Special Operations Command. At each of the stops Greenert met with leadership and Sailors to listen and learn what was on their minds……..

Avon Park –
Change of Command ceremony introduces Lt. Col. Beeker

http://www.newssun.com/news/article_bd4a53ed-ac54-5233-ad7b-01a4ce271d82.html

News Sun © August 29, 2014

The Avon Park Air Force Assumption of Command ceremony Thursday afternoon welcomed a new face to the ranks of Detachment 1, 23rd Fighter Group “Flying Tigers” — that of Lt. Col. Kevin “Keller” Beeker. He was introduced by the commander of the 23rd Fighter Group, Derek Oaks, who said it was important to uphold the legacy of the base as well as increase the ability to train soldiers. Beeker, born in 1974 and now married with four children, has a career in the Air Force dating back to 1996……..

Other Items of Interest –

All 50 States on Board Interstate Schools Compact after New York Enacts Measure


Defense Communities 360 © September 2, 2014

A long-standing goal of the Pentagon was reached last month after New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) signed legislation adopting an interstate agreement designed to ease the transition for military children transferring to a new school district, making it the 50th state to embrace the compact. The goal of the interstate compact is to make transition easier so that military children — who typically attend from six to nine different school systems from K-12 — are afforded the same opportunities as other children. States that sign the compact agree to follow common guidelines in handling issues such as enrollment, class placement, records transfer, immunization requirements, graduation requirements, attendance, exit testing and extracurricular opportunities……..
Net Zero Energy Installations Poised to Reach Sustainability Goals


Defense Communities 360 © September 3, 2014

All nine of the pilot installations participating in the Army’s Net Zero Energy initiative have already made substantial progress in identifying, developing, and executing energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in the first several years of the program, according to the fiscal 2013 Net Zero Energy Roadmap and Program Summary. The summary also concludes that each of the nine pilot installations has great potential for energy efficiency. The 55-page document includes data on each site’s energy baseline and efficiency, energy audit, completed and planned renewable energy projects and Net Zero Energy roadmap.

Governor Resurrects Group to Protect Washington Bases

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/governor-resurrects-group-to-protect-washington-bases/

Defense Communities 360 © September 3, 2014

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D) on Wednesday renewed a coalition of groups to help shield the state’s installations from further downsizing stemming from Pentagon budget cuts. The Washington Military Alliance — which will have members from economic development offices, chambers of commerce and the military — will help protect defense jobs, contracts and infrastructure in the state. The group will meet quarterly and will serve as a policy adviser to state officials, reported the Spokesman-Review.

Pennsylvania Governor Fights Army Plan to Eliminate National Guard Unit


Defense Communities 360 © September 4, 2014

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett (R) has made it clear he will oppose a contingency plan by the Army to shut down a unit of the National Guard. The plan to eliminate the 55th Armored
Brigade Combat Team is not in the current budget; it would not go into effect unless the Army is forced to adhere to the Budget Control Act spending caps in fiscal 2016, reported the *Times-Leader*. But it’s still a concern, Maj. Gen. Wesley Craig, the state’s adjutant general, told the paper. In a letter to Army Secretary John McHugh, Corbett said he opposes the unit’s elimination and urged officials to cancel the “ill-advised reduction.” With that letter, the closure threat should have subsided, Craig said. “The governor knows elimination of any unit has to have his consent. That’s the law. U.S. Code Titles 10 and 32 spell that out,” he said.

**State Awards $4M to Hampton Roads Communities to Fight Encroachment**


Defense Communities 360 © September 4, 2014

Three cities in southeastern Virginia will share $4.1 million in state funds to prevent development from interfering with operations at Naval Air Station Oceana, Joint Base Langley-Eustis and Navy Auxiliary Landing Field Fentress. The grants were made through the state’s federal action contingency trust (FACT) fund, which was established by the General Assembly to counter federal actions that adversely affect the state. Earlier this year, Gov. Terry McAuliffe (D) refined the program’s criteria to include communities that have been harmed by encroachment at military installations. “Virginia’s military bases and installations are a key asset to our economy, and we have a responsibility to protect them,” McAuliffe said in a press release. “I am pleased that we were able to keep this FACT fund money in the budget, and award it to communities so that they can guard against encroachment and preserve our commonwealth’s strong relationship with the Department of Defense,” he said……
September 15, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting This Thursday** -- The Task Force will conduct its next meeting **on Thursday, September 18, 2014 from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM** at the Doubletree Hotel, 101 S. Adams St., Tallahassee. This meeting will be devoted primarily to the review of FY 2015 grant applications.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call in Number** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachments:**

   - Agenda for September meeting
   - Florida Trend article
   - TPG report with comments from Senator Levin

Regards, BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**

**BRAC** –
Thornberry Firmly against Holding a BRAC Round Soon

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/thornberry-firmly-against-holding-a-brac-round-soon/

Defense Communities 360 © September 8, 2014

Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas), considered the frontrunner to replace Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) in the next Congress as chair of the Armed Services Committee, told supporters of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., last week that he opposes conducting a new round of base closures in the near future. “I don’t think you are going to see a BRAC anytime soon. We haven’t paid for the last one,” said Thornberry, who now serves as the committee’s vice chairman……..

DOD Budget–

US House Could Vote This Week To Avert Government Shutdown


Defense News © September 8, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The US House soon could vote on a spending measure that would keep the Pentagon and other federal agencies funded while lawmakers hit the campaign trail. Federal funding will run out on Sept. 30. The House could recess for midterm-election campaigning as soon as Sept. 19, and the Senate could leave Washington just four days later……..

Campaign ’16: Despite tough talk, little chance of defense increase

http://www.militarytimes.com/article/20140908/NEWS05/309080023/Campaign-16-Despite-tough-talk-little-chance-defense-increase

Military Times © September 8, 2014
Potential 2016 presidential candidates are using hawkish terms when it comes to Russia and the Islamic State. But while some are banging the drums of war, few are calling for larger annual U.S. defense budgets. Vice President Joe Biden, a potential White House aspirant, last week vowed to fight the violent Sunni group “to the gates of Hell.” The man Biden and others might seek to replace, President Obama, told the Islamic State “we will not be intimidated……

House Introduces CR with Limited Extras

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/house-introduces-cr-with-limited-extras/#

Defense Communities 360 © September 9, 2014

House Republicans on Tuesday introduced a continuing resolution to keep the federal government running through Dec. 11, while also advancing several urgent needs.

The most controversial provision in the fiscal 2015 stopgap measure would extend the Export-Import Bank through June 30, 2015. The provision is opposed by conservative Republicans and could cause them to withhold support for the bill, but the loss of those votes is not expected to jeopardize passage in the House. Other provisions would extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act until the CR runs out in December, boost spending for disability claims processing at the VA, provide $88 million to address the Ebola outbreak in Africa and grant agencies flexibility in meeting their immigration enforcement responsibilities, reported CQ………

House CR Free of Controversial Provisions, Should Hit Floor on Sept. 11


Defense News © September 10, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT
The House later this week is expected to take up a measure free of controversial riders to keep the US government open while members hit the campaign trail for seven weeks. Fiscal year 2014 funding will run out on Sept. 30. The House is leaving next week to focus on November’s midterm elections; the Senate is expected to depart Washington the following week for the same reason. That means both chambers need to send President Barack Obama a government-funding measure before the upper chamber splits………

Levin doubts defense vote this month

http://thehill.com/policy/defense/217335-levin-doubts-defense-vote-this-month

The Hill © September 10, 2014
By Martin Matishak

The full Senate will likely not vote on the 2015 defense policy bill before lawmakers adjourn next week, Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.) said Wednesday. “It’s not official. I’m going to continue to work on one key thing — that is to come up with a [unanimous consent] that has a limited number of relevant amendments agreed to,” he told reporters. “That’s the goal.” Levin, who is retiring, said he would continue to work with Sen. James Inhofe (Okla.), the panel’s top Republican, and, if they can come up with a compromise, “then I’m not giving up this week.” The committee unveiled its draft of the 2015 national defense authorization bill in May, but it has yet to receive any floor time………

White House Request Delays CR Vote

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/white-house-request-delays-cr-vote/#

Defense Communities 360 © September 10, 2014

House Republicans have pushed back the chamber’s vote on the fiscal 2015 continuing resolution (CR) after the White House asked to add language authorizing the government to take action in Syria against the Islamic State. The president’s request to include Title X authorization language for the United States to train and arm Syrian
rebels who are fighting the Islamic State came at the eleventh hour, reported CQ. The House now is expected to take up the stopgap spending measure, which would fund the government through Dec. 11, next week……..

Sources: Expect Next Year’s USAF Budget To Continue Push for Cuts

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140914/DEFREG02/309140021/Sources-Expect-Next-Year-s-USAF-Budget-Continue-Push-Cuts

Defense News © September 14, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

When the US Air Force rolled out its budget request in March, it was billed as a realistic look at the post-sequestration world, one filled with necessary tough choices but still maintaining current capabilities. Air Force leaders’ intent to modernize the force quickly crashed against a brick wall in the shape of Congress, as both chambers made clear that cuts to the A-10 close air support plane, and to a lesser extent the U-2 surveillance aircraft, have little support………..

McKeon: Defense Budget Cuts Will “Break Our Military”

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/September%202014/September%202015%202014/McKeon-Defense-Budget-Cuts-Will-%E2%80%9CBreak-Our-Military%E2%80%9D.aspx

Air Force Magazine © September 15, 2014

BY AUTUMN A. ARNETT

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) lauded the formidability of US airpower, but also decried the future of American readiness in a cutback environment during a think tank event last week. “There is nothing to stand up to our air support, and those people on the ground, when they see those airplanes, they don’t want to be there,” said McKeon during a Sept. 11 American Enterprise Institute event in Washington, D.C. “Special Forces provide a unique function, but they’re working on the shoulders of a lot of people behind them. … If you didn’t have conventional forces to back them up, they couldn’t do the job,” he continued…….
Top House Appropriator Seeks Omnibus during Lame-Duck Session


Defense News © September 14, 2014

Harold Rogers (R-Ky.), chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, is trying to steer House leaders to embrace a yearend fiscal 2015 omnibus spending package during a lame-duck session when the continuing resolution (CR) now under consideration would run out. Rogers is hoping to recreate the 12-bill package he negotiated with his Senate counterpart Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) for FY 2014 in less than a month last December and January, reported CQ.

MacDill AFB –

Former Centcom boss honors 9/11 on first visit back to Tampa


Tampa Tribune © September 11, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

In his first trip back to the Tampa area since turning over the helm of U.S. Central Command in 2013, James Mattis, the retired Marine general known affectionately as “Mad Dog,” recalled fond memories of the place he called home for three years. “Ladies and gentleman, I am humbled to be here,” Mattis told more than 700 who came out on an early Wednesday morning to honor the nearly 3,000 who died Sept. 11, 2001, and the more than 6,700 who died fighting in two wars since, “I am humbled to come back to this community that I left too quickly and I never got a chance to thank.”

President Obama to visit Central Command in Tampa Wednesday

President Barack Obama will be paying a visit to U.S. Central Command on Wednesday. CENTCOM is housed at MacDill Air Force base in Tampa. According to the White House, the president will be getting a briefing from his commanders on battle plans against the Islamic State. In a briefing Friday, White House spokesman Josh Ernest said not only will Obama meet with his commanders, he will also "thank the servicemembers for their continued hard work on these efforts."……..

Eglin AFB –

**New institute hopes to join military, commercial, academic innovators**


Northwest Florida Daily News © September 8, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE

At long last, the Doolittle Institute has officially opened the doors of its new headquarters building. The non-profit institute, a project in collaboration with the Air Force Research Laboratory, aims to bring together military, commercial and academic innovators in science and technology. While the group has been in developmental stages in the community for about two years, on Monday they opened their new 6,000-square-foot facility in Uptown Station........

**53rd Wing historian helps create expeditionary wing coin**


Northwest Florida Daily News © September 5, 2014
Dr. Chuck Merkel, 53rd Wing historian, recently assisted the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing in redesigning their commander’s coin, which now illustrates past and present elements of the 386th AEW’s history. Merkel contributed to the coin’s new look through research into the 386th AEW’s history, while serving a six-month Southwest Asia deployment in 2013. He also received input and guidance from Col. David Farrow, then the 386th AEW commander, and other staff members…….

Eglin AFB forms partnerships with Doolittle Institute


WEAR TV © September 11, 2014
Eglin Air Force Base is a center for research, development and testing of cutting-edge military technology. Now a partnership has been formed to share some of that expertise with private businesses, and even public schools. Most people remember General Jimmy Doolittle as the daring aviator who led a famous raid on Tokyo. What you might not know is he had a PHD in Aeronautical Engineering. Hence the name of the Doolittle Institute, a nonprofit dedicated to sharing technology and promoting education in science and engineering…….

Column: Betting on the F-35


Defense News © September 14, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The afternoon drive team on Washington’s WTEM sports radio station has some advice for, ahem, sports fans: Keep betting on the Dallas Cowboys’ opponents to cover the spread until one fails to. The often-provocative radio trio’s rationale was simple: The Cowboys’ defense appears lacking in its ability to stop other teams from scoring points. Lots of points. That makes going the other way on Big D a safe bet. The same is true about the Pentagon buying thousands of Lockheed Martin-made F-35 fighter jets…….
Aerial target QF-16 takes to the sky


USAF © September 12, 2014
By Ashley M. Wright

The Air Force's newest aerial target took a major step toward preparing warfighters downrange with a realistic fourth-generation replication of what they may face on the battlefield. The first unmanned QF-16 Viper struck down over the Gulf of Mexico Sept. 5, 2014, was part of a joint effort between the Test and Training Division at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, and the 82nd Aerial Target Squadron here. "This test was the culmination of years of planning and aircrew training specifically tailored to stand up the next generation of full-scale aerial targets," said Lt. Col. Ryan Inman, the 82nd ATRS commander. "

Hurlburt Field –

USAFSOS Language Center named best in SOCOM


Northwest Florida Daily News © September 5, 2014
By ERICA VEGA

The U.S. Air Force Special Operations School Language Center at Hurlburt Field earned the Special Operations Command Institutional Language Program of the Year award Aug. 11. Army Brig. Gen. Sean Mulholland, Special Operations Command South commanding general, presented the award which covered the period of July 31, 2013 through Aug. 1, 2014. The center also earned the award in 2012……….
NS Mayport –

Mayport Awarded Grant To Create 2 School Transition Centers


Mayport Mirror © September 10, 2014

Judy Cromartie, School Liaison Officer for NS Mayport, wrote and was awarded a $20,000 grant to create two elementary school transition centers for military families. Finegan Elementary and Mayport Elementary will be the sites for the two centers. These school-based transition centers will serve the schools with the greatest number of military dependents. Changing school may be the most stressful part of a family’s relocation process, especially if it happens during the school year…...

Florida National Guard –

Money crunch forces Florida Guard to suspend drills

http://www.sun-sentinel.com/fl-national-guard-shortfall-20140912,0,4381780.story

Sun-Sentinel © September 12, 2014

By William E. Gibson

Last year it was a government shutdown that shook up the ranks of Florida's "citizen soldiers." This month, another form of funding shortfall has forced the Florida Army National Guard to suspend its drills, disrupting training plans and jeopardizing paychecks for thousands. Many soldiers and their families plan their lives around these drills and depend on pay that may not come this month. Guard leaders played down the impact, saying the temporary shortfall will not impair active-duty operations abroad or
emergency response to natural disasters. But for state leaders and troops preparing for a call to duty, the shrinking budget and shifting schedule are unnerving.

Defense Industry –

**Analysis: More Gaps Found In US Contracts Website**  
Defense News © September 8, 2014  
By BRADLEY PENISTON

Scathing as it was, the Government Accountability Office’s (GAO’s) recent report on the gaps and deficiencies of USAspending.gov left out a few things — problems that may give defense companies pause about relying too much on the government transparency website for business intelligence. For example, the site’s listings for many Defense Department contracts lack the Treasury code that would show which agency or branch of service is funding them, according to an analysis by VisualDoD, a company that specializes in gathering and crunching Pentagon spending data.

**Army Cyber Chief: Let’s Get Closer To Industry**  
http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140911/DEFREG02/309110033/Army-Cyber-Chief-Let-s-Get-Closer-Industry  
Defense News © September 11, 2014  
By JOE GOULD

To keep pace with rapid changes in the cyber domain, the military needs “a much tighter relationship between industry and government,” the head of U.S. Army Cyber Command said Thursday. Speaking at Association of the United States Army breakfast, Lt. Gen. Edward Cardon said there were opportunities for industry to develop network infrastructures, operating systems and applications — and that past collaboration on a training environment had worked well. A central clearinghouse for industry to access the service’s cyber requirements is in the works, Cardon said.
The war on ISIS already has a winner: The defense industry

http://fortune.com/2014/09/13/defense-industry-winner-against-isis/

Fortune © September 13, 2014

It’s far too soon to tell how the American escalation in the sprawling, complex mess unfolding in Iraq and Syria will play out. But this much is clear: As our military machine hums into a higher gear, it will produce some winners in the defense industry. New fights mean new stuff, after all. And following the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan—and the belt-tightening at the Pentagon imposed by steep budget cuts—military suppliers are lining up to meet a suddenly restored need for their wares........

U.S. defense industry says global turmoil swaying budget hawks


Reuters © September 12, 2014

BY DAVID ALEXANDER AND ANDREA SHALAL

Images of two Americans being beheaded and of Russian tanks rolling through Ukraine have boosted pressure on Congress to roll back $1 trillion in mandatory defense cuts that the defense industry blames for almost 100,000 job cuts in recent years. U.S. lawmakers this week signaled support for President Barack Obama's plan to take action against Islamic State extremists in Syria and Iraq. For now, the Pentagon is working on the assumption that the fiscal 2016 budget will include deep spending cuts that were partially offset in 2014 and 2015, and further reductions in personnel........
Boeing Begins Rolling Out New Business Strategy

Since tacking charge of Boeing Defense, Space & Security late last year, Chris Chadwick has been building a plan to transform the world’s No. 2 military contractor with $33 billion in 2013 sales and more than 55,000 employees. His biggest customer, the Pentagon, has been hobbled by budget cuts, crimping new starts as key aircraft programs such as the C-17 transport and the F/A-18 fighter wind down.

Other Items of Interest –

Army activates its first cyber protection brigade

The Army on Sept. 5 activated a new Cyber Protection Brigade — the first of its kind in the Army — at Fort Gordon, Georgia. Col. Donald Bray took command of the brigade from Lt. Col. Philippe Persaud, who had been serving as the brigade’s interim commander while it was being stood up. Persaud will stay on as the brigade’s deputy commander.

New Combat Ship Briefing Delayed
One of the most eagerly-anticipated stories in naval circles this fall is what findings and recommendations a special US Navy task force has come up with for a new small surface combatant (SSC) warship. The task force’s report was completed at the end of July, but the Navy so far has been relentlessly tight-lipped about its contents. That would have changed Tuesday, when a classified briefing had been scheduled for members of the House Armed Services Committee. Congressional overseers were anxious to get a status report on where the service is on coming up with a follow-on design for the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), and the members would have been the first outside the Pentagon to be let in on what’s going on........

Pentagon wants to buy F-35s, Apaches with war funds

The Pentagon has asked the US Congress for permission to move just over USD1.9 billion in supplemental wartime funding, known as the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) account, into specific procurement accounts, with over half of that amount going to aircraft purchases. The reprogramming request, dated 9 September and viewed by IHS Jane's, asks for USD404,000 million for 12 Boeing AH-64E Apache attack helicopters to replace 21 Bell OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters lost in combat........
It’s Not Airpower Vs. Boots On Ground Any More


Breaking Defense © September 12, 2014

By ROBBIN LAIRD and ED TIMPERLAKE

As the Ukrainian and Middle Eastern crises roil our world, the debate quickly turns on which path will work best to deal with the evolving threats: boots on the ground, or planes in the air operating without boots on the ground. The specter of responses to the 9/11 attack and the various engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq naturally shade everyone’s perspectives. But changing capabilities and concepts of operations are obliterating the classic distinction. The Marines have become the only tilt rotor enabled force in the world; the Air Force and Navy have shaped highly integrated air grids, and advances in both the lethality and effectiveness of manned and unmanned aviation have grown…..

Air Base Can Learn from Losing Competition for KC-46, Support Group Official Says


Defense Communities 360 © September 11, 2014

Although the Air Force did not select Robins Air Force Base as one of the first installations to host the new KC-46A tanker, Middle Georgia can learn from that decision, according to the new head of the base’s local support group. “Because there will be other decisions to be made, what can we do to make sure, we first of all understand the process, and second, how do we cultivate the right atmosphere or fix what might need to be fixed, to ensure we have the right numbers,” said Charles Stenner, CEO of the 21st Century Partnership……..

Guest column: Cecil Airport is poised to become a player in space industry

The recent decision by Space Exploration Technologies Inc., better known as SpaceX, to build the nation’s first private launch facility in Texas was clearly disappointing news for Space Florida officials, who had aggressively pursued the project. This will serve only to galvanize and solidify Space Florida’s pursuit of commercial space opportunities. But all is not lost for Florida’s commercial space industry here in Northeast Florida, considering the status of the Cecil Airport and Spaceport facility……..

What’s Next: USAF Lays Groundwork To Replace Fighter, Tanker Fleets


Defense News © September 14, 2014

By AARON MEHTA
As US Air Force leaders gather this week outside of Washington, they bring a warning: Potential adversaries are spending big on technology, and the US can’t afford to fall behind. Much of the focus of the Air Force Association conference will be on a series of recapitalization programs that will get underway in the next few years. But even as the Air Force tries to inject new systems into its fleet, it has its eyes on the horizon and what could be the next wave of recapitalization programs……..

James' mission: Prioritize wisely to maintain capable, agile Air Force


Air Force Times © September 14, 2014
The Air Force has weathered a difficult year of personnel cuts, tough budget decisions and a cheating scandal that rocked the nuclear force. But Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James, on the job for eight months, said the service has made tremendous strides in improving its communication with airmen, Congress and the public. She said that approach should carry the Air Force through tough discussions with Congress over which aircraft to retire and how to prioritize spending through 2015 and 2016, when the threat of sequestration looms large........
FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **October Task Force Meeting in Key West** -- The Task Force will conduct its next meeting on **Thursday, October 16, 2014 from 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM** at the Doubletree Hotel, 3990 S. Roosevelt Blvd., Key West, 33040.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call in Number** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachments:**

   - TPG notes on ADC
   - Copies of letters sent to Greater Pensacola Chamber revoking their grant funding
   - Draft Task Force meeting schedule for 2015
   - Notes from bi-weekly TPG conference call

Regards, BG.

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**Articles of Interest:**
Lawmakers eyeing lame-duck for defense bill vote


The Hill © September 16, 2014

By Martin Matishak

House and Senate lawmakers are holding informal talks on cobbling together a joint 2015 defense policy bill in the hopes that they could approve the must-pass legislation during a lame-duck session of Congress, Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) said Tuesday. Talks between members of the House and Senate Armed Services panels began because members are under the impression that the upper chamber is “not going to have a bill go to the floor,” Thornberry, who could chair the House Armed Services Committee next year, told The Hill.

US House Comes Back Early, Could Take Up CR as Early as Tuesday


Defense News © September 15, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The US House could vote on a government shutdown-averting spending bill and new authorities to take on the Islamic State as soon as Tuesday. Last week ended with House Republican leaders delaying action on a $1 trillion measure, which would fund the Pentagon and other federal agencies through Dec. 11, because members had questions about a provision added at the request of President Barack Obama.

Civilian-Military Relations and the Sequester
A strong and trusting relationship between civilian leadership and senior military officials is vital for the Air Force, and US military overall, to carry out its mission, said Gen. Mike Hostage, Air Combat Command boss, in his speech at AFA's Air and Space Conference on Tuesday. This was Hostage's final speech at the annual National Harbor, Md., event before his retirement. With the Air Force today having nearly half the end strength and a fraction of the force structure it had when Hostage first entered the service, while new tasks and missions continue to pile up, it's incumbent on military leaders to give their best advice on proposed changes, he said. The Air Force is facing serious challenges because of intransigence on some proposed budget cuts, which will affect readiness if not changed, said Hostage.

CR on Path for Approval

As the House on Tuesday began to debate an amendment to a fiscal 2015 continuing resolution (CR) authorizing the administration to support Syrian rebels, there appears to be sufficient bipartisan support in both chambers to pass the amendment along with the underlying stopgap spending bill. The House is expected to finish floor debate and vote on the amendment and CR on Wednesday. The Senate plans to vote on the stopgap, which would fund the federal government through Dec. 11, by the end of the week.

Congress Staves Off Government Shutdown...for Now

By Eric Katz
The Senate on Thursday easily passed a short-term spending bill, clearing the way for the government to avoid a shutdown until at least mid-December. The Senate’s passage by a vote of 73-22 follows the House approving on Wednesday the $1.01 trillion stopgap measure -- which funds agencies at their current spending levels through Dec. 11. The stopgap measure will now head to President Obama, who has indicated he will sign it.

Nothing is Safe From Sequester

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/September%202014/September%2022%202014/Nothing-is-Safe-From-Sequester.aspx

Air Force Magazine © September 22, 2014

BY MARC V. SCHANZ

Not even the Air Force’s top three acquisition programs will be protected if sequester returns in Fiscal 2016, said industry experts during a wide-ranging panel discussion at AFA’s Air & Space Conference last week. James McAleese, founder of contracting consulting firm McAleese and Associates, said USAF spends about $24 billion annually on research, development, test, and evaluation, which far outstrips the other services. While much of the Long-Range Strike Bomber program, one of the top three priorities, remains shrouded in secrecy, McAleese said the program is one of the few slated for an increase in RDT&E dollars, rising to around $3.3 billion by 2019 by most recent estimates.

Space Coast –

Space Coast slowly regaining lost jobs


Orlando Sentinel © September 21, 2014

By Richard Burnett,
The Space Coast's post-shuttle economy appears to be on its way to recovery, buoyed most recently by NASA's big "space taxi" contract award last week. Winners of the multibillion-dollar deal to build the next-generation human spaceflight capsule — Boeing Co. and SpaceX — plan to add hundreds of jobs at Kennedy Space Center and the Cape Canaveral area. Other big expansions are already underway in Brevard County by Northrop Grumman Corp., Brazilian jet-maker Embraer and other tech companies....... 

MacDill AFB –

**Obama arrives in Tampa for briefing on ISIS**

http://tbo.com/list/military-news/obama-arrives-in-tampa-for-briefing-on-isis-20140916/

Tampa Tribune © September 16, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

President Barack Obama landed at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa Tuesday evening ahead of a Wednesday briefing at the base on the Islamic State insurgent group. Air Force One touched down at the base, home to U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command, about 45 minutes ahead of schedule Tuesday. After stepping off the plane, the President was greeted by U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor, D-Tampa, Centcom commander Army Gen. Lloyd Austin III, Socom commander Gen. Joseph Votel, and Col. Daniel H. Tulley, commander of the 6th Air Mobility Wing, who also serves as base commander………

**Obama's Tampa visit wasn't all business**


Tampa Tribune © September 17, 2014
By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

On a dreary, gray Wednesday morning, the president of the United States hopped into a black sport utility vehicle and his lengthy motorcade sped away from the Hilton Tampa Downtown, down rain-soaked city streets, along the Selmon Expressway and finally through the gates of MacDill Air Force Base. It would be a day of meeting with his top military commanders, the troops who serve on the front lines and students at the base elementary school who grow up knowing that the president can order mom, dad or both to deploy anywhere around the globe. As White House staffers, security personnel and media waited outside the hotel for President Barack Obama, a woman under a blue-and-white umbrella stood in the downpour in front of Nathan’s Famous Hot Dogs and Tampa Salad Co. restaurants, across Tampa Street from the Hilton, serenading the motorcade…………..

Eglin AFB –

**Bogdan: F-35 Likely Protected in Next Budget**


Defense News © September 15, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The F-35 joint strike fighter will likely be protected regardless of whether the Pentagon is operating under limits imposed by the Budget Control Act in fiscal 2016, the program’s top official said Monday. “I have faith in the Department of Defense leadership that when they tell me and the services that if sequestration comes we’re going to do everything we can to minimize the impact on the program, because that is what we need to do,” Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan, the head of the F-35 joint program office, said………..

After 13 years of deployments, last EOD units come home
When 4-year-old Devyn Frehner spotted her dad in the airport terminal, she bolted across the floor and into his arms. Her father, Senior Airman Josh Frehner, a 32-year-old explosive ordnance disposal technician, returned from Afghanistan on Sunday along with two of his EOD teammates from Eglin Air Force Base. This time, unlike others over the past 13 years, the airmen will not be going back.

Lockheed Martin unveiled new details on manufacturing investments aimed at bringing the F-35 joint strike fighter price down to about $80 million a copy by 2019. The efforts are a part of the company’s Blueprint for Affordability initiative and would save the government $1.8 billion by 2019, said Lorraine Martin, Lockheed’s vice president and general manager of the F-35 program, during a Sept. 16 briefing to reporters. The latest figures in 2013 had the F-35’s per unit cost ranging from $98 million to $116 million depending on the model. Lockheed is making changes to joint strike fighter manufacturing techniques and the components themselves, she said.

Lockheed eyes 2-4 percent cost reduction in next F-35 contract

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE

By Valerie Insinna

By ANDREA SHALAL
WASHINGTON Lockheed Martin Corp (LMT.N) is close to signing a roughly $4 billion deal with the U.S. Defense Department for 43 more F-35 fighter jets that will lower the cost of the jet's airframe by 2 to 4 percent, sources familiar with the program said. The reduction is part of a drive by the company and other key F-35 suppliers to slash the projected $400 billion cost of developing and building 2,457 U.S. jets in coming years - and the $1 trillion in additional costs to operate and maintain them over 50 years. Lockheed's F-35 program manager Lorraine Martin and Air Force Lieutenant General Chis Bogdan this week both said the two sides were "close" to agreement for an eighth batch of F-35s. Neither disclosed details..........

Hurlburt Field –

**US Air Force Special Ops Looks To Add Armor, Firepower to Ospreys**


Defense News © September 16, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY

In response to two of its CV-22 Ospreys being shot up over Juba, South Sudan, in December, critically injuring two service members, the US Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) has added optional armor to the flooring of the aircraft and may also incorporate forward-firing weapons. AFSOC commander Lt. Gen. Bradley Heithold told reporters on Monday that armor panels developed for the bird could add 800 pounds of weight if the full “blanket” is used, but crews have the option to use the armor sheeting or not..........

**Hurlburt pararescuemen in right place at right time**

Northwest Florida Daily News © September 17, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE | Daily News

Eight local pararescue airmen from Hurlburt Field were in the middle of a training session aboard the USS Alabama on Tuesday when they found themselves in the right place at the right time. On the second day of their confined space rescue training, the airmen from the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron were setting up for a rope rescue practice when a civilian painter, perched precariously on a ledge, fell 30 feet to one of the decks below. The airmen jumped to action..........

NS Mayport –

Area Chiefs Show Their Navy Pride

Mayport Mirror © September 17, 2014

Hundreds of Chief Petty Officers and Selectees from commands at Naval Station Mayport, NAS Jacksonville and NSB Kings Bay crowded the stands in front of the Memorial Wall in downtown Jacksonville on Sept. 12. The Chiefs and Selectees were there to show “Navy Chief, Navy Pride” at the first CPO Pride Day. “Our theme for this year’s Pride Day is ‘Honoring our Past and Shaping Our Future,” said NS Mayport CMDCM Ross Cramer during the opening ceremony at the Wall. “As we celebrate the Pride we have as Chief Petty Officers, and the dedication we have to our service, we must also remember those who have gone before us. Every day we should remind ourselves that we owe our very best to the hard work and dedication that built the legacy that we have today.”..........

Defense Industry –

Report: Defense contractors won’t see increased demand from U.S. military strategy against Islamic State
Defense contractors won't see much immediate benefit from President Barack Obama's plan to defeat the extremist group Islamic State, according to an analysis from Standard and Poor's. The report says that companies providing services like logistics, training, security and maintenance may see a modest rise in demand. While that demand won't offset the decrease resulting from the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan, the credit rating agency's report says conflict in the Middle East could lead to more defense spending in 2016 than what it would have been if sequestration continued…….

Is The Defense Downturn Over?

http://www.forbes.com/sites/lorenthompson/2014/09/16/is-the-defense-downturn-over/

Forbes © September 16, 2014

By Loren Thompson

Inflection points in demand for military goods and services tend to be clear only in retrospect. Nobody could have predicted on the day the Berlin Wall came down that within a dozen years, the ranks of top Pentagon contractors would be thinned by two-thirds. Similarly, few foresaw when the Twin Towers fell on 9-11 that U.S. military spending would soon exceed the highest Cold War levels. So it isn’t surprising that defense-industry analysts, who prefer hard data to headlines in making their calls, are still sounding gloomy about the outlook for domestic military demand. However, there is a growing likelihood that the bottom has been reached in the Obama defense downturn, and industry prospects will brighten in the months ahead

Pentagon Unveils Draft of New R&D Strategy; Waits for Industry, Hill To Weigh In


Defense News © September 19, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY
The Pentagon’s top weapons buyer formally released a draft of his proposed new
guidance for acquisition reform this morning, calling for a renewed focus on research
and innovation to maintain the increasingly tenuous lead that the US holds in military
technology over its adversaries. Administration officials — including Defense Secretary
Chuck Hagel — have been telegraphing elements of the strategy for weeks, even
though the final plan won’t be finished for months........

Other Items of Interest –

**JSF & The Path of DOOM**

Breaking Defense © September 16, 2014
By **LT. COL. DAN WARD**

In February of 2014, **Lt. Gen. Charles Davis**, the Air Force’s top uniformed acquisition official,
said big, audacious programs like the Joint Strike Fighter were “doomed the day the contract was
signed.” As the former Program Executive Officer for the JSF, he brings a pretty credible
perspective to the situation. Given his first-hand experience and the F-35’s track record
of delays, cost overruns, technical problems, operational limitations, and the recent grounding of
the entire fleet due to an engine fire, I am very much inclined to agree with him……

**Planned Cuts to Air Force Units in Europe May Be Postponed**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/planned-cuts-to-air-force-units-in-europe-
may-be-postponed/#

Defense Communities 360 © September 16, 2014
Planned cuts to Air Force units based in Europe may be delayed over concerns about Russia’s intentions toward Ukraine and Eastern Europe, defense officials said Tuesday. “I see this building now moving towards a review of those decisions,” Gen. Philip Breedlove, commander of U.S. European Command, told reporters at the Pentagon. DOD has been withdrawing forces out of Europe in recent years due to budget constraints and other needs around the globe........

**Governor Plugs Importance of North Carolina’s Installations**


Defense Communities 360 © September 16, 2014

At a meeting of the state’s Military Affairs Commission Tuesday, North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory (R) highlighted the strategic value of the state’s military installations, while pointing out the need to continue supporting the bases on the local level. McCrory said he had been told by the commander of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point that community support for the base was strong, a statement he had heard throughout the installations he has visited. “I hear that at every one of our bases and I think that is so important for all of us,” he said........

**Panel Points to Funding, Water Supply, Security as Key Installation Challenges**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/panel-points-to-funding-water-supply-security-as-key-installation-challenges/#

Defense Communities 360 © September 18, 2014

With declining budgets for sustainment and construction, and facilities continuing to deteriorate, installation officials throughout DOD are facing “doom and gloom,” John Conger, the department’s acting deputy undersecretary for installations and environment, said during the opening session at this week’s ADC 2014 Defense Policy Forum. As officials face greater risks regarding the condition of their infrastructure,
though, they will be forced to consider innovative ideas to operate their bases more efficiently that they wouldn’t have considered otherwise. “People are going to be more willing to try new things,” Conger said……..

Installations to Increasingly Rely on Communities for Services, Top Officials Say

Defense Communities 360 © September 15, 2014

Communities will play an increasingly important role in providing on-base support as the military services attempt to cope with declining budgets for installation support in the next decade, a panel of DOD’s top installations officials said Monday at the ADC 2014 Defense Policy Forum. The Pentagon’s new authority for installations to enter into intergovernmental support agreements with state and local governments to share base support services — enacted in January 2013 as part of the fiscal 2013 defense authorization bill — will provide a tremendous boon to the military, Dave Sienicki, a professional staff member on the majority side of the House Armed Services Committee, told the event’s 120 participants……..

Panel Points to Funding, Water Supply, Security as Key Installation Challenges

Defense Communities 360 © September 18, 2014

With declining budgets for sustainment and construction, and facilities continuing to deteriorate, installation officials throughout DOD are facing “doom and gloom,” John Conger, the department’s acting deputy undersecretary for installations and environment, said during the opening session at this week’s ADC 2014 Defense Policy Forum. As officials face greater risks regarding the condition of their infrastructure, though, they will be forced to consider innovative ideas to operate their bases more efficiently that they wouldn’t have considered otherwise……..

Senate Confirms Air Force Installations Nominee
The Air Force’s top installations post will be filled by a Senate-confirmed individual for the first time in 18 months after the chamber last week confirmed Miranda Ballentine to be the service’s assistant secretary for installations, environment and logistics. Ballentine, a top sustainability and renewable energy official for Wal-Mart Stores, is expected to begin working at the Pentagon on Sept. 22, according to an Air Force spokesman. President Obama nominated Ballentine for the post in January. Kathleen Ferguson has been the acting assistant secretary since March 2013 when Terry Yonkers stepped down………..

3 Major Decisions Loom for US Navy

Congress again is hung up on a budget, but lawmakers have left town to fight the midterm elections, leaving the Pentagon to wait and see what happens in one budget year before it can nail down the next. Meanwhile, there’s work to do, and the US Navy has several major decision points coming up — questions that need to be decided regardless what Congress ultimately comes up with. At the top of the decision list sit three programs: the Unmanned Carrier-Launched Airborne Surveillance and Strike (UCLASS); the Small Surface Combatant (SSC) and the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS). A decision on how to skew UCLASS — toward surveillance or strike — had been expected by the end of summer……..

Review Finds Few Efficiencies in the Pentagon’s Joint Basing Plan

Defense One © September 21, 2014

By Bob Brewin
The consolidation of 26 standalone military bases into 12 joint facilities has not resulted in increased efficiency nor cost savings, the Government Accountability Office said in a report published today that suggested the Pentagon re-evaluate the project. The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission kicked off the consolidation process on the recommendation of the Pentagon, which said installations that shared a common boundary, such as Army and Air Force bases in Washington State, could share some functions, including gates to access the bases......
FDSTF Members –

1. **October Task Force Meeting in Key West** -- The Task Force will conduct its next meeting **on Thursday, October 16, 2014 from 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM** at the Doubletree Hotel, 3990 S. Roosevelt Blvd., Key West, 33040. More information on base tours and Wednesday dinner to follow to Task Force members.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call in Number** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachments:**
   - Meeting agenda

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–
Lawmakers Reject Pentagon Bid to Spend War Funds on F-35s


Bloomberg News © September 22, 2014
By Tony Capaccio

Lawmakers have rejected the Pentagon’s request to shift as much as $1.5 billion in war spending to buy eight new Lockheed Martin Corp. (LMT) F-35 jets and 21 additional Boeing Co. (BA) AH-64 Apache helicopters. The Defense Department asked for the additional jets and helicopters in a Sept. 8 request for permission to shift, or reprogram, about $2 billion in its war operations budget, partly to pay for expanded operations against Islamic State extremists in Iraq and Syria.

Sen. Levin: Military Should Not Give Up on Sequestration

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=1619

National Defense Magazine © September 24, 2014
By Sandra I. Erwin

There is no chance that Congress will repeal sequestration before he retires, but Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., insists that lawmakers might find a way to relieve the military and civilian agencies from automatic budget cuts next year. “My hunch is it will be repealed or reduced, one way or another,” said Levin, chairman of the Armed Services Committee. “I hope we can get rid of sequestration,” he said Sept. 24 during a breakfast meeting with reporters. Regardless of the outcome of the mid-term election, it is conceivable that Republicans and Democrats could find some common ground on which to build a budget deal that spares both defense and nondefense agencies from automatic cuts, Levin said.

Sen. Levin: 'We're Gonna Have an Authorization Bill'

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140924/congresswatch/309240028/sen-levin-we-re-gonna-an-authorization-bill-

Defense News © September 24, 2014
A key US senator believes Congress will pass a Pentagon policy bill this year, but he cast further doubt on the upper chamber ever taking up its own version of the legislation. The Senate last year failed to pass its own National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), forcing the chambers' Armed Services committees to push through a version negotiated behind closed doors. SASC Chairman Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., speaking to reporters here Wednesday morning, would not rule out the possibility of a repeat during a year-ending lame duck session.

**Boehner: Don’t Expect War Authorization Vote in Lame-Duck Session**

[Link to article](http://blogs.rollcall.com/218/boehner-dont-expect-a-war-authorization-vote-in-lame-duck-session/?dcz=

Roll Call © September 25, 2014

By Emma Dumain

Speaker John A. Boehner thinks Congress should debate authorizing use of force against the Islamic State in Syria — but not until new members of the House and Senate take office in January. The Ohio Republican told The New York Times in an interview published Thursday morning the lame-duck session following the midterms in November would not be an appropriate time to make those decisions. “Doing this with the whole group of members who are on their way out the door, I don’t think that is the right way to handle this,” Boehner told the Times.

**Pentagon Working With Congress for More War Funding**

[Link to article](http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140926/CONGRESSWATCH/309260027/Pentagon-Working-Congress-More-War-Funding?odyssey=mod|newswell|text|FRONTPAGE|p)
Despite operating under an $85 billion supplemental wartime budget, the Pentagon is going back to Congress to ensure that it has the funding to continue its air operations against Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria, top officials said Friday. "We're going to require additional funding from Congress as we go forward," Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said. "We're working now with the appropriate [congressional] committees on how we go forward with the funding." Two prominent Democrats on the Senate Armed Services Committee — Carl Levin and Tim Kaine — have already signaled that they expect to grant to Pentagon more money for the latest Middle East bombing campaigns……..

Syria Strikes Raise Questions Over Future of OCO Funding
http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140928/DEFREG02/309280011/Syria-Strikes-Raise-Questions-Over-Future-OCO-Funding

As the price tag for operations in Iraq, Syria and West Africa continues to grow, Pentagon leadership insists that it is well prepared to pay for all of these previously unforeseen long-term operations. Part of the reason is that the building has been able to shift money around within its overseas contingency operations (OCO) supplemental budget, and is already working with Congress to make sure that more funding is on the way. "We're going to require additional funding from Congress as we go forward," Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said on Sept. 26. "We're working now with the appropriate [congressional] committees on how we go forward with the funding.”……

Syrian Ops Mean DoD ‘Budget Problems:’ CJCS Dempsey
The services’ draft budgets delivered to the Office of Secretary of Defense early this month are probably being shredded in light of the campaign in Iraq and Syria against the terrorist group known as ISIL. “If you’re asking me, are we going to have budget problems, the answer is yes,” the president’s top military advisor told reporters this afternoon. Gen. Martin Dempsey said the 2015 Pentagon budget assumed that US military commitments would “level off or come down” and that Congress would allow the military to change pay, close bases, retire weapons and make other changes……….

Space Coast –

Brevard will face plenty of aerospace, aviation challengers

Florida Today © September 28, 2014

By Ilana Kowarski

With its history as home to the Kennedy Space Center, satellite launches and Patrick Air Force Base, Brevard County is a natural fit for companies in the aerospace and aviation industry. But communities throughout the United States, and the world, are attempting to lure those companies away from this region, and make sure any companies looking to expand or relocate choose their areas over the Space Coast. And their quivers are filled with arrows similar to Brevard's — economic incentive programs, community support, powerful lawmakers and lobbyists, quality education partnerships and engineering talent……….
MacDill AFB –

**Centcom international coalition pitched on importance of anti-IS effort by Obama**


Tampa Tribune © September 18, 2014

Aside from being briefed by Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, commander of U.S. Central Command, on plans to hit Sunni insurgent group Islamic State targets in Syria, President Barack Obama spent about 20 minutes Wednesday with in a private meeting with Centcom’s international coalition leaders at MacDill Air Force Base. The meeting highlighted the importance of the coalition as Obama, who has yet to approve the plans he heard at Centcom, seeks to build a broad international consensus for efforts against IS………

**Centcom to brief Sen. Nelson on airstrikes**


By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

Sen. Bill Nelson, an early proponent of using force in Syria against the Sunni insurgent group Islamic State, will receive a briefing on operations from U.S. Central Command today, according to his office. A senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Nelson authored a resolution giving President Barack Obama authority to conduct those operations. He lashed out at his colleagues for not taking up the measure before leaving town. “I don’t think we should adjourn and go home with matters of war and peace in front of us,” he said on the Senate floor………

**MacDill tanker stars in Centcom Syria operation video**

The world’s most famous KC-135 Stratotanker air refueling jet hails from MacDill Air Force Base. A blast of videos of aerial attacks on Islamic State targets in Syria, distributed by U.S. Central Command and seen around the world, includes a 77-second YouTube video of a KC-135 refueling F-16s that were part of the first strike package to hit IS targets in Syria Sept. 23. The green-hued video, using night vision technology, shows an F-16 approaching the tanker as the boom operator carefully guides the refueling boom down to the bomb-laden fighter to offload fuel.......
As a fierce battle rages between Kurds and the Islamic State in the Syrian town of Kobane, the fight has another front, aimed at U.S. Central Command headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base. Kurds, and those supporting them, have been sending hundreds of urgent Twitter messages calling for Centcom, which controls U.S. military operations in the region, to start bombing the jihadis who are attacking the town on the Turkish border. Centcom officials say while they are aware of social media traffic, it does not drive targeting decisions. “We get a lot of suggestions for targets on social media,” said Army Maj. Curt Kellogg, a Centcom spokesman. “We monitor social media and see comments about all kinds of things, but that does not mean it is driving what Centcom is doing in our area of responsibility.”

Eglin AFB –

**GAO Draft Slams F-35 On ‘Unaffordable’ Costs: $8.8B Over Legacy Fighters**


Breaking Defense © September 22, 2014

By [COLIN CLARK](mailto:colin.clark@breakingdefense.com)

The F-35’s long-term costs may “not be affordable” and appear to be substantially higher than those of the existing combat aircraft fleets that the Joint Strike Fighter will replace, the Government Accountability Office says in a draft report. “The annual F-35 operating and support costs are estimated to be considerably higher than the combined annual costs of several legacy aircraft,” the draft says. This issue is likely to be a topic of debate at the JSF Executive Steering Board meetings to begin Thursday in Oslo, Norway. The nine countries that invested in the F-35’s development will hold bilateral meetings on Wednesday. Then they gather in the shadow of the Norwegian parliament as a group the next day.

**F-35 'On Track' for Carrier Tests in November**

The F-35 joint strike fighter is on track to conduct trials aboard a US Navy aircraft carrier in November, but there are still variables as to what may be tested, the program’s top official said today. “The November deployment will happen,” Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan, the head of the F-35 joint program office, said during a news briefing in Oslo. “It will most likely happen with two airplanes. Whether both those airplanes are fully capable of doing all the work remains to be seen……..

NS Mayport –

Pelicans’ tour destroyer at NS Mayport


Jax Air News © September 24, 2014

By Lt. j.g. Anthony Montes

With “interoperability” a key to success in modern warfare, it is jointly beneficial when military communities come together to learn the specifics of each other’s platforms. Pilots, naval flight officers and aviation warfare operators from VP-45 at NAS Jacksonville were recently hosted by crewmembers on board the destroyer USS Farragut (DDG 99), home ported at NS Mayport. They toured the ship’s anti-submarine warfare (ASW) systems and operations, courtesy of Lt. j.g. Tim Pellittiere, division officer of combat acoustics – systems that the P-8A Poseidon complements from the aviation side. The tour started in sonar control, where similarities between the ship’s systems and those of the P-8A Poseidon aircraft were immediately recognized……..

Mayport-based ship part of missile attacks against ISIS militants
The guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58) fires its MK 45 5-inch lightweight gun. Philippine Sea, a part of the George H.W. Bush Strike Group, is conducting training operations in the Atlantic Ocean. The USS Philippine Sea, homeported at Naval Station Mayport, is part of the coalition attack group waging strike against militants in Syria, according to the Florida Times-Union. The U.S. fired 47 Tomahawk land attack missiles from the USS Philippine Sea and the USS Arleigh Burke while operating from international waters in the North Arabian Gulf and Red Sea.

Tyndall AFB –

F-22 Raptor makes combat debut

By JENNIFER C. KERR

Envisioned in the 90s as crucial to U.S. military superiority in the next century — the sleek, radar-evading F-22 Raptor has finally seen its first combat. Never used in Afghanistan or Iraq, the Air Force’s newest fighter jet made its combat debut this week, taking part in the second wave of airstrikes over Syria, according to the Pentagon.

F-22s Used In Syria Strikes; Right Force, Right Time, Say Analysts

By BREAKING DEFENSE

Breaking Defense © September 23, 2014
By COLIN CLARK

While we don’t yet have much detail on how many were used, what munitions were used or what targets they hit, F-22s were used in last night’s air strikes in Syria against ISIL and al Qaeda. F-22s flew in the second of three waves of attacks launched against ISIL targets in Syria, Lt. Gen. William C. Mayville, the Joint Director of Operations, told reporters during a briefing on last night’s air strikes........

NAS Key West –

Navy: Air wing en route to Key West
http://keysnews.com/node/58684

Keys News © September 27, 2014

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff

Operations at Boca Chica Field are about to ramp up this week as an entire air carrier wing is flying into town to train. Air Carrier Wing Two based out of Naval Air Station Lemoore in California -- and all of its roughly 650 sailors -- will be training at Naval Air Station Key West through mid-October, said NAS Key West spokeswoman Trice Denny. Naval air carrier wings are comprised of several squadrons, in this case fixed-wing fighter jets and support aircraft, and are usually attached to a specific aircraft carrier. Air Carrier Wing Two is attached to the USS Ronald Reagan, and they typically deploy together........

Defense Industry –

AgustaWestland Lawsuit a Sign Of 'Frustration' With the US


Defense News © September 27, 2014

By TOM KINGTON
Finmeccanica's decision to sue the US Army after being excluded from a sole-source helicopter contract reveals the Italian firm's “frustration” with the US market after seeing a series of contracts go sour, analysts have said. In a Sept. 19 filing, Finmeccanica unit AgustaWestland asked the US Court of Federal Claims in Washington to block the US Army’s awarding of a contract, without competition, to Europe's Airbus for 155 helicopters. AgustaWestland argued that it could beat Airbus on price if allowed to bid……

Other Items of Interest –

**Challenges Hinder Success of Joint Basing Implementation, GAO Finds**

[link](http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/challenges-hinder-success-of-joint-basing-implementation-gao-finds/#)

Defense Communities 360 © September 22, 2014

DOD’s 12 joint bases have been fully operational since 2010, yet joint base officials reported variations in the degree to which they have consolidated 42 common installation support functions, according to a new report by the [Government Accountability Office](http://www.gao.gov) (GAO). None of the joint bases reported they had consolidated all support functions. Still, the 12 locations in aggregate had partially consolidated about 80 percent of the functional areas joint base commanders are responsible for, with the level of consolidation varying from 52 percent of the functions at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va., to 90 percent or more at three joint bases, the agency found……

**Was that a Lackluster F-22 Debut?**

[link](http://aviationweek.com/blog/was-lackluster-f-22-debut)

Aviation Week © September 24, 2014

by [Amy Butler](http://www.aviationweek.com/profiles/location/1000036)
The F-22’s combat debut — the twin-engine stealth fighter was used in anger against Islamic State (IS) extremists gaining footholds in Syria and Iraq early Sept. 23 in a wave of air strikes — was not the dazzle many had expected. After years of hearing the refrain of the F-22’s purpose to “kick down the door” (thank you Gen. John Jumper, former USAF chief of staff) of air defenses, clearing the way for other assets to do business in an air battle, many probably expected the F-22’s debut to be just that……..

Military panel set for shake-up


The Hill © September 26, 2014
By Martin Matishak

Rep. Mac Thornberry is poised to become one of the leading Republican voices on national security as President Obama embarks on a prolonged military campaign against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). First elected in the 1994 Republican revolution, Thornberry is the front-runner to replace Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) as the leader of the powerful House Armed Services Committee in the next Congress. The promotion would give him responsibility for crafting the House version of the Defense Department’s annual budget blueprint, along with a prominent role overseeing Obama’s use of the military…….

Meet the Zumwalt: The US Navy's Stealth Destroyer Will Go to Sea Next Spring


Defense News © September 28, 2014
By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

The ship is plainly visible from Front Street, across the Route 1 bridge in downtown Bath. Nothing like this angular, almost hulking giant has ever been seen here, even after well over a century of shipbuilding at Bath Iron Works. The futuristic shape of the Zumwalt, DDG 1000, has become familiar after more than a decade of graphics presentations and artist drawings, and models of the destroyer have been a staple at
naval expositions for years. But now the whole ship is coming together, all construction blocks assembled and set afloat. People walk her decks and she rises and falls with the tide as all that planning turns into a real thing. She’ll take to the sea for the first time in the spring………..

Chairmanship is ‘Thornberry’s to Lose,’ HASC Watcher Says

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/chairmanship-is-thornberrys-to-lose-hasc-watcher-says/

Defense News © September 28, 2014

Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) appears poised to become the next chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, though Rep. Randy Forbes (R-Va.) has left the door open to seek the gavel, too. The current chairman, Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.), announced in January that he will not seek re-election to the House, and the race to replace him started immediately. “[The race is] Thornberry’s to lose. Period,” Mackenzie Eaglen, a defense analyst at the American Enterprise Institute, told The Hill. Thornberry is the second-most senior Republican on the committee and chairs the Intelligence, Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee. Forbes ranks two seats behind Thornberry and chairs the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee. He has repeatedly called for new leadership on defense and national security, according to The Hill………..
FDSTF Members –

1. **Task Force Meeting This Week in Key West** -- The Task Force will conduct its next meeting on **Thursday, October 16, 2014 from 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM** at the Doubletree Hotel, 3990 S. Roosevelt Blvd., Key West, 33040.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call in Number** –

   - Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 8784566

3. **New EFI Logo** – Effective October 1st, Enterprise Florida will utilize the new logo below:

   ![New EFI Logo](image)

4. **Attachments:**

   - Meeting agenda

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**  
**Defense Consultant**  
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Office (850) 878-0826  
Cell (850) 443-8286
Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**BRAC is Coming, Principi Says**

[http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/brac-is-coming-principi-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=0a75e21543-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-0a75e21543-55781729&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#](http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/brac-is-coming-principi-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=0a75e21543-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-0a75e21543-55781729&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#)

Defense Communities 360 © October 6, 2014

Anthony Principi, chairman of the 2005 BRAC Commission, is convinced a new base closure round will be held in the next five years. “At some point, Congress is going to have to authorize a BRAC” commission, Principi told Seacoastonline last week. “I’ve seen the trepidation [of base closures] first-hand, and I know [a BRAC round] can create an anxious time for communities. But the bottom line is that there’s a lot of excess military infrastructure, and it’s costly,” he said. The paper interviewed Principi ahead of his visit today, along with Maine gubernatorial candidate Rep. Mike Michaud (D), to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery. Principi last visited the shipyard during the 2005 BRAC round. The commission later voted to take it off the closure list. At the time, he said it was “the premiere public shipyard. It should be the gold standard by which we should measure other shipyards.” Principi told the paper he is confident Portsmouth will survive a future BRAC.

DOD Budget–

**President, House Democrats Highlight Dangers of Sequestration**


Defense Communities 360 © October 8, 2014
During a rare visit to the Pentagon, President Obama on Wednesday warned about the deleterious impacts of the 2011 Budget Control Act spending caps on national defense, underscoring the need “to make sure that Congress is working with us to avoid, for example, some of the draconian cuts that are called for in sequestration.” Obama added that lawmakers need to ensure the military has “the equipment and the technology that’s necessary for them to be able to succeed at their mission,” reported the Hill.

MacDill AFB –

Shift in war footing affects Tampa area defense industry


Tampa Tribune © October 5, 2014
By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

It’s been a tough few years for Tampa’s defense industry. With the war in Iraq ending in 2011 and about two-thirds of the remaining 30,000 U.S. troops set to leave Afghanistan by the end of the year, the Pentagon was on a course to reduce its global footprint and the White House and Congress were planning to chop the war funding that went with it. Thanks to the multiple whammy of troop reductions, the automatic spending cuts known as sequestration and the reliance on continuing resolutions to fund operations, Tampa area defense contractors, who had seen unprecedented growth since 9/11, experienced a sharp hit to their bottom lines. And reductions in their workforces.

MacDill AFB elementary school will expand to K-8


Tampa Tribune © October 1, 2014
By Erin Kourkounis | Tribune Staff
Next school year, the public school on MacDill Air Force Base — currently open to students in kindergarten through fifth grade — will serve middle-schoolers, too. The Hillsborough County School Board on Tuesday gave its approval to convert the A-rated Tinker Elementary to a K-8 for the next school year. The conversion will cost $1.4 million and will be paid for through the district’s capital fund. About $450,000 of the budget will go toward six modular classrooms to accommodate the older students. ........

Eglin AFB –

**Eglin, community work together to save resources, money**


Northwest Florida Daily News © October 1, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE

Sometimes one man’s trash really is another man’s treasure. That’s what a group of community, business and military leaders found over the past six months as they worked together to come up with plans for saving resources and money. On Wednesday, Eglin Air Force Base signed four agreements under the new Air Force-wide Community Partnership Program during a brief ceremony at Northwest Florida State College. One of the agreements will take some of Eglin’s garbage – lots of large, broken hunks of concrete - and use it to create an artificial reef in Okaloosa County............

NS Mayport –

**CSCS Mayport Trains Fleet Sailors For Real Navy**


Florida Times-Union © October 8, 2014
A sign outside the main gate at Naval Station Mayport reads “Finest Services for the Finest Fleet.” This statement describes the vital role the Center for Surface Combat Systems (CSCS) plays. To prepare Sailors to maintain, operate and fight in a combat environment. The training courses on base are a constant. With over 1,200 students taught yearly. The command uses a mix of blended learning that is comprised of instructor led classes, hands on labs, simulation and computer-based training. According to Naval Station Mayport CSCS Officer in Charge Chief Warrant Officer Kevin King, it is their job to ensure ships combat personnel are trained to defend the ship during any scheduled deployment………..

**Amphibious ships' arrival boosts Mayport prestige, spending**


Florida Times-Union © October 4, 2014

By Clifford Davis

The USS Iwo Jima, USS New York and USS Fort McHenry, with their nearly 2,000 crew members, brought much more to Mayport Naval Station than a boost for local businesses and added prestige for the base. The arrival of the ships will add $60 million a year in consumer spending and $75 million in annual ship repair contracts to the local economy. The versatile amphibious triumvirate also represents the apex of a force that has been over 70 years in the making — a force that military leaders now call the Swiss Army Knife of the U.S. Navy……..

**SOUTHCOM –**

**JHSV Brings Unique Capability to SOUTHCOM AOR**


Navy Live © October 6, 2014

By Rear Adm. George Ballance, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command / U.S. 4th Fleet

As Southern Partnership Station 2014 comes to a close, I am struck by how much can be accomplished in a short period of time if you have the right people with the right skills and the right equipment in order to deliver them on station. Security Cooperation – building partnerships, capabilities and capacity with our fellow navies in Central and South America – and finding
opportunities for experimentation and testing – in essence, being a theater of innovation – are key missions of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet.

Tyndall AFB –

95th Fighter Squadron Makes First Deployment to Combat

http://www.mypanhandle.com/story/d/story/95th-fighter-squadron-makes-first-deployment-to-co/20075/_CiDVSrpMk-fpcuWw1_zVA

My Panhandle.com © October 7, 2014
By Corey Dobridnia

For the first time ever a squadron from Tyndall Air Force Base deploys to a combat setting. Public affairs at Tyndall made the announcement late Monday. Tuesday, News13 spoke exclusively to the wing’s commander. F-22's are still in the sky over Tyndall Air Force Base, but spirits flying even higher as the installation announces its first combat deployment. It's the first major step for the squadron since they were officially re-activated, but it's the final step for the base as this deployment marks its official transition to an Air Combat Command.

Tyndall AFB’s reach stretches beyond base


News Herald © September 28, 2014
By VALERIE GARMAN

As the hub for F-22 pilot training in the U.S., Tyndall Air Force Base has played a significant role in developing the country’s fifth generation fighter fleet, which took to the skies to launch a second wave of air strikes against terrorist targets in Syria last week. The mission marked the F-22 Raptor’s combat debut after entering service in the mid-2000s.
Opinion: A better plan for Army aviation
http://www.armytimes.com/article/20141009/NEWS01/310090074/Opinion-better-plan-Army-aviation

Army Times October 9, 2014

The active component Army is working to implement a plan that will erode the National Guard, and they are doing it under the guise of “modernization.” The Army Restructuring Initiative calls for removing all Apache attack helicopters from the Guard, an action that would undermine the operational capability of a reserve force that has served admirably during the past 12 years of sustained combat. The Army has chosen this course of action because it is woefully underfunded and lacks good options. Nonetheless it is a mistake of epic proportions........

Learning from the Air Force: Why The Army Needs a Congressional Commission


War on the Rocks © October 9, 2014
By David Barno and Nora Bensahel

Over recent months, tensions between the active U.S. Army and the U.S. Army National Guard have escalated dramatically. Instead of working as a team to manage the deep cuts to Army force structure and end strength, the two sides have withdrawn to their corners, donned their boxing gloves, and sparred bloodily about topics ranging from restructuring aviation assets to the degree of interchangeability between active and reserve forces. These battles are so contentious, and mutual distrust so high, that
Congress is debating the creation of an independent commission to examine the future roles of active and reserve components of the Army. Although Washington commissions rarely solve tough problems, in this case a commission is essential to establish ground truth and serve as a catalyst to help restore trust among the Army’s components.

Defense Industry –

**Defense Industry Seeks to Reignite Debate on Economic Impact of Pentagon Budget Cuts**
http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=7c996cd7-cbb4-4018-baf8-8825eada7aa2&ID=1636&RootFolder=%2Fblog%2FLists%2FPosts

National Defense Magazine © October 12, 2014
By Sandra I. Erwin

The defense industry has not fully recovered from the political damage caused by a 2012 study that predicted that military budget cuts would wipe out more than 2 million jobs across the United States over the next decade. When Congress imposed draconian cuts in 2013 and the industry did not collapse, that estimate was quickly discredited as sensationalistic and overblown. Over the past two years, defense CEOs have sought to move past the controversy and regain control of the debate. With defense industry stocks at record highs, the challenge has been to persuade Washington that, no matter what Wall Street says, the downturn is causing real pain to the U.S. economy.

**Could Real Defense Acquisition Reform Be Afoot?**
http://www.defensenews.com/article/20141011/DEFREG/310110024/Could-Real-Defense-Acquisition-Reform-Afoot-
Defense News © October 11, 2014
By JOHN T. BENNETT
Forces might be converging that could lead to significant Pentagon acquisition reform, and a group of House Democrats is pushing pages of ideas. For months, House Armed Services Committee (HASC) leaders have been conducting a major reform study. Because that effort is being led by the panel’s likely next chairman, Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, insiders say much of it could become law. But before that study is finalized, the 55-member New Democratic Coalition is floating nearly a dozen pages of findings and recommendations to “streamline and upgrade the acquisitions process.” The coalition’s report states “it is clear that acquisition reforms are needed.”

Other Items of Interest –

**America's Big Military Mistake: Cutting Land Forces Too Quickly**


Brookings © October 1, 2014

By: Michael E. O'Hanlon

In recent years, ground warfare has again gotten a bad name in the United States. This is understandable. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been very costly in lives, treasure, and enduring injury—physical and mental—to American troopers and their families. The outcomes have been mediocre. As a result, the White House’s 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, backed up by the Pentagon’s 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, argued that American ground forces would no longer be sized for the possibility of large-scale stabilization or counterinsurgency missions.

**Hostage's Warning**

[http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2014/October%202014/Hostage's-Warning.aspx](http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2014/October%202014/Hostage's-Warning.aspx)

Air Force Magazine © October 2014
Mike Hostage laid out the Air Force’s past and future readiness problem in no uncertain terms. Last year’s budget sequester so crippled the Air Force that a third of its fleet was grounded and only a handful of jet aircraft were ready in case of a new international crisis, according to the head of the combat air forces. That debacle drove USAF’s request to shrink even more, as the service desperately tried to save enough cash to keep a smaller force fully prepared for unexpected wars. And without Congress’ help, the same sequestration-based disaster will surely play out again next year. Last summer’s stand-down was as badly timed as could be imagined. It was preceded by years of here-and-now combat operations that shortchanged depth and left the Air Force in a fragile readiness state, according to Air Combat Command chief Gen. Gilmary Michael Hostage III.

6 new AF Materiel Command units to form installation and mission support center


USAF © October 1, 2014

Six Air Force organizations moved under Air Force Materiel Command Oct. 1, in a step toward integrating and forming the foundation of the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center when the center is formally activated in 2015. The Air Force realigned four field operating agencies -- the Air Force Civil Engineer Center, Air Force Financial Services Center, Air Force Installation Contracting Agency and Air Force Security Forces Center -- to AFMC. Two additional organizations -- the Air Force Cost Analysis Agency’s Financial Management Center of Expertise and the Air Force Personnel Center’s Services Directorate -- were also realigned to the command.
October 27, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. Next Task Force Meeting -- The next Task Force meeting will be Thursday, November 20 at the Crowne Plaza Pensacola Grand Hotel, 200 East Gregory Street, Pensacola, Florida 32502 beginning at 9:00 AM CST.

2. Attachments:

    2015 Florida Defense Support Task Force Meeting Schedule
    Notes from the bi-weekly call with TPG
    FDSTF Grants -- Statewide Press Release

Regards, BG.

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–

Congress Will Scramble To Pass Crucial Defense Legislation After Midterm Elections
Less than two weeks before the midterm elections, a handful of races that could turn the Senate majority over to the GOP remain too close to call. Two, in Louisiana and Georgia, may go into runoffs, meaning control of the Senate in the next Congress may not be decided until Dec. 6, or even Jan. 6 — after the current Congress expires. In what one senior Republican Senate aide described as a kind of doomsday scenario — unlikely, but still a worrying possibility — this uncertainty, or an imminent transfer of control, could derail deliberations on a full slate of crucial defense legislation in the current Congress.

Ex-Pentagon Officials Warn of Threats to Readiness from Sequestration

Two former senior Pentagon officials said Oct. 22 the sharp cuts in defense spending already have seriously affected combat readiness and warned that the “disconnect” between the rising threats and how defense is funded will get worse in the future if sequestration is not repealed. Speaking at the Bipartisan Policy Center, Michèle Flournoy and Eric Edelman, both former undersecretaries of defense for policy, said that in addition to increasing defense budgets, Congress must give the military the authority to make the reforms and force structure changes and base closings it has requested, and allow the services to better manage the money they receive.
While the top appropriators in the House and Senate are pushing for Congress to complete fiscal 2015 appropriations before the end of the year by passing a massive year-end omnibus, many lawmakers may prefer to move a yearlong continuing resolution (CR) that simply extends last year’s funding levels through Sept. 30, 2015. For some, the appeal of a full-year CR for all agencies would be getting appropriations out of the way so Congress can focus on other year-end business during the lame duck session. Such a move also would provide agencies certainty about their FY 2015 spending. For Republicans, it would be a way to deny Democrats a last chance to see their spending priorities implemented. Alternatively, if Republicans gain control of the Senate in the midterm elections, the party may try to pass another short-term CR, so they can rewrite bills to reflect GOP priorities when the next Congress opens. ........

Defense hopes for sequester relief

The odds of rolling back the sequester are improving with the fight against Islamic militants and the possibility that Republicans will control the Senate, budget experts and defense firm analysts say. While repealing the automatic spending cuts is unlikely and even easing the cuts remains an uphill climb, opponents believe they have new, favorable arguments on their side. Those talking points include the falling budget deficit and the emerging twin threats of Ebola and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. “I think there is significant hope for an adjustment, but it may be taken in stages,” said Geoff Davis of Republican Consulting, a former member of the House Armed Services Committee........}

Sequestration Will Give US Army 'Real Problems' Meeting Increased Demands, Officials Say
If sequestration budget cuts remain in effect, the US Army will take a $14 billion hit in 2016, jeopardizing modernization and its ability to respond to a major conflict, Army officials told reporters Friday. With no sign of a reprieve from Congress, Army senior leaders have been ringing the alarms. The Army assembled two flag officers and its director of aviation on Friday to flesh out for reporters Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno’s gloomy tidings from the service’s annual AUSA convention last week........

MacDill AFB –

MacDill troops, families warned to downplay military connection in public

Troops and their families at MacDill Air Force Base are being advised to downplay references to their military connections on Facebook, Twitter and other social media because of online threats made by Islamic State and other jihadi groups. Also now discouraged: Bumper stickers, T shirts and other public signs that show a military affiliation. Though no specific threats have been detected against anyone at the base, the 6th Air Mobility Wing sent out a public service announcement Wednesday morning advising troops and their families to reduce their public profile when it comes to their military connections..........
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLA. — US airstrikes and Iraqi ground forces have blunted an Islamic State offensive in Iraq, but it will be months before Iraq can mount a sustained counteroffensive to take terrain back, a senior US military official said Thursday. The official, who is involved in directing the military’s campaign against the militants, said Iraq’s security forces have been able to mount some limited counterattacks with the help of US airstrikes.

Eglin AFB –

Eglin Formalizes Partnerships with Host Communities

Leaders from Eglin Air Force Base and neighboring communities in northwest Florida earlier this month signed multiple agreements designed to save money or leverage mutual benefits by sharing installation support services. Under one partnership, the installation will provide Okaloosa County excess concrete for use in creating artificial reefs. Offering the concrete to the county, which will use a contractor to haul the materials from the base, saves Eglin $40 per ton in removal costs, reports Eglin Public Affairs.

First F-35A operational weapons load crew qualified

Northwest Florida Daily News © October 24, 2014
By STAFF SGT. MARLEAH ROBERTSON | 33rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Racing against the clock and with leadership’s eyes watching, three Airmen with the 58th Aircraft Maintenance Unit loaded training munitions onto an F-35A Lightning II during a qualification load here, Oct. 10, officially becoming the first qualified operational weapons load crew for the F-35A. Staff Sgt. Zachary Watts, 58th AMU crew one load crew chief, leveraged his 10 years of experience loading munitions on F-16 Fighting Falcons to lead his crew through the successful load. Airmen 1st Class Robert Hughes and Reece Zoller, 58th AMU crew one load crew members, joined Watts for the week-long load training after completing technical training at the Academic Training Center........

NAS Key West –

**Boca Chica Field full again**

[http://keysnews.com/node/59650](http://keysnews.com/node/59650)

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff

Fantasy Fest has waned, but things are heating up in a hurry at Boca Chica Field as another carrier air wing arrived Sunday to begin air-to-air combat training -- and more are on the way. About 500 sailors from Carrier Air Wing Nine, based out of Naval Air Station Lemoore in California, and Fighter Squadron Composite Twelve (VFC-12), a reserve fighter squadron out of Naval...

Defense Industry –

**Textron CEO Outlines Path Forward For US Defense Industrial Base**


Defense News © October 21, 2014
By PAUL McLEARY

With few new start programs coming through the Pentagon’s pipeline over the next several years, defense contractors are anxiously checking their portfolios for opportunities to upgrade and modernize existing platforms to extend their operational lives while waiting for service purse strings to loosen. The show floor at the Association of the US Army convention here last week was packed with incremental upgrades and proposals for small-scale modernization programs, pitches that served two purposes……..

**Exclusive: Lockheed, Pentagon reach $4 billion deal for more F-35 jets**


Reuters © October 22, 2014

Lockheed Martin Corp and U.S. defense officials have reached agreement on the terms of a contract worth about $4 billion for an eighth batch of 43 F-35 fighter jets, sources familiar with the deal said on Thursday. The contract will lower the cost of the radar-evading warplane by about 3 percent and includes jets to be built for the U.S. military, Britain and other U.S. allies, according to the sources, who were not authorized to speak publicly..........

**Largo company wins $8.7 million Army contract**


Tampa Tribune © October 23, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

During 13 years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq, more than 2,500 U.S. troops were killed by improvised explosive devices, according to The Washington Post. That’s about half of the troops killed in action in both conflicts. And many thousands more were wounded. Though the end of the war in Iraq and the winding down of U.S. combat operations in Afghanistan has
seen a reduction in IED deaths and injuries, the devices still pose a global problem not just for troops, but for civilians. With that in mind, the Army last month awarded an $8.7 million operational development contract to a small Largo company that has created a technology allowing troops to detect from a distance the chemicals used to make the bombs

Pentagon official upbeat on streamlining U.S. military acquisitions

http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/10/24/us-usa-military-arms-idUSKCN0ID2G720141024

Reuters © October 24, 2014

BY ANDREA SHALAL

WASHINGTON The Pentagon and Congress have better-than-ever odds of reaching agreement on how to streamline myriad overlapping laws that slow the process for buying military equipment and services, a top Defense Department official said. "I am optimistic," Andrew Hunter, a former congressional aide who helped draft many of those laws before joining the Pentagon four years ago, told reporters on Thursday. He said he saw emerging consensus among industry, lawmakers and defense officials about the need for changes

In Proposal to Congress, Pentagon Seeks Simplification of Acquisition Process

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=7c996cd7-cbb4-4018-baf8-8825eada7aa2&ID=1654&RootFolder=%2Fblog%2FLists%2FPosts

National Defense Magazine © October 24, 2014
By Sandra I. Erwin

The goal is plain and simple: "Ease the burdens on program managers." That about sums up the gist of the acquisition reforms that the Defense Department hopes Congress will pass in 2016. "Our legislative proposal is not a radical rewrite," said Andrew Hunter, director of the joint rapid acquisition cell. His office is at the center of ongoing exchanges with House and Senate leaders who criticize the Pentagon's weapons acquisition process as grossly inefficient. Hunter is leaving the Pentagon next
week to join the Center for Strategic and International Studies, but he expects the reform initiative he started with the House and Senate Armed Services Committees will stay on track……..

Other Items of Interest –

**Air Force Proposes Expanding Utah Range to Prevent Encroachment**


Defense Communities 360 © October 21, 2014

The Air Force needs to add about 700,000 acres around the perimeter of the Utah Test and Training Range to protect F-35 flight training from potential encroachment, officials told about 50 residents at a public meeting Monday in western Utah. “If someone puts a wind farm there, I’m done testing,” Chris Robinson, the range’s director of operations, said while pointing to a map of the proposed expansion area. A wind farm would obstruct the airspace around the range and create electronic interference, he explained……..

**Pentagon Likely to Conduct Study of Excess Capacity**


Defense Communities 360 © October 22, 2014

DOD may study the need for additional base closures even if language in the House version of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill calling for a comprehensive assessment of excess infrastructure is stripped from the conference report, John Conger, acting deputy undersecretary for installations and environment, said Wednesday. “Even if it doesn’t end up in the final version, I think it’s a signal that we can go ahead and do a capacity analysis at a parametric level,” Conger told CQ. “It’s not a bad thing to have those numbers,” he said…….
Bill Hodgkins: Keep pushing for energy independence

Tallahassee Democrat © October 21, 2014

Without much fanfare, the United States has now met its own domestic natural gas needs, while also becoming the world’s No. 1 exporter of natural gas. At the same time, Americans still consume far more oil than our currently available domestic resources can supply. The gap in domestic oil requirements versus production is shrinking due to newly incorporated techniques, such as hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling, and these technological advances are allowing the United States to produce more oil than it has in more than a decade — an important impact to our economy and national security. However, significant areas of both federally controlled onshore and offshore resources remain closed to oil and gas exploration and production. To achieve energy independence and the benefits to the nation, these resources must be opened to development……..

Pennsylvania moves to protect its military bases

Public Opinion © October 24, 2014

A state commission has been established by law to protect Pennsylvania's military bases, including Letterkenny Army Depot. Gov. Tom Corbett codified the Pennsylvania Military Community Enhancement Commission on Wednesday when he signed House Bill 1550 into law. "The commonwealth will be better prepared to defend our vital economic defense engine when the federal government considers cuts," Sen. John Blake, D-Scranton, said on Thursday. "In the past, due to business cycles and changing budget conditions, Pennsylvania was exposed to the adverse impact of unilateral action by a branch of the military if it decided to eliminate the mission of one of our military installations. We will have the real-time knowledge and the capacity to protect more than 60,000 workers who work in Pennsylvania's defense industry."...........

Navy Ushers in New CNIC Commander
http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/navy-ushers-in-new-cnic-commander/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=247ec9c404-
Vice Adm. Dixon Smith became the fifth commander of Navy Installations Command (CNIC) amid full gun salutes, musical performances, march on of the troops and parading of the colors during a ceremony Friday at the Washington Navy Yard. Smith, who was promoted to vice admiral prior to the ceremony, relieved Vice Adm. William French, who retired after more than three decades of service to the Navy. Smith is the first former installation commanding officer to lead CNIC, according to an agency press release.

State Commission Approves Solar Projects at Three Georgia Posts

The Georgia Public Service Commission on Thursday approved the construction of solar photovoltaic arrays at three Army installations in the state — Forts Stewart, Gordon and Benning. The Georgia Power Co., an operating utility of Southern Company, will finance, design, build, own and operate each of the 30-megawatt projects. All three are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2016, according to a commission press release. The projects, referred to as “Georgia 3×30,” are a collaborative effort among the Army’s Office of Energy Initiatives, the three installations, the General Services Administration (GSA) and Georgia Power.
FDSTF Members –

1. **Task Force Conference Call Meeting Later This Month** -- Marcy will be sending out a Doodle today to Task Force members to determine the best date and time for this conference call. We need a very quick turn on availability in order to schedule and notice a TF Conference call as early as possible next week. Please respond to the scheduling query as soon as possible, but no later than COB Wednesday. The subject of the call will be to publically review the City of Key West grant, and, if warranted, take appropriate action on their grant request in support of the Truman Waterfront Park project.

2. **Task Force Meeting Call in Number** –

   Conferencing Number: 800-501-8979
   Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachments:**

   - Defense Reinvestment Grant (DRG) Announcement Letter
   - Defense Infrastructure Grant (DIG) Announcement Letter

Regards, BG.

Bruce Grant  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FLORIDA DEFENSE SUPPORT TASK FORCE

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The US Army will be gutted and in danger of “wasting away” if the sequestration stranglehold on its budget continues, the service’s secretary said Monday at the opening of the Army’s largest annual gathering. A crowd of soldiers, veterans, civilians and industry reps jammed the opening ceremony of the annual meeting of the Association of the US Army at the convention center in Washington, D.C.

In his keynote address, Army Secretary John McHugh lost no time in voicing the Army leadership’s primary concern. US soldiers are on missions from Ukraine to the Philippines to Liberia, across six continents and 150 countries, McHugh said, helping allies and “winning the peace.”

Sequestration Jeopardizes Army’s Ability to Fulfill Its Role, Hagel Says

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel praised the Army for its contributions since 9/11, before urging Congress to undo spending reductions called for under the Budget Control Act to avoid
devastating cuts to the service’s force structure. “As the Army emerges from over 13 years of large-scale combat operations — the longest in its history — it faces new challenges,” Hagel said during the annual meeting of the Association of the U.S. Army. “The world’s becoming more volatile, less predictable, and, in many ways, more threatening at the same time our defense budgets are declining.” 

Hagel pressures Congress to reverse defense budget cuts


The Hill © October 15, 2014

By Kristina Wong

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel pressured Congress Wednesday to reverse the Pentagon's deep budget cuts, saying the cuts put soldiers' lives at risk at a time of growing threats. "Going forward, whether we can keep our soldiers ready in the future will depend on Congress's partnership in providing the resources to fund the training our soldiers need," Hagel said at the Association of the United States Army.

Hagel said although 150,000 soldiers were no longer deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, about just as many are deployed or stationed around the world, to combat the spread of Ebola, reassure allies in Eastern Europe, and train Kurdish and Iraqi forces in the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). 

If Congress Opt for Spending Omnibus, Compromise over Individual Bills Attainable

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/if-congress-opts-for-spending-omnibus-compromise-over-individual-bills-attainable/#

Defense Communities © October 19, 2014

Lawmakers will only have a narrow window when they return to Capitol Hill next month to decide whether to aim for a massive year-end fiscal 2015 spending package or settle for a short- or long-term continuing resolution (CR), but if they opt for the omnibus, overcoming differences between the two chamber's individual spending bills should not be particularly arduous, according to an analysis by CQ. Differences between the
House and Senate versions for many of the spending bills are no more than $1.5 billion or less………

MacDill AFB –

**MacDill AFB, Tampa Consider Building Joint Use Pool**


Defense Communities 360 © October 19, 2014

Officials at MacDill Air Force Base and Tampa are considering collaborating on the construction and use of an Olympic-sized pool on or near the installation in South Tampa. One option would be to build the facility off base and allow military personnel to use it for a nominal fee. “It would be good enough for special operators and other stuff,” Terry Montrose, spokesman for the 6th Air Mobility Wing, told the [Tampa Tribune](http://www.tampatrib.com). 

The two parties began discussing dozens of possible areas for partnering in April, with a joint effort to build a new pool emerging as the idea that made the most sense. The installation and city both want to replace aging aquatic facilities………..

**MacDill AFB seeks project partners under new community program**


Tampa Tribune © October 15, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

MacDill Air Force Base would like an Olympic-sized swimming pool. The city of Tampa would like one as well. A year ago, the base and the community would likely have gone their separate ways in pursuit of a mutual desire. Not anymore. Thanks to a program implemented by the Air Force, the 6th Air Mobility Wing and the Tampa Parks and Recreation Department are now looking into building a pool together, either on base or near it, that would be available to those who live on and work at the base as well as Tampa civilian residents with no specific connection.
to the military. The Air Force rolled out its Community Partnership Program two years ago and MacDill joined in April, said Terry Montrose, spokesman for the 6th Air Mobility Wing, MacDill’s host unit.

Eglin AFB –

**Pentagon Announces F-35 Engine Contract, Fixes Covered**

[http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/October%202014/October%202015%202014/Pentagon-Announces-F-35-Engine-Contract,-Fixes-Covered.aspx](http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/October%202014/October%202015%202014/Pentagon-Announces-F-35-Engine-Contract,-Fixes-Covered.aspx)

Air Force Magazine © October 15, 2014

BY MARC V. SCHANZ

The F-35 joint program office and engine maker Pratt & Whitney announced the award of a seventh low-rate initial production batch of F135 engines late Tuesday, a deal delayed by this summer’s grounding of the F-35 fleet after a June engine fire at Eglin AFB, Fla. The Defense Department awarded P&W a $592 million contract for 36 engines, as well as program management costs, engineering support, and spares. The contract also includes the company’s commitment to “cover the cost of corrective actions for previously delivered propulsion systems and modules to correct the third stage fan blade failure” in last summer’s mishap, according to the statement. The Pentagon and P&W added they anticipate a follow on LRIP Lot eight contract for 48 more engines to be finalized “in the near future.”

NS Mayport –

**Preparations for arrival of littoral combat ships at Mayport underway**


Florida Times-Union © October 16, 2014

By Clifford Davis
As Mayport Naval Station prepares for its first batch of littoral combat ships (LCS), U.S. Rep. Ander Crenshaw, R-Fla., traveled Tuesday and Wednesday to San Diego Naval Station to inspect its progress. San Diego is already the West Coast hub for the controversial ships and Mayport will be the hub for the East Coast, but the California base already has four of the ships and Crenshaw wanted to see the operation first hand. “I just wanted to see how they are handling it here and get a first-person view of the operations, the training and maintenance,” Crenshaw said. “I think that will help us, when they start coming to Mayport, to make sure that we use any lessons learned out here to make sure they’re even stronger there at Mayport.”

Tyndall AFB –

The F-22 Over Syria: Efficiency and Effectiveness


Cicero Magazine © October 14, 2014

By Colonel (Ret.) Eric Jorgensen

After being criticized for not using the F-22 Raptor previously, the U.S. Air Force has now taken a drubbing for using F-22s over Syria, in the coalition fight against the Islamic State. Critics are judging long-term strategic investments based on short-term tactical results, while misapplying the distinction between efficiency and effectiveness. The sound bites may play well, but critiquing excess capabilities in the air over ISIS targets in Syria is short-sighted armchair quarterbacking.

Defense grants of $271,980 coming to Bay County


News Herald © October 14, 2014

Bay County will receiving $271,980 of a $2.45 million Florida’s Defense Infrastructure and Reinvestment Grant, officials announced Tuesday. The funding will support
sustainability initiatives at Naval Support Activity Panama City (NSAPC) and Tyndall Air Force Base. Bay County was one of 12 counties to receive the grant, which is designed to support relationships between military installations and their community. The Defense Infrastructure Grant is awarded to local projects deemed to have a positive impact on the military value of the installation and that benefits the community. Bay County was awarded $175,000 for improving access to NSAPC and $96,980 to protect other military installations and promote economic diversification strategies in defense dependent communities.

Patrick AFB –

**SecAF gains 'inside look' into eastern range launch mission**


Patrick AFB © October 17, 2014

by 45th Space Wing
Public Affairs

Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, and her husband, Mr. Frank Beatty, visited the 45th Space Wing's Patrick Air Force Base and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., Oct. 15, 2014. The Secretary's visit included a wing mission brief, unit mission briefs, tours of Air Force Eastern Range launch assets as well as a windshield tour of NASA's Kennedy Space Center. James also met with Airmen and senior leaders to include those from Air Force Technical Applications Center and the 920th Rescue Wing.

**Performance, professionalism, pride, highlight SECAF visit to Team Patrick-Cape**


Patrick AFB © October 17, 2014

Commentary by Brig. Gen. Nina Armagno
45th Space Wing Commander
As I've said many times in the past, there are few things more rewarding for a leader at any level than having the opportunity to open their doors and let others take an "inside look" into the quality of people who make up their organization. Well, that's exactly what happened when The Honorable Deborah Lee James, Secretary of the Air Force, and her husband, Mr. Frank Beatty, spent Wednesday touring the 45th Space Wing and our valued mission partners here on the Space Coast, to include a meeting with NASA's senior leadership at Kennedy Space Center later that afternoon. From her meeting with senior leaders (to include those from AFTAC and the 920th Rescue Wing) on Patrick, to visits all over historic Cape Canaveral Air Force Station (MOC, NRO, 5th SLS, 45th LCSS and Launch Complexes 37, 40 and 41), I could not have been more proud of the performance, professionalism and the very obvious pride (The Three Ps) that members of Team Patrick-Cape displayed at every stop………

Avon Park Air Force Range --

Voices of the base dwindling


Highlands Today © October 17, 2014

BY PAUL CATALA

It’s an important component of conservation, environmental protection and compliance but its numbers are in the single digits. Bob Hummel of Sebring was the only member to show up at the May 6 meeting of the Avon Park Air Force Range Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) and the range personnel are hoping others will literally get on board. Founded in 1995 with about 10 members, the RAB is made up of citizens from Highlands and Polk counties who represent their neighbors’ interests in the range’s conservation program activities and keep them informed about environmental restoration activities……

Other Items of Interest –

Climate Change Prompting DOD to Study Risks to Installations

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/climate-change-prompting-dod-to-study-risks-to-installations/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=44bdd97c68-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8f45e8-44bdd97c68-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360 EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#
DOD is preparing for a range of impacts to its facilities as a result of climate change, according to its newly released Climate Change Adaptation Roadmap. “Climate change will have serious implications for the department’s ability to maintain both its built and natural infrastructure, and to ensure military readiness in the future,” states the department’s strategic blueprint for tackling the issue. Potential impacts to military infrastructure include……

Navy, Marines, Coast Guard to release revised maritime strategy
Stars and Stripes © October 14, 2014
By Jon Harper

For the first time in seven years, the Navy and its sister services soon will release an updated version of their global maritime strategy, the service’s top officer said Tuesday. The revisions are now being reviewed by the commandants of the Coast Guard and Marine Corps. The service chiefs of the Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Corps have to sign off before the new strategy is released……

Scott, Gardiner, Crisafulli Comment On Defense Grants
http://spacecoastdaily.com/2014/10/scott-gardiner-crisafulli-comment-on-defense-grants/
Space Coast Daily © October 14, 2014

Governor Rick Scott announced that 14 counties were awarded $2.45 million through Florida’s Defense Infrastructure and Reinvestment Grant Programs. The funding will support community projects at 19 Florida military installations. Gov. Rick Scott “These Florida Defense Programs serve to support and sustain our many military installations,” Governor Scott said. “The more than $2.4 million in grants will provide installations with the resources necessary to enhance military value, and allow installations to provide for and support military families. I appreciate the work Florida’s service men and women do for our state and I’m grateful we are able to get communities the funding needed to enhance base and community relations.” ………
Fourteen Florida counties will share $2.45 million from the state’s Defense Infrastructure and Reinvestment Grant Programs. The funding will provide support for community projects at 19 military installations. Florida’s military and defense sector is responsible for almost 9.5% of the state’s economy. That translates to 758,000 direct and indirect jobs that represent $73 billion in spending. “A disproportionate amount of these grants comes to northwest Florida,” said Florida Senate President Don Gaetz, a Republican from Niceville. “And that’s only right because we have a heavy concentration of military bases and missions.”
November 10, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** -- The next Task Force meeting will be **Thursday, November 20, 2014** at the **Crowne Plaza Pensacola Grand Hotel, 200 East Gregory Street, Pensacola, Florida 32502** beginning at 9:00 AM CST. Draft agenda attached.

2. **Attachment** – Draft meeting agenda.

Regards, BG.

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

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Articles of Interest:

**BRAC –**

**Hagel says congressional partnership key to future BRAC round**

http://www.federaltimes.com/article/20141031/DEPARTMENTS/310310009/Hagel-says-congressional-partnership-key-future-BRAC-round

Federal Times © October 31, 2014

By ANDY MEDICI
The Defense Department needs a stronger partnership with Congress if it wants to achieve critical priorities like another round of base closures, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said. He spoke at the Washington Ideas Forum Oct. 29, and said the Defense Department won’t be able to close the bases it needs to or discontinue ship or plane programs without a strong relationship with Congress, according to a DoD transcript……..

DOD Budget–

**Sequester Could Kill Shipyards, Says CNO Greenert**


Breaking Defense © November 4, 2014

By **SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.**

Navy readiness won’t fully recover from the second-order effects of the 2013 sequester for another year, the Chief of Naval Operations said this morning — and if the Budget Control Act cuts (known as sequestration) return in full force for fiscal year 2016, the nation might lose two of its five remaining major shipyards. “I worry about the shipbuilding industrial base,” Adm. Jonathan Greenert said at the Brookings Institution. If sequestration forces steep cuts to the Navy’s shipbuilding account — which Congress has actually been pretty adamant about protecting; more on that below — the impact on the size of the fleet “would take years to manifest,” he said: Ships last for decades, so building fewer today generally comes back to bite you in a generation, not immediately. “But more importantly,” the admiral went on, “there’s some likelihood we lose one or two [ship] builders, and we only have five………..

**Republican Control of Congress May Not Result in Raising Spending Caps**
Despite traditional support from the Republican Party for national defense, the GOP’s predicted capture of the Senate may not result in congressional action to lift the Budget Control Act spending caps on defense starting in fiscal 2016. While Republican appropriators and defense hawks, along with many Democrats, have urged repealing the 2011 law, a deficit reduction deal that satisfies both conservatives and President Obama is unlikely, reports CQ Roll Call. The White House would continue to insist on a deal that relaxes the caps on all discretionary spending, while Republicans would demand concessions to reform entitlement programs. “It could be very tough to change the caps if Republicans have the majority,” said Charles Konigsberg, a budget expert who served as assistant director of the Office of Management and Budget under Clinton………

Pentagon Spending on Path to Bust Budget Caps, CBO Finds

Pentagon spending is forecast to grow at an average annual rate of 1.2 percent over the next 15 years, resulting in a 20 percent increase in the defense budget by 2030, according to a report released Thursday by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). The largest components of the DOD budget would grow by different amounts, however. The cost of operation and support, which accounts for about two-thirds of the department’s FY 2015 budget, would rise steadily through 2030, with average growth of 1.1 percent a year in real terms and cumulative growth of 18 percent. The growth in operation and support — which includes compensation for the department’s military and civilian employees, military health care, and various operation and maintenance activities — would occur despite a 6 percent decrease in the size of the military, the report said……….
Congressional Staff Continue to Work toward Omnibus Spending Bill

House and Senate Appropriations staffers continue to lay the groundwork for a fiscal 2015 omnibus spending bill to wrap up appropriations though next Oct. 1. But while Republican leaders in the House and Senate favor an omnibus to clear the decks for a GOP-led Congress next January, it’s still not clear whether House Republicans will go along with that approach. With Republicans increasing their House majority and gaining control of the Senate in Tuesday’s elections, conservatives likely will push for a second continuing resolution so they can rewrite bills in the new Congress to reflect GOP priorities.

Pentagon Not As Optimistic as GOP over Sequestration Roll Back

Republican leaders on Capitol Hill expect the defense portion of sequestration to be incrementally rolled back once the new Congress comes to session in 2015 even though Pentagon officials said Wednesday that they aren’t so confident. Sequestration is slated to resume in 2015, but Congressional sources said they expect the Republicans to use their new majority in the Senate to lessen the burden on the military. "What you will probably see is a consensus among Republicans that we really need to roll back sequestration for defense. I think there will be a whole new momentum to take the defense portion of sequestration off the table. Once you do that, everything else changes," the source said.

Deficit Or Defense Hawks? GOP Signals Sequester Deal Possible
How much Kentucky bourbon will it take for President Barack Obama and presumptive Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to come to an agreement of some kind on how to alleviate sequestration? A few drinks in the Oval Office? A bottle between them up in McConnell’s Capitol eyrie? And what about those new Republicans coming to the Senate for the first time come January, and the less moderate Democrats left in the Senate chamber, who still must be won to do the nation’s business?........

Deficit Or Defense Hawks? GOP Signals Sequester Deal Possible

How much Kentucky bourbon will it take for President Barack Obama and presumptive Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to come to an agreement of some kind on how to alleviate sequestration? A few drinks in the Oval Office? A bottle between them up in McConnell’s Capitol eyrie? And what about those new Republicans coming to the Senate for the first time come January, and the less moderate Democrats left in the Senate chamber, who still must be won to do the nation’s business? The good news is it looks as if the most committed deficit hawks have been curbed, culled from the GOP, or learned the realities of governing the hard way, which eases the pressure to shut down the US government or take other damaging and irresponsible steps........
Why We Haven’t Felt the Full Effect of Sequestration — Yet


Cicero Magazine © November 5, 2014

By Col. S. Clinton Hinote

Some believe that sequestration is good. They believe the across-the-board cuts mandated by the Budget Control Act keep spending under control and have not hurt defense significantly, as military forces continue to get the job done. This view is incorrect. The sequester cuts do hurt, but they hurt in ways that postpone the pain. Specifically, sequester cuts have resulted in the loss of margin for today’s force, making it vulnerable. Worse, the negative consequences will be with us for decades. The decision to keep the sequester in place is essentially a trade of long-term pain for short-term gain, and that is not a good bargain.

Congressional Leaders Favor Omnibus

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/congressional-leaders-favor-omnibus/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=fa42a4aa5d-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-fa42a4aa5d-55784537&ct=(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

Defense Communities 360 © November 9, 2014

Congressional leaders from both parties attending a White House lunch Friday agreed that lawmakers should advance an omnibus spending bill during the lame duck session to wrap up fiscal 2015 appropriations, reported the Hill. “There were areas of significant agreement I think — the agreement that we want to do an omnibus and wanted to do that hopefully by Dec. 11 — completing the funding for this year’s operations of funding,” House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) said on CNN’s “The Lead with Jake Tapper.”
MacDill pilot ready to test Air Force’s new tanker


Tampa Tribune © November 4, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

In the Leibrand household, husband David currently outranks his wife Kaylyn, but she is about to get the sweeter ride. Married for a little more than a year, the Leibrands, who met in an English class at the Air Force Academy, are KC-135 pilots with the 6th Air Mobility Wing at MacDill Air Force Base. David, 26, is a captain and his wife, 25, will still be a first lieutenant for another few months. But some time in the not-too-distant future, Kaylyn Leibrand will get the family bragging rights. She has been chosen by the Air Force to help test the new KC-46 Pegasus, the replacement for the aging Eisenhower-era aerial refueling jets the couple now fly…….

Eglin AFB –

Booz Allen to support USAF test and evaluation center


UPI © November 5, 2014

By Richard Tomkins

The U.S. Air Force has contracted a Booz Allen Hamilton subsidiary to provide technical support to the service's test and evaluation center in Florida. Booz Allen Hamilton Engineering Services has been selected to provide technical support to the U.S. Air Force's 96th Test Wing at Eglin AFB in Florida. The support will covers C4ISR capabilities -- command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance -- a well as engineering and research management support. As the 96th Test Wing helps the Air Force deploy new technologies, we will work as an essential partner to help the TW do the same," said Lee Wilbur, a senior vice president with Booz Allen who leads the company's Engineering Services team. "This opportunity builds upon an enduring, productive relationship, while helping the 96th TW chart a bold, productive course for the future." ……
A thank you from the commander

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/eglin/a-thank-you-from-the-commander-1.398033

Northwest Florida Daily News © November 7, 2014

By BRIG. GEN. DAVID HARRIS | 96th Test Wing commander

Commentary
I want to take a minute to simply say ... Thank You. I’m constantly amazed by the effort, enthusiasm and dedication each of you bring to the mission every day. Your passion is truly inspiring. At the end of September, I spent the evening with our comptroller and contracting teams as they worked around the clock and into the early morning hours to close out fiscal-year 14. While most of our wing slept, they meticulously closed out the books to ensure we met all federal regulations and kept the resources flowing to all of our mission areas……..

U.S. Air Force studying ways to keep F-35 target date on track

http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/06/lockheed-fighter-idUSL1N0SW2Z920141106

Reuters © November 6, 2014

BY ANDREA SHALAL

The U.S. Air Force is studying ways to meet its August 2016 target for declaring the new Lockheed Martin Corp F-35 fighter jet ready for use in combat, despite an unexpected shortage of mechanics, a top Air Force general said on Thursday. Lieutenant General Stephen Hoog, assistant vice chief of staff of the Air Force, confirmed that the timeline was in jeopardy because congressional moves to block the retirement of the A-10 aircraft meant the Air Force would be unable to shift the required number of expert mechanics to the F-35 program........
Hurlburt Field –

**SecAF learns how Hurlburt Air Commandos operate**

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/hurlburt/secaf-learns-how-hurlburt-air-commandos-operate-1.394596

Northwest Florida Daily News © October 31, 2014

By By SRA CHRISTOPHER CALLAWAY | 1st SOW Public Affairs

Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James learned how Air Commandos operate during a visit to Hurlburt Field, Oct. 20-21. James said she is making her way to bases across the Air Force to familiarize herself with various missions and discuss her priorities with Airmen. “If you look back at our 67-year history, today we are the smallest Air Force we have ever been, yet our operations tempo is nearly through the roof,” she said. “The great news is we have great technology and even better people.”

**Otis supports special operators, refines fundamentals**

http://www.dvidshub.net/news/146913/otis-supports-special-operators-refines-fundamentals

DVIDS © November 4, 2014

By Cpl. J. R. Heins

Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 252 supported United States Special Operations Command with an aerial delivery and insertion at Hurlburt Air Force Base, Florida, Oct. 24. Two KC-130J Super Hercules departed Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia, traveling to Hurlburt, where 50 SOCOM operators and four Combat Rubber Raiding Craft were loaded onto the aircraft. The Hercules flew at staggered altitudes allowing for the boats to be dropped out of the first aircraft. Once the boats hit the water, the operators jumped, said Capt. Tyler E. Burnham, a naval aviator with the squadron.
NAS Jacksonville –

**Jacksonville seeing boom in defense business**


Jacksonville Business Journal © November 6, 2014

By Jensen Werley

Economic opportunities for military contractors and defense-related businesses in Florida are booming, according to experts attending Thursday's First Coast Defense Expo. "The quality of educated labor is second to none," said Aaron Bowman of JaxUSA, which is attracting manufacturers like GE Oil & Gas to the area. "GE had the choice to go to anywhere in the world, they chose Jacksonville," he said……..

NS Mayport –

**Naval Station Mayport readies for new combat ships**


First Coast News © November 7, 2014

By Mike Lyons

There has been years of talk that Naval Station Mayport would be the Atlantic Coast home to the Navy's newest littoral combat ships and that became reality today with the establishment of a new command at the base. The establishment of Littoral Combat Ship Squadron Two is the beginning of something big at Naval Station Mayport. This command will get Mayport ready to host the first ship next summer, and many more after that. Captain Paul Young becomes the first commodore of LCS Squadron Two. $21 million is now being spent to build three new buildings on base to house the staff that will train sailors to operate the new ships…………
Tyndall AFB –

**Tyndall pilot dies in F-16 crash in Gulf**


News Herald © November 6, 2014

By CHRIS OLWELL

An F-16 pilot was killed Thursday when his jet crashed in the Gulf Mexico 50 to 75 miles south of Panama City, according to Air Force officials. Search and rescue teams with the Air Force and Coast Guard found what they believed was the wreckage of the F-16 Falcon C by Thursday afternoon. The Air Force announced Thursday night that the pilot’s remains had been found……….

**U.S. Air Force recovers pilot's body after crash in Gulf of Mexico**


MSN.com/Reuters © November 7, 2014

The United State Air Force said it had recovered the body of an F-16 fighter jet pilot who was killed when his aircraft crashed in the Gulf of Mexico on Thursday during a routine training mission. The aircraft, based out of Tyndall Air Force Base in the Florida Panhandle, was reported lost about 57 miles (92 km) south of Panama City, according to the U.S. Coast Guard. The name of the pilot was being withheld to allow for notification of his relatives. "Efforts will now shift from that of a rescue mission to a recovery operation as evidence is collected to help in determining the cause of the crash," ……………

NAS Whiting Field –
**Water Quality Team at NAS Whiting Field earns FDEP award**


Santa Rosa Press Gazette © November 3, 2014

Feel free to drink from the water fountains on base, because Naval Air Station Whiting Field has once again won the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Northwest District Plant Operations Excellence Award. This is the third consecutive year that NASWF has taken home the prize, which recognizes the hard work of the Public Works Department’s water management team. The competition involves more than just great water. Criteria to be eligible for the award included detailed recordkeeping, good customer relations, staff and safety training, and outstanding operation/maintenance practices.

**Patrick AFB –**

**On your mark, get set, LAUNCH!**


Patrick AFB © October 31, 2014

Commentary by Brig. Gen. Nina Armagno, 45th Space Wing Commander

Let me begin by giving a heartfelt thanks to all of Team Patrick-Cape and our first-class mission partners for executing a picture-perfect launch Wednesday afternoon of a ULA Atlas V rocket carrying the Air Force’s eighth Block IIF navigation satellite for the Global Positioning System from Launch Complex 41 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida. This was the first of more than 20 missions we currently have on the Eastern Range manifest for Fiscal Year 2015. It goes without saying the Sharks are going to have a very busy year here on the Space Coast.
DoD, Industry Huddle As Civil Firms Gain

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20141101/DEFREG02/311010016/DoD-Industry-Huddle-Civil-Firms-Gain

Defense News © November 1, 2014
By PAUL McLEARY

The big issues of the day facing the Pentagon and its defense industrial base go far deeper than developing the next generation fighter or aircraft carrier, top industry analysts warn. With commercial companies outpacing the defense industry’s ability to develop and field cyber, satellite and communications capabilities — and with those companies competing hard for the top engineering and software development talent — the Pentagon and its industry partners will need to chart a new path forward……..

Election Outcome Is Good News For Defense Industry

http://www.forbes.com/sites/lorenthompson/2014/11/05/election-outcome-is-good-news-for-defense-industry/

Forbes © November 5, 2014

When your main customer is a political system, elections matter a lot. Everybody in the defense industry knows that, but common sense dictates that companies not take sides in political races for fear of retribution. So don’t expect anyone in the defense sector to be talking in public this week about what a good night it was for the industry on Tuesday. But it was. Here are six reasons why........

Other Items of Interest –

Defense Committees Will See New Leadership, Regardless of Election Results

Republicans appear to have the momentum to gain the six seats they need to take the Senate in Tuesday’s midterm elections. But the possibility of runoffs in Georgia and Louisiana means the majority could remain undecided into the next Congress. Even if Democrats lose Senate control, Republicans aren’t expected to snag many seats beyond a small majority. Regardless of the results, the Senate and House Armed Services …………..

F-35C makes first arrested landing on aircraft carrier


Navy Times © November 3, 2014

An F-35C Lightning II, the carrier variant of the Joint Strike Fighter, made an arrested landing aboard a flattop today, an important milestone both in the development of the stealth fighter and in naval aviation history. Navy test pilot Cmdr. Tony Wilson landed his F-35C on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier Nimitz off the coast of San Diego at 12:18 p.m. Pacific Time, according to a news release from Naval Air Forces. The landing, in which the redesigned tailhook worked flawlessly, marked the beginning of initial at-sea developmental testing for the F-35C, which is expected to last two weeks………..

After Election Day, Familiar Faces in New Places on Senate Defense Committees

Defense News © November 5, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

For the US national security sector, Tuesday mostly was a status-quo election — but with one glaring exception: Say hello to Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain. The Republican tidal wave means defense and national security committees in the Senate will have new chairmen — but all are familiar faces to the
Pentagon and arms manufacturers. Voters also sent most sitting members of national security committees back to the Capitol. By 10:30 p.m. (EST), it was clear the 2014 midterm elections would indeed bring the Republican wave many prominent political pollsters and analysts predicted. The GOP picked up 12 House seats, with several still outstanding. But the big news was the party’s seven-seat, with two competitive races outstanding, flip to gain control of the Senate ..........

New Boss at ACC

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/November%202014/November%2005%202014/New-Boss-at-ACC.aspx

Air Force Magazine © November 5, 2014

Gen. Hawk Carlisle assumed command of Air Combat Command from Gen. Mike Hostage during a change of command ceremony at JB Langley-Eustis, Va., on Tuesday, according to a Nov. 4 release. USAF Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Larry Spencer presided over the ceremony, which was attended by Secretary Deborah Lee James as well as former Air Force Secretaries Whit Peters and Mike Wynne as well as other military dignitaries. "The Air Force is able to project combat air power around the globe 365 days a year," Spencer said. "It is the most feared Air Force on the planet and that’s because of you." James said Hostage, who will retire after nearly four decades in uniform, “has been a tireless leader” who is “dedicated and committed to excellence and has indeed ushered that into ACC through a very tough and challenging budget time in our Air Force history.” ........

Democratic Losses Will Revamp Armed Services Panel in Senate

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/democratic-losses-will-revamp-armed-services-panel-in-senate/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=077a0a9c17-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-077a0a9c17-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)
Two Democratic members of the Senate Armed Services Committee lost their re-election bids on Tuesday, but with the Republican Party gaining a majority of the chamber, the panel’s most significant change will be at the top. John McCain (R-Ariz.) is widely expected to take the committee gavel in the 114th Congress and with current chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.) retiring, Jack Reed (D-R.I.) is in line to become the ranking member. Reed, however, may opt to take the top Democratic spot on the Banking Committee instead. If Reed passes over the post, Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.) likely would become the ranking member……..

Newsflash to the New Congress: Tiered Readiness Is Here Now
http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2014/11/06/newsflash_to_the_new_congress_tiered_readiness_is_here_now_107530.html

By Mackenzie Eaglen

The modern day version of “tiered readiness” has arrived for the U.S. military. While the news has yet to sink in the minds of Washington leaders, the state of affairs across the force speaks for itself. During the defense drawdown in the 1990s, this concept was instituted with units preparing to deploy at peak readiness while the majority of the remaining forces stateside, especially those in the Reserve Component, were not. This was sanctioned by Pentagon leaders as a way to produce savings while (supposedly) preserving force structure and modernization where possible. While the idea was eventually rejected, budget cuts combined with a relentless pace of operations have resurrected “tiered readiness” for those in uniform……..

After Election Day, Familiar Faces in New Places on Senate Defense Committees

By JOHN T. BENNETT
For the US national security sector, Tuesday mostly was a status-quo election — but with one glaring exception: Say hello to Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain. The Republican tidal wave means defense and national security committees in the Senate will have new chairmen — but all are familiar faces to the Pentagon and arms manufacturers. Voters also sent most sitting members of national security committees back to the Capitol.

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**Sen. John McCain vows to save A-10 from retirement**


Military Times © November 6, 2014

Sen. John McCain says the Air Force won't be able to retire the A-10 Warthog ground attack jet now that he's in line to become chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. McCain said Thursday the A-10 is the best close-air support aircraft ever made and there is "no doubt" Congress will prevent its retirement. Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson has 80 of the twin-jet planes and trains A-10 pilots. McCain says there's no replacement for the jet's close-air support mission and pointed to a June friendly fire in Afghanistan where a B-1 bomber mistakenly targeted American troops, killing five.

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**Fla. named most veteran-friendly, with third-largest vet population**

[http://www.alligator.org/news/local/article_2df04aae-689a-11e4-973c-1bf4ff0d9e6d.html](http://www.alligator.org/news/local/article_2df04aae-689a-11e4-973c-1bf4ff0d9e6d.html)

The Independent Florida Alligator

By Patrick Pinak

Timothy Kline doesn't have to worry about paying for college in Florida, which was deemed the most veteran-friendly state in the country by Florida TaxWatch on Thursday. The 25-year-old UF telecommunication senior has served in the U.S. Air
Force Reserve Command for six years. Now, he receives assistance from the state’s GI Bill, which was passed earlier this year. It covers his tuition, housing and a portion of his textbooks. “It means a lot to have a country to come back to that’s so grateful for the people who sacrifice so much,” he said………
November 3, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** -- The next Task Force meeting will be **Thursday, November 20, 2014** at the **Crowne Plaza Pensacola Grand Hotel, 200 East Gregory Street, Pensacola, Florida 32502** beginning at 9:00 AM CST.

   Electronic version attached to this email.

3. **Attachments:**
   - FDSTF Grants 2015 – Announcement Letter with all grants listed
   - New version of Florida Military Friendly Guide
   - TPG monthly Report

Regards,  BG.

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

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Articles of Interest:
BRAC –

BRAC Authority Needs Updating, Heritage Executive Says

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/brac-authority-needs-updating-heritage-executive-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=f3cc7ec893-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-f3cc7ec893-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

Defense Communities 360 © October 30, 2014

When Washington gets around to crafting the authority for a new round of base closures, there are a number of guidelines defense officials and lawmakers should consider, according to a recent commentary in National Interest. The Pentagon should integrate its processes for rightsizing its infrastructure overseas and domestically, writes James Jay Carafano, vice president of the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank. “What the future American basing structure in Europe looks like ought to be just as important as how many bases the DOD keeps in Texas,” Carafano writes. “DOD should have an infrastructure management mechanism that seamlessly addresses both, rather than decide overseas and domestic basing needs through separate stovepipes.”

Sequestration Presents Greater Threat than BRAC, Virginia Defense Affairs Secretary Says


Defense Communities 360 © October 30, 2014

Virginia’s military installations are more likely to gain new missions than contract in a future BRAC round, John Harvey Jr., the commonwealth’s secretary of veterans and defense affairs, said this week. “Virginia has an awful lot to offer, and I think we have a lot to gain from a BRAC process,” Harvey told the Quantico/Belvoir Regional Business Alliance. One factor in Virginia’s favor is that the state’s installations are well-suited for all three of the military’s growth areas — special operations, cybersecurity and intelligence, reported InsideNOVA.
Florida Communities to Receive $2.6M to Strengthen Local Installations

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/florida-communities-toreceive-2-6m-to-strengthen-local-installations/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=a057baedd9-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-a057baedd9-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

Defense Communities 360 © October 27, 2014

Thirteen projects in 10 counties were awarded $2.6 million through the Florida Defense Support Task Force Grant Program to strengthen the state’s bases ahead of possible realignment actions by DOD, Florida Gov. Rick Scott (R) announced Monday. “We will continue to work to make Florida the best place in the nation for military service members and their families to live and work, and this $2.59 million in Florida Defense Support Task Force Grants will further help us support our military installations,” Scott said, according to a press release.

Jacksonville and Clay County get defense grants for local interests


The governor's office awarded $500,000 in grants to Northeast Florida defense projects. The Florida 8(a) Alliance in Jacksonville and the Clay County Development Authority will receive $500,000 in Florida Defense Support Task Force Grants from the governor's office. The funds will go to benefit the Florida 8(a) Alliance and Camp Blanding, according to a news release. The Florida 8(a) Alliance, which works with those in the defense business, will get $100,000 to provide a gateway for industries looking for small business suppliers and to support veteran-owned and defense industry businesses. By providing training, mentoring, marketing and development, this will help them connect with other defense-related small businesses.

DOD Budget–

Prospects for Enacting Relief from Sequester Improve as Global Crises Mount

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/prospects-for-enacting-relief-from-sequesterimprove-as-global-crisis-mount/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=a057baedd9-
The confluence of multiple unplanned demands on the nation’s military and the possibility that Republicans will capture the Senate are helping the chances that Congress acts to shield the Pentagon from the full impact of the 2011 Budget Control Act spending caps starting in fiscal 2016. While it remains unlikely that Congress will abolish the stringent caps, the prospects are decent that it will provide some relief, Todd Harrison, senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, told the Hill.

Readiness to Decline again if Spending Caps Remain, Army Officials Warn

Senior Army leaders are increasingly concerned about the health of the force, as the department faces new demands and the likely return of sequester’s full impact in fiscal 2016. Unless Congress acts to relax the 2011 Budget Control Act spending caps, the Army’s end strength, modernization and readiness will remain out of balance at least until 2019, Maj. Gen. Gary Cheek, assistant deputy chief of staff for operations, said last week. It could take the Army as long as four years to fully recover from that state, he said.

DOD Budget Picture Remains Unfavorable, Comptroller Says

Congress most likely won’t provide any long-term budget guidance until next spring when lawmakers will need to deal with the expiration of the debt ceiling, Pentagon Comptroller Mike McCord said this week. McCord said he’s not looking for lawmakers to act on the Budget Control Act spending caps when they return to Washington following next week’s elections, reported Defense One. “We don’t really expect that there’s going to be some kind of a budget deal. It doesn’t seem that likely in the lame duck session,” McCord said in his first public speech since becoming comptroller after Bob Hale retired.
Gates Blasts Lawmakers Over Sequestration

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20141030/DEFREG02/310300041/Gates-Blasts-Lawmakers-Over-Sequestration

Defense News © October 30, 2014

By JOE GOULD

Former US Defense Secretary Robert Gates ripped Washington on Thursday over sequestration budget caps, saying Congress’ inability to reach a budget compromise was causing “grave damage” to the US military, homeland security and other essential government operations. “The most illustrative and appalling example of Congress’ abdication of responsibility is sequestration,” Gates said during an intelligence and national security forum hosted by SAP National Security Services here. “If there is a more stupid way to cut the federal budget, I am unable to imagine it.”

Is America's Defense Budget Too Small?

http://nationalinterest.org/feature/americas-defense-budget-too-small-11581

National Interest © October 31, 2014

Over the last quarter century, Washington’s primary tool for divesting infrastructure the armed forces no longer needs has been the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. But the Pentagon needs better tools if it is to manage its massive global footprint efficiently. Throughout this summer of serial chaos, American interests have suffered setbacks on every critical front from Asia to the Middle East. The silver lining is that these harrowing challenges have helped most members of Congress see that it makes no sense to take a "peace dividend" when there is no peace. As a result, lawmakers in 2016 are likely to abandon the current cycle of ever-constricting defense budgets, which has demonstrably cut the capacity and capability of our armed forces.
MacDill AFB –

**Troop removals not necessarily bad for MacDill**


*Tampa Tribune © October 26, 2014*

**BY SCOTT SCHLIMMER**

At first blush, removing American troops from Afghanistan and the Middle East might seem bad for MacDill Air Force Base and Tampa. MacDill houses the U.S. military’s Central Command (CENTCOM), which is responsible for Afghanistan and the Middle East, which could shrink if work were reduced in those parts of the world. A smaller MacDill would hurt the Tampa economy. However, President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry’s desire for “no boots on the ground” does not necessarily mean less demand for CENTCOM. What we’re seeing is less of a “pull out” and more of a change in how wars are fought. This could be the future of warfare……..

MacDill AFB campaign gets $150,000 grant to support base’s future


*Tampa Tribune © October 28, 2014*

**By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff**

Will MacDill Air Force Base still be around in the year 2025? To help ensure the answer to that is yes, the state has awarded a regional support group $150,000 to help bolster the future of a base that pumps $5 billion into the local economy every year. Gov. Rick Scott on Tuesday announced the Tampa Bay Defense Alliance will receive the money for the continued development of a strategic marketing campaign for MacDill, according to the governor’s office…..

Eglin AFB –
Eglin hones Ebola response


Northwest Florida Daily News © October 31, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE | Daily News

Stepping out of the isolation area, airmen slowly rolled down the hoods of each other’s plastic suits. “Fold it under, fold it under,” said Karla Parish, a public health specialist at Eglin Air Force Base, leading the airmen to remove their protective clothing slowly without letting any part touch skin. The base conducted an exercise Wednesday practicing their response to a massive, worst-case-scenario Ebola outbreak. The purpose was to test the extent of their resources and give everyone on base a chance to review response policies for infectious disease outbreaks..........

Sequester Versus F-35

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/November%202014/November%2003%202014/Sequester-Versus-F-35.aspx

Air Force Magazine © November 3, 2014

BY JOHN A. TIRPAK

If sequestration resumes in Fiscal 2016, “there will be an impact” on the F-35 production buys for all three US services, but it remains to be seen how much, program manager Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan said. Bogdan noted that the F-35 buy was largely protected by the services in the last bout with sequester, and the services are anxious to buy the jets as fast as possible. The Navy is only planning to buy two in ’16, and it “can’t go much below two,” Bogdan told reporters on Oct. 30. However, the Marine Corps “has made it clear they need as many airplanes as they can get,” and the Air Force has “shown a tremendous commitment to keep on the ramp” the numbers it plans to buy, he reported. Sequester could affect Lots 9-11, in which the buy is now planned to be broken out, respectively, as follows: Low-Rate Initial Production Lot 9 would include 57 aircraft, of which 34 are for the US; in LRIP 10, 96 aircraft, of which 55 are for the US; and in LRIP 11, 121 airplanes, of which 68 are for the US. The request for proposals on LRIP 9 will go out shortly and Lockheed Martin and Pratt & Whitney should return their proposals in January or February. Bogdan said he expects the Lot 9 negotiations to wrap up “about a year from now.”
Tyndall AFB –

**Grants will fund defense support projects**


News Herald © October 27, 2014

By CHRIS OLWELL

Gov. Rick Scott announced more than $1.1 million in projects and programs designed to make life a little easier for military personnel and their families in the Panhandle on Monday, about a week before Election Day, and some of that money will end up in Bay County. CareerSource Gulf Coast is getting $150,000 from the Florida Defense Support Task Force (FDSTF), which is chaired by Rep. Jimmy Patronis, for a plan to identify industries where someone transitioning from the military to civilian life could find a good job. The project is part of a partnership with Tyndall Air Force Base to spur local economic development.

Patrick AFB –

**Reserve wing ensures safe passage for GPS satellite launch**


Air Force Reserve Command © October 29, 2014

by 920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs
Reservists from the 920th Rescue Wing provided range-clearance and safety support for the successful launch of a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station at 1:21 p.m. today. The payload for today's launch included the Air Force's eighth Block IIF navigation satellite for the Global Positioning System. GPS IIF-8 is one of the next-generation satellites, incorporating various improvements to provide greater accuracy, increased signals, and enhanced performance for users.

NAS Key West –

New $12.5M station for Navy firefighters
http://keysnews.com/node/59756

Keys News © October 30, 2014

BY ADAM LINHARDT Citizen Staff
It's been more than 30 years in the making, but Naval Air Station Key West firefighters will soon be moving out of the 1940s era airplane hangar they've long called home into a new $12.5 million building at Boca Chica Field. "Getting a new firehouse has been a long time coming," said NAS Key West commanding officer Capt. Steve McAlearney. "The building they are currently in has just been eroding over the years, so we've finally gotten the money and approvals to go forward. The contractor will also demolish the old building, which makes more room on the flightline, increasing safety out there.

Defense Industry –

Pentagon Officials To Meet With Industry Chiefs in Weekend Strategy Session

Defense News © October 30, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY
The Pentagon's top weapons buyer is meeting with a leading industry group and several top defense CEOs over the weekend to talk through his latest acquisition reform initiative. On Saturday morning, Frank Kendall, undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, will sit down with Boeing CEO Chris Chadwick, Lockheed Martin CEO Marillyn Hewson and others in a meeting chaired by Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) Chairman Mike Strianese.

Other Items of Interest –

UWF receives $350K grant for military

Pensacola News-Journal © October 27, 2014
By Kaycee Lagarde

The University of West Florida will receive $350,000 to develop educational courses and industry certifications for military service members and their families, part of an approximately $1.1 million in grants awarded to Northwest Florida this year from the Florida Defense Support Task Force. According to a news release Monday from Gov. Rick Scott's office, the grant will help UWF develop courses and certifications in information technology and cybersecurity workforce, which will be available to active duty, reserve and retired military and their family members.

State grants $750,000 for cybersecurity training
http://tbo.com/list/military-news/state-grants-750000-for-cybersecurity-training-20141029/
Tampa Tribune © October 29, 2014
By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

Sometimes, there is a silver lining to a perfect storm, and that’s what the creators of a new cybersecurity training program for veterans hope to capture. A recent study by IBM showed that the vast majority of cybersecurity breaches have a human element. And there is a large
regional population of education-seeking veterans who still have, or can easily regain, their security clearance. To help meld the need to stem a growing problem with a potentially large workforce that can help, the state Department of Economic Opportunity has awarded a $750,000 grant to the not-for-profit National Cyber Partnership for Cyber Foundations, a pilot program to prepare Tampa-area veterans and others for high-skill, high-wage jobs in the cyber industry……..

DOD Plan Points the Way toward Sustainability


Defense Communities 360 © November 2, 2014

The Pentagon on Friday released a long-term plan for mitigating the risk posed by climate change effects including flooding, surging sea levels, severe weather and extreme temperatures that calls for “managing the unavoidable and preparing for the possible.” “There are plenty of things we can do to mitigate the risk, but in order to mitigate risk, you have to recognize that it exists,” said John Conger, acting deputy undersecretary of defense for installations and environment. Conger added that he considers the military’s ability to cope with expected environmental changes his top concern……….
November 10, 2014 – FDSTF Update

FDSTF Members –

1. **Next Task Force Meeting** -- The next Task Force meeting will be **Thursday, November 20, 2014** at the **Crowne Plaza Pensacola Grand Hotel, 200 East Gregory Street, Pensacola, Florida 32502** beginning at 9:00 AM CST. Draft agenda attached.

2. **Attachment** – Draft meeting agenda.

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**  
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Articles of Interest:

**BRAC** –

**Hagel says congressional partnership key to future BRAC round**


Federal Times © October 31, 2014

By ANDY MEDICI
The Defense Department needs a stronger partnership with Congress if it wants to achieve critical priorities like another round of base closures, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said. He spoke at the Washington Ideas Forum Oct. 29, and said the Defense Department won’t be able to close the bases it needs to or discontinue ship or plane programs without a strong relationship with Congress, according to a DoD transcript…….

DOD Budget–

**Sequester Could Kill Shipyards, Says CNO Greenert**
Breaking Defense © November 4, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Navy readiness won’t fully recover from the second-order effects of the 2013 sequester for another year, the Chief of Naval Operations said this morning — and if the Budget Control Act cuts (known as sequestration) return in full force for fiscal year 2016, the nation might lose two of its five remaining major shipyards. “I worry about the shipbuilding industrial base,” Adm. Jonathan Greenert said at the Brookings Institution. If sequestration forces steep cuts to the Navy’s shipbuilding account — which Congress has actually been pretty adamant about protecting; more on that below — the impact on the size of the fleet “would take years to manifest,” he said: Ships last for decades, so building fewer today generally comes back to bite you in a generation, not immediately. “But more importantly,” the admiral went on, “there’s some likelihood we lose one or two [ship] builders, and we only have five………..

**Republican Control of Congress May Not Result in Raising Spending Caps**
Defense Communities 360 © November 4, 2014

Despite traditional support from the Republican Party for national defense, the GOP’s predicted capture of the Senate may not result in congressional action to lift the Budget Control Act spending caps on defense starting in fiscal 2016. While Republican appropriators and defense hawks, along with many Democrats, have urged repealing the 2011 law, a deficit reduction deal that satisfies both conservatives and President Obama is unlikely, reports CQ Roll Call. The White House would continue to insist on a deal that relaxes the caps on all discretionary spending, while Republicans would demand concessions to reform entitlement programs. “It could be very tough to change the caps if Republicans have the majority,” said Charles Konigsberg, a budget expert who served as assistant director of the Office of Management and Budget under Clinton………

Pentagon Spending on Path to Bust Budget Caps, CBO Finds

Pentagon spending is forecast to grow at an average annual rate of 1.2 percent over the next 15 years, resulting in a 20 percent increase in the defense budget by 2030, according to a report released Thursday by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). The largest components of the DOD budget would grow by different amounts, however. The cost of operation and support, which accounts for about two-thirds of the department’s FY 2015 budget, would rise steadily through 2030, with average growth of 1.1 percent a year in real terms and cumulative growth of 18 percent. The growth in operation and support — which includes compensation for the department’s military and civilian employees, military health care, and various operation and maintenance activities — would occur despite a 6 percent decrease in the size of the military, the report said………
Congressional Staff Continue to Work toward Omnibus Spending Bill

House and Senate Appropriations staffers continue to lay the groundwork for a fiscal 2015 omnibus spending bill to wrap up appropriations though next Oct. 1. But while Republican leaders in the House and Senate favor an omnibus to clear the decks for a GOP-led Congress next January, it’s still not clear whether House Republicans will go along with that approach. With Republicans increasing their House majority and gaining control of the Senate in Tuesday’s elections, conservatives likely will push for a second continuing resolution so they can rewrite bills in the new Congress to reflect GOP priorities.

Pentagon Not As Optimistic as GOP over Sequestration Roll Back

Republican leaders on Capitol Hill expect the defense portion of sequestration to be incrementally rolled back once the new Congress comes to session in 2015 even though Pentagon officials said Wednesday that they aren’t so confident. Sequestration is slated to resume in 2015, but Congressional sources said they expect the Republicans to use their new majority in the Senate to lessen the burden on the military. "What you will probably see is a consensus among Republicans that we really need to roll back sequestration for defense. I think there will be a whole new momentum to take the defense portion of sequestration off the table. Once you do that, everything else changes," the source said.

Deficit Or Defense Hawks? GOP Signals Sequester Deal Possible
How much Kentucky bourbon will it take for President Barack Obama and presumptive Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to come to an agreement of some kind on how to alleviate sequestration? A few drinks in the Oval Office? A bottle between them up in McConnell’s Capitol eyrie? And what about those new Republicans coming to the Senate for the first time come January, and the less moderate Democrats left in the Senate chamber, who still must be won to do the nation’s business?.......
Why We Haven’t Felt the Full Effect of Sequestration — Yet


Cicero Magazine © November 5, 2014

By Col. S. Clinton Hinote

Some believe that sequestration is good. They believe the across-the-board cuts mandated by the Budget Control Act keep spending under control and have not hurt defense significantly, as military forces continue to get the job done. This view is incorrect. The sequester cuts do hurt, but they hurt in ways that postpone the pain. Specifically, sequester cuts have resulted in the loss of margin for today’s force, making it vulnerable. Worse, the negative consequences will be with us for decades. The decision to keep the sequester in place is essentially a trade of long-term pain for short-term gain, and that is not a good bargain……..

Congressional Leaders Favor Omnibus

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/congressional-leaders-favor-omnibus/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=fa42a4aa5d-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-fa42a4aa5d-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

Defense Communities 360 © November 9, 2014

Congressional leaders from both parties attending a White House lunch Friday agreed that lawmakers should advance an omnibus spending bill during the lame duck session to wrap up fiscal 2015 appropriations, reported the Hill. “There were areas of significant agreement I think — the agreement that we want to do an omnibus and wanted to do that hopefully by Dec. 11 — completing the funding for this year’s operations of funding,” House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) said on CNN’s “The Lead with Jake Tapper.”……..

MacDill AFB —
MacDill pilot ready to test Air Force’s new tanker


Tampa Tribune © November 4, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

In the Leibrand household, husband David currently outranks his wife Kaylyn, but she is about to get the sweeter ride. Married for a little more than a year, the Leibrands, who met in an English class at the Air Force Academy, are KC-135 pilots with the 6th Air Mobility Wing at MacDill Air Force Base. David, 26, is a captain and his wife, 25, will still be a first lieutenant for another few months. But some time in the not-too-distant future, Kaylyn Leibrand will get the family bragging rights. She has been chosen by the Air Force to help test the new KC-46 Pegasus, the replacement for the aging Eisenhower-era aerial refueling jets the couple now fly…….

Eglin AFB –

Booz Allen to support USAF test and evaluation center


UPI © November 5, 2014

By Richard Tomkins

The U.S. Air Force has contracted a Booz Allen Hamilton subsidiary to provide technical support to the service's test and evaluation center in Florida. Booz Allen Hamilton Engineering Services has been selected to provide technical support to the U.S. Air Force's 96th Test Wing at Eglin AFB in Florida. The support will covers C4ISR capabilities -- command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance -- as well as engineering and research management support. As the 96th Test Wing helps the Air Force deploy new technologies, we will work as an essential partner to help the TW do the same,” said Lee Wilbur, a senior vice president with Booz Allen who leads the company's Engineering Services team. "This opportunity builds upon an enduring, productive relationship, while helping the 96th TW chart a bold, productive course for the future." .......
A thank you from the commander

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/eglin/a-thank-you-from-the-commander-1.398033

Northwest Florida Daily News © November 7, 2014

By BRIG. GEN. DAVID HARRIS | 96th Test Wing commander

Commentary
I want to take a minute to simply say ... Thank You. I’m constantly amazed by the effort, enthusiasm and dedication each of you bring to the mission every day. Your passion is truly inspiring. At the end of September, I spent the evening with our comptroller and contracting teams as they worked around the clock and into the early morning hours to close out fiscal-year 14. While most of our wing slept, they meticulously closed out the books to ensure we met all federal regulations and kept the resources flowing to all of our mission areas........

U.S. Air Force studying ways to keep F-35 target date on track

http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/06/lockheed-fighter-idUSL1N0SW2Z920141106

Reuters © November 6, 2014

BY ANDREA SHALAL

The U.S. Air Force is studying ways to meet its August 2016 target for declaring the new Lockheed Martin Corp F-35 fighter jet ready for use in combat, despite an unexpected shortage of mechanics, a top Air Force general said on Thursday. Lieutenant General Stephen Hoog, assistant vice chief of staff of the Air Force, confirmed that the timeline was in jeopardy because congressional moves to block the retirement of the A-10 aircraft meant the Air Force would be unable to shift the required number of expert mechanics to the F-35 program........
SecAF learns how Hurlburt Air Commandos operate

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/hurlburt/secaf-learns-how-hurlburt-air-commandos-operate-1.394596

Northwest Florida Daily News © October 31, 2014

By By SRA CHRISTOPHER CALLAWAY | 1st SOW Public Affairs

Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James learned how Air Commandos operate during a visit to Hurlburt Field, Oct. 20-21. James said she is making her way to bases across the Air Force to familiarize herself with various missions and discuss her priorities with Airmen. “If you look back at our 67-year history, today we are the smallest Air Force we have ever been, yet our operations tempo is nearly through the roof,” she said. “The great news is we have great technology and even better people.”

Otis supports special operators, refines fundamentals

http://www.dvidshub.net/news/146913/otis-supports-special-operators-refines-fundamentals

DVIDS © November 4, 2014

By Cpl. J. R. Heins

Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 252 supported United States Special Operations Command with an aerial delivery and insertion at Hurlburt Air Force Base, Florida, Oct. 24. Two KC-130J Super Hercules departed Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia, traveling to Hurlburt, where 50 SOCOM operators and four Combat Rubber Raiding Craft were loaded onto the aircraft. The Hercules flew at staggered altitudes allowing for the boats to be dropped out of the first aircraft. Once the boats hit the water, the operators jumped, said Capt. Tyler E. Burnham, a naval aviator with the squadron.
NAS Jacksonville –

**Jacksonville seeing boom in defense business**


Jacksonville Business Journal © November 6, 2014

By **Jensen Werley**

Economic opportunities for military contractors and defense-related businesses in Florida are booming, according to experts attending Thursday's First Coast Defense Expo. "The quality of educated labor is second to none," said **Aaron Bowman** of JaxUSA, which is attracting manufacturers like GE Oil & Gas to the area. "GE had the choice to go to anywhere in the world, they chose Jacksonville," he said……..

NS Mayport –

**Naval Station Mayport readies for new combat ships**


First Coast News © November 7, 2014

By **Mike Lyons**

There has been years of talk that Naval Station Mayport would be the Atlantic Coast home to the Navy's newest littoral combat ships and that became reality today with the establishment of a new command at the base. The establishment of Littoral Combat Ship Squadron Two is the beginning of something big at Naval Station Mayport. This command will get Mayport ready to host the first ship next summer, and many more after that. Captain Paul Young becomes the first commodore of LCS Squadron Two. $21 million is now being spent to build three new buildings on base to house the staff that will train sailors to operate the new ships……..
Tyndall AFB –

Tyndall pilot dies in F-16 crash in Gulf


News Herald © November 6, 2014

By CHRIS OLWELL

An F-16 pilot was killed Thursday when his jet crashed in the Gulf Mexico 50 to 75 miles south of Panama City, according to Air Force officials. Search and rescue teams with the Air Force and Coast Guard found what they believed was the wreckage of the F-16 Falcon C by Thursday afternoon. The Air Force announced Thursday night that the pilot’s remains had been found………..

U.S. Air Force recovers pilot's body after crash in Gulf of Mexico


MSN.com/Reuters © November 7, 2014

The United State Air Force said it had recovered the body of an F-16 fighter jet pilot who was killed when his aircraft crashed in the Gulf of Mexico on Thursday during a routine training mission. The aircraft, based out of Tyndall Air Force Base in the Florida Panhandle, was reported lost about 57 miles (92 km) south of Panama City, according to the U.S. Coast Guard. The name of the pilot was being withheld to allow for notification of his relatives."Efforts will now shift from that of a rescue mission to a recovery operation as evidence is collected to help in determining the cause of the crash," ……………
Water Quality Team at NAS Whiting Field earns FDEP award


Santa Rosa Press Gazette © November 3, 2014

Feel free to drink from the water fountains on base, because Naval Air Station Whiting Field has once again won the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Northwest District Plant Operations Excellence Award. This is the third consecutive year that NASWF has taken home the prize, which recognizes the hard work of the Public Works Department’s water management team. The competition involves more than just great water. Criteria to be eligible for the award included detailed recordkeeping, good customer relations, staff and safety training, and outstanding operation/maintenance practices.

Patrick AFB –

On your mark, get set, LAUNCH!


Patrick AFB © October 31, 2014

Commentary by Brig. Gen. Nina Armagno, 45th Space Wing Commander

Let me begin by giving a heartfelt thanks to all of Team Patrick-Cape and our first-class mission partners for executing a picture-perfect launch Wednesday afternoon of a ULA Atlas V rocket carrying the Air Force’s eighth Block IIF navigation satellite for the Global Positioning System from Launch Complex 41 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida. This was the first of more than 20 missions we currently have on the Eastern Range manifest for Fiscal Year 2015. It goes without saying the Sharks are going to have a very busy year here on the Space Coast.

Defense Industry –
DoD, Industry Huddle As Civil Firms Gain

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20141101/DEFREG02/311010016/DoD-Industry-Huddle-Civil-Firms-Gain

Defense News © November 1, 2014
By PAUL McLEARY

The big issues of the day facing the Pentagon and its defense industrial base go far deeper than developing the next generation fighter or aircraft carrier, top industry analysts warn. With commercial companies outpacing the defense industry’s ability to develop and field cyber, satellite and communications capabilities — and with those companies competing hard for the top engineering and software development talent — the Pentagon and its industry partners will need to chart a new path forward……..

Election Outcome Is Good News For Defense Industry

http://www.forbes.com/sites/lorenthompson/2014/11/05/election-outcome-is-good-news-for-defense-industry/

Forbes © November 5, 2014

When your main customer is a political system, elections matter a lot. Everybody in the defense industry knows that, but common sense dictates that companies not take sides in political races for fear of retribution. So don’t expect anyone in the defense sector to be talking in public this week about what a good night it was for the industry on Tuesday. But it was. Here are six reasons why……..

Other Items of Interest –

Defense Committees Will See New Leadership, Regardless of Election Results

Republicans appear to have the momentum to gain the six seats they need to take the Senate in Tuesday’s midterm elections. But the possibility of runoffs in Georgia and Louisiana means the majority could remain undecided into the next Congress. Even if Democrats lose Senate control, Republicans aren’t expected to snag many seats beyond a small majority. Regardless of the results, the Senate and House Armed Services ……………

F-35C makes first arrested landing on aircraft carrier


An F-35C Lightning II, the carrier variant of the Joint Strike Fighter, made an arrested landing aboard a flattop today, an important milestone both in the development of the stealth fighter and in naval aviation history. Navy test pilot Cmdr. Tony Wilson landed his F-35C on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier Nimitz off the coast of San Diego at 12:18 p.m. Pacific Time, according to a news release from Naval Air Forces. The landing, in which the redesigned tailhook worked flawlessly, marked the beginning of initial at-sea developmental testing for the F-35C, which is expected to last two weeks………..

After Election Day, Familiar Faces in New Places on Senate Defense Committees

Defense News © November 5, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

For the US national security sector, Tuesday mostly was a status-quo election — but with one glaring exception: Say hello to Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain. The Republican tidal wave means defense and national security committees in the Senate will have new chairmen — but all are familiar faces to the
Pentagon and arms manufacturers. Voters also sent most sitting members of national security committees back to the Capitol. By 10:30 p.m. (EST), it was clear the 2014 midterm elections would indeed bring the Republican wave many prominent political pollsters and analysts predicted. The GOP picked up 12 House seats, with several still outstanding. But the big news was the party’s seven-seat, with two competitive races outstanding, flip to gain control of the Senate...........

New Boss at ACC

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/November%202014/November%2005%202014/New-Boss-at-ACC.aspx

Air Force Magazine © November 5, 2014

Gen. Hawk Carlisle assumed command of Air Combat Command from Gen. Mike Hostage during a change of command ceremony at JB Langley-Eustis, Va., on Tuesday, according to a Nov. 4 release. USAF Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Larry Spencer presided over the ceremony, which was attended by Secretary Deborah Lee James as well as former Air Force Secretaries Whit Peters and Mike Wynne as well as other military dignitaries. "The Air Force is able to project combat air power around the globe 365 days a year," Spencer said. "It is the most feared Air Force on the planet and that’s because of you." James said Hostage, who will retire after nearly four decades in uniform, “has been a tireless leader” who is “dedicated and committed to excellence and has indeed ushered that into ACC through a very tough and challenging budget time in our Air Force history.”........

Democratic Losses Will Revamp Armed Services Panel in Senate

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/democratic-losses-will-revamp-armed-services-panel-in-senate/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=077a0a9c17-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-077a0a9c17-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#
Two Democratic members of the Senate Armed Services Committee lost their re-election bids on Tuesday, but with the Republican Party gaining a majority of the chamber, the panel’s most significant change will be at the top. John McCain (R-Ariz.) is widely expected to take the committee gavel in the 114th Congress and with current chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.) retiring, Jack Reed (D-R.I.) is in line to become the ranking member. Reed, however, may opt to take the top Democratic spot on the Banking Committee instead. If Reed passes over the post, Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.) likely would become the ranking member……..

**Newsflash to the New Congress: Tiered Readiness Is Here Now**
http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2014/11/06/newsflash_to_the_new_congress_tiered_readiness_is_here_now_107530.html

Real Clear Defense © November 6, 2014

By Mackenzie Eaglen

The modern day version of “tiered readiness” has arrived for the U.S. military. While the news has yet to sink in the minds of Washington leaders, the state of affairs across the force speaks for itself. During the defense drawdown in the 1990s, this concept was instituted with units preparing to deploy at peak readiness while the majority of the remaining forces stateside, especially those in the Reserve Component, were not. This was sanctioned by Pentagon leaders as a way to produce savings while (supposedly) preserving force structure and modernization where possible. While the idea was eventually rejected, budget cuts combined with a relentless pace of operations have resurrected “tiered readiness” for those in uniform……..

**After Election Day, Familiar Faces in New Places on Senate Defense Committees**

Defense News © November 5, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT
For the US national security sector, Tuesday mostly was a status-quo election — but with one glaring exception: Say hello to Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain. The Republican tidal wave means defense and national security committees in the Senate will have new chairmen — but all are familiar faces to the Pentagon and arms manufacturers. Voters also sent most sitting members of national security committees back to the Capitol………

**Sen. John McCain vows to save A-10 from retirement**


Military Times © November 6, 2014

Sen. John McCain says the Air Force won't be able to retire the A-10 Warthog ground attack jet now that he's in line to become chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. McCain said Thursday the A-10 is the best close-air support aircraft ever made and there is "no doubt" Congress will prevent its retirement. Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson has 80 of the twin-jet planes and trains A-10 pilots. McCain says there's no replacement for the jet's close-air support mission and pointed to a June friendly fire in Afghanistan where a B-1 bomber mistakenly targeted American troops, killing five…….

**Fla. named most veteran-friendly, with third-largest vet population**

http://www.alligator.org/news/local/article_2df04aae-689a-11e4-973c-1bf4ff0d9e6d.html

The Independent Florida Alligator

By Patrick Pinak

Timothy Kline doesn’t have to worry about paying for college in Florida, which was deemed the most veteran-friendly state in the country by Florida TaxWatch on Thursday. The 25-year-old UF telecommunication senior has served in the U.S. Air
Force Reserve Command for six years. Now, he receives assistance from the state’s GI Bill, which was passed earlier this year. It covers his tuition, housing and a portion of his textbooks. “It means a lot to have a country to come back to that’s so grateful for the people who sacrifice so much,” he said........
FDSTF Members –

1. **Task Force Meeting This Week** -- The Florida Defense Support Task Force meeting will be **Thursday, November 20, 2014** at the **Crowne Plaza Pensacola Grand Hotel, 200 East Gregory Street, Pensacola, Florida 32502** beginning at 9:00 AM CST.

2. **Attachment** – Meeting agenda.

Regards,  BG.

**Bruce Grant**  
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**Articles of Interest:**

**BRAC –**

**Deputy Defense Secretary Takes up the BRAC Mantle**  

Defense Communities 360 © November 14, 2014
During remarks Wednesday focusing on the bind the Pentagon faces between stringent spending caps and a Congress unwilling to embrace the department’s belt-tightening reforms, Deputy Defense Secretary Bob Work believed there was an opening to make the case for a new round of base closures. “The first place we should look at is our basing infrastructure. The department spends about $55 billion annually to maintain, sustain, and protect its bases,” Work said during the Center for Strategic and International Studies Fifth Annual Global Security Forum. 

DOD Budget–

Reversing Sequestration Missing from Republican Agenda


Defense Communities 360 © November 11, 2014

The Republican landslide last week that allowed the party to seize control of the Senate and increase its majority in the House for the most part did not emphasize the tenets of the tea party and its philosophy of slashing government programs, with many of the winners abiding by traditional Republican values such as a strong military. “The isolationist wing of the GOP that favored deficit reduction over a strong defense seems to be in retreat,” Loren Thompson, chief operating officer of the Lexington Institute, told Defense News.

Omnibus Spending Bill Will Not Come out until December


Defense Communities 360 © November 10, 2014

An omnibus spending bill needed to keep the government running through next Oct. 1 likely won’t be released until early December, according to House Appropriations Committee spokeswoman Jennifer Hing. The fiscal 2015 spending measure likely would be released the week of Dec. 8, reported the Hill. The timing would give lawmakers very little time to debate
and vote on the legislation, as the existing continuing resolution runs out Dec. 11. Of course, lawmakers could pass another short-term stopgap to give themselves more time to clear an end-of-the-year omnibus.

**McCain Looks to Reverse Sequestration**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/mccain-looks-to-reverse-sequestration/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=2cdc779adf-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-2cdc779adf-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

Defense Communities 360 © November 12, 2014

The incoming chairman of the Senate Armed Service Committee said Wednesday that eliminating the 2011 Budget Control Act spending caps on the Pentagon will be one of his top priorities. “As far as the military is concerned, the blow is too big … and with the world changing as it is, it’s really too biting,” John McCain (R-Ariz.), told reporters. McCain indicated he would hold hearings on the impact of the stringent spending caps. “We’ll be hearing from our services chiefs about how really biting this is,” McCain said, reported Defense News.

**Don't Buy the Defense Hawks' Budget Bellyaching**


US News © November 13, 2014

By Lawrence J. Korb

The Republican victory in the 2014 midterm election has emboldened the defense hawks on the Hill. If you had just come down from Mars, you would think that the U.S. military was reeling, overstretched and overburdened, and in need of an urgent injection of tens billions of dollars to be able to perform its core missions. The crises around the world today, from the airstrikes against the Islamic State group to Russian aggression in Ukraine to Ebola in West Africa, are prompting calls to greatly increase defense spending, despite a base budget of just under a half a trillion dollars this year and a requested $59 billion in additional war funding.
House Republicans Split over Way Forward on FY’15 Spending

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/house-republicans-split-over-way-forward-on-fy15-spending/

Defense Communities 360 © November 14, 2014

Following a strategy meeting Thursday, the House GOP conference appeared divided over whether to pursue a fiscal 2015 omnibus spending bill or another short-term continuing resolution to keep the federal government open when the existing stopgap runs out Dec. 11. “I don’t think a full-year omnibus makes much sense, but there was no decision in there. Nobody wants a shutdown,” said Rep. Tim Huelskamp (R-Kan.), adopting a stance popular among conservatives who would like to wait until the Republican Party controls both the House and Senate before making final decisions regarding FY 2015 spending.

Midterm Elections Sharpen House Republicans’ Approach to FY’15 Appropriations

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/midterm-elections-sharpen-house-republicans-approach-to-fy15-appropriations/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=cafcd00e01-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-cafcd00e01-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

Defense Communities 360 © November 16, 2014

Since lawmakers returned to Washington last week from the campaign trail, the question facing House Republican leaders regarding fiscal 2015 appropriations has shifted from what funding mechanism they favor to keep the government running beyond Dec. 11 to whether they will embrace a conservative-led effort to confront President Obama over immigration and possibly trigger a shutdown. So far House leaders have encouraged Appropriations Chairman Harold Rogers (R-Ky.) to produce an omnibus spending bill funding all federal agencies through next September that could be passed during the current lame duck session. Rogers and his Senate counterpart, Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), continue to negotiate a compromise spending package with a goal of finishing by the second week of December.
RGNext receives launch and test range service contract from USAF


Air Force Technology © November 11, 2014

Ranged Generation Next (RGNext) has been awarded a contract for the operation, maintenance, and sustainment of the US Air Force's (USAF) launch and test range system (LTRS). Valued at $86.5m, the launch and test range integrated service contract (LISC) includes operations, organisational- and depot-level maintenance, as well as sustainment at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida, and Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, US. Awarded by the Space and Missile Systems Center (SMC), the fixed-price-incentive contract also includes potential options, which if exercised will bring the total contract value to $2bn…………

MacDill AFB –

30 nations at MacDill AFB to plot Islamic State’s demise


Tampa Tribune © November 12, 2014

By Howard Altman

Nearly 200 military planners from more than 30 nations are meeting at MacDill Air Force Base to plot the demise of the Sunni insurgent group Islamic State. The operational planning conference, being hosted by U.S. Central Command, began Wednesday and runs through Nov. 21. “I have every confidence that over the next several days this esteemed group will do tremendous work and through their efforts set the conditions necessary to ensure that ISIL is defeated and long-term security and stability is achieved throughout the central region,” said Army Gen. Lloyd Austin III, commander of Centcom, in a media release. Austin, who used an acronym for Islamic State, oversees U.S. military operations in Iraq, Syria and 18 other nations
in one of the world’s most dangerous regions that includes Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Egypt and Iran………….

Eglin AFB –

County to expand Shoal River Buffer


Northwest Florida Daily News © November 11, 2014

By KARI C. BARLOW

Okaloosa County plans to use $1.7 million in Department of Defense grants to purchase 961 acres of land around the Shoal River from Haiseal Timber. The acreage will greatly expand what’s known as the Shoal River Buffer, an area that protects Eglin Air Force Base as well as Okaloosa County’s future water supply, said Jeff Littrell, director of water and sewer for the county. “This is another example of where we have worked together with our brothers and sisters at Eglin and what we have is a win-win,” Littrell said. “If it wasn’t a win-win, we wouldn’t be doing it, and neither would they.”

NS Mayport –

Mayport Moves Closer To Being LCS Hub On East Coast


Mayport Mirror © November 12, 2014

By Paige Gnann

The landscape of Naval Station Mayport’s basin is quickly changing, and establishment of Commander Littoral Combat Ship Squadron Two (LCSRON Two) is further emphasizing the steady growth of the base. Waterfront and community leaders from
Naval Station Mayport welcomed the newest addition to the base during a command establishment ceremony on Friday at the construction site that will be LCSRON Two headquarters when it is complete. "If you look at Mayport 20 years ago… Mayport had a lot of frigates," said Rear Adm. Pete Gumataotao, Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic. “Now we’re looking at the [frigates] starting sundown. It’s the turning of the guard, of the watch.”

**Philippine Sea returns to Mayport from Persian Gulf, ISIS fight**


Florida Times-Union © November 13, 2014

By Clifford Davis

The USS Philippine Sea will return to Mayport Naval Station on Saturday after nine months at sea which included taking part in offensive operations against Islamic State militants as part of the George H.W. Bush carrier strike group. The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser fired Tomahawk missiles into IS positions in Syria, supported air operations and worked with ships from the British, French and Italian navies.

**Littoral Combat Ship Squadron Two establishes**


DVIDS © November 14, 2014

Capt. Paul Young assumed command of the newly formed Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron (LCSRON) 2 during a ceremony held at Naval Station Mayport Nov. 7. Waterfront and community leaders joined Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic, Rear Adm. Pete Gumataotao, in welcoming the Sailors and staff that will support the arrival of littoral combat ships (LCS) in Mayport starting in 2016. The ceremony was held at the construction site of the LCSRON 2 headquarters where the support squadron staff and ship crew members is expected to grow to 900 Sailors. “This is a major command set to do some heavy-lifting for us in the very near future,” Gumataotao said. “LCS is set to do very specific missions, but brings capabilities to the warfighter that can adapt and flex quickly to a very dynamic operational environment of the 21st
Defense Industry –

Harris lands mapping-data deal with intelligence agency

Florida Today © October 24, 2014

By Wayne T. Price
Harris Corp. has been awarded a potential $770 million to provide geospatial data services for the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. Under Foundation GEOINT Content Management, or FGCM, contracts, Harris will create data and products of the Pacific, North America, South America, and Africa regions of the world for use by the U.S. intelligence community and military. FGCM will contribute to and maintain a comprehensive, geospatially accurate map of the world that can be accessed quickly as intelligence, operational, and crisis needs arise. The contract has indefinite delivery/requirements contracts for up to five years to put its value at $770 million………

How the Defense Department’s Procurement Problems Are Hurting National Security

Defense One © November 11, 2014

By Marcus Weisgerber

Frank Kendall cringes when he hears the term “acquisition reform.” The Pentagon’s top weapons buyer instead prefers the term “acquisition improvement,” which he says focuses more on the continued refinement of the entire process by which the Defense Department conceives, develops and purchases everything from ships and aircraft to trucks and ammunition. By almost any measure, the system is broken. Consider this: The Defense Department spent at least $46 billion between 2001 and 2011 on a dozen
weapons systems that never even entered production, according to the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

Other Items of Interest –

**USAF Discussing A-10 Compromise With Congress**


Defense News © November 11, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The US Air Force is trying to work out a compromise with Congress to retire a percentage of the A-10 fleet in order to move maintainers to the F-35 joint strike fighter, according to two service officials. The Air Force is in discussion with congressional leaders about the possibility of retiring three active-duty squadrons, or roughly 72 A-10 aircraft. While that is well short of retiring the whole fleet, even this targeted retirement would help with what the service is describing as a major crunch in available maintenance personnel.

**McCain To Target 'Fiscal Irresponsibility,' Mulls SASC Subcommittee Shake-Up**


Defense News © November 12, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The incoming chairman of the US Senate Armed Services Committee wants to crack down on over-priced weapon programs and shake up SASC’s subpanels. Sen. John
McCain, R-Ariz., is poised to take the committee gavel in early January when the new Congress begins its work. Defense and industry officials are fearful of his tenure, worried he will unleash havoc on programs, policies and witnesses……..

Corpus Christi Advances $5M in Projects to Benefit Military

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/corpus-christi-advances-5m-in-projects-to-benefit-military/#

Defense Communities 360 © November 13, 2014

The Corpus Christi (Texas) City Council on Tuesday moved to approve $5 million in projects intended to benefit local installations. The investments are intended to bolster Naval Air Station Corpus Christi and Corpus Christi Army Depot ahead of further Pentagon spending cuts, reported the Corpus Christi Caller-Times. “Corpus Christi is deeply committed financially to the long-term health and welfare of our military’s operations here,” City Councilman Mark Scott said during the meeting. With cuts looming, “we continue to show Washington our ongoing commitment to their presence,” Scott told the paper…….
Task Force members –

1. **Next Meeting in January** – The next scheduled meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be January 15, 2015 at the Doubletree Hotel in Tallahassee beginning at 9:00 AM.

2. **Florida Defense Alliance (FDA)** – The Florida Defense Alliance will conduct its semi-annual membership meeting December 10-11 at the Hyatt Riverside in Jacksonville.

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**  
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Articles of Interest:

**BRAC** –

**Hagel urges more base closures, troop benefit cuts**

By Martin Matishak

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel is calling on lawmakers to approve a new round of military base closures and limit troop benefits to give the Pentagon flexibility to address its budget woes. “The longer we defer the tough choices, the tougher they will be to make down the road and the more brutal the outcome,” Hagel warned Saturday at the Reagan Defense Forum in Simi Valley, Calif. ADVERTISEMENT

“Without the ability to make programmatic adjustments like retiring aging aircraft, and without base realignment and closure, the department will face a bill of about $30 billion over fiscal years 2016 to 2020.” Hagel said the Pentagon has 24 percent more facilities than needed, “costing us billions of dollars every year, money that could otherwise be invested in maintaining our military's edge.”

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**Pentagon Will Request a New BRAC Round in FY’16 Budget, Hagel Indicates**


Defense Communities 360 © November 17, 2014

During multiple stops this weekend, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel underscored the need for a new BRAC round as one way for the Defense Department to mitigate the fiscal constraints imposed by the Budget Control Act spending caps. “Despite numerous efforts and almost 10 years since the last round, DOD has been unable to secure another round of base realignment and closure. Today, DOD has 24 percent excess capacity in our basing and facilities — excess capacity that is costing us billions of dollars every year, money that could otherwise be invested in maintaining our military’s edge. We need Congress to help end this excess spending,” Hagel said at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, in Simi Valley, Calif., on Saturday.

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**Army Realignment Should Be Conducted under BRAC, Community Leaders Say**
The decision-making process the Army is using to shrink its active-duty end strength to 420,000 by fiscal 2020 lacks transparency, say leaders in two Army communities that stand to lose thousands of troops as officials decide what installations will lose up to 70,000 soldiers. Instead, the Army’s force structure realignments should be made through a formal BRAC round, they say. “No one is comfortable with the process of this whole drawdown and the way it’s being managed. The citizens at large, Congress, the Army — nobody’s happy with this process. … The meat-cleaver approach that is being taken to defense spending is unconscionable,” said John Crutchfield, president and CEO of the Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce.

Chances for Sequester Relief Fade as Post-Midterm Showdowns Take Shape

Anyone who expects the new Republican majority on Capitol Hill to lift the lid on military spending is either naïve or oblivious to the obvious, a panel of current and former lawmakers said Nov. 15. It would take an extraordinary national security crisis on a par with the 9/11 attacks for Congress to roll back the spending restrictions it passed in 2011, said former House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, who was one of the architects of the Budget Control Act that cut $1 trillion from federal agency budgets.

2016 US Defense Budget Could Be $60B Over Spending Caps
As the White House and Pentagon pass drafts of the fiscal 2016 defense budget back and forth before submitting it to Congress early next year, the base budget request possibly could exceed congressionally mandated spending caps by as much as $60 billion, according to a former defense official with knowledge of the discussions. Administration and defense officials have said for months that the 2011 Budget Control Act (BCA), which limits how much the Pentagon can spend, wouldn’t fully constrain the 2016 request. But a source with knowledge of a meeting between President Barack Obama and the Joint Chiefs of Staff said the chiefs have pushed for an increase of $60 billion over the $535 billion cap for defense, with another $10 billion for Department of Energy programs………

US House Republicans’ top appropriator has a message for any member who might favor a government shutdown next month: The American people “want action.” Appropriations Committee Chairman Rep. Hal Rogers, R-Ky., penned a Monday op-ed in Roll Call preaching “elections have consequences” as some in his Republican caucus are pushing to shut down the federal government should President Barack Obama issue an executive order that alters the federal immigration system……….
California Gloomin’: Fixing Sequester May Take ‘Til ’16


Breaking Defense © November 17, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Just two months ago, prominent pro-defense Republicans were telling me the best outcome for the military budget would be a GOP-controlled Senate. Now they’ve got it — but before the new Congress is even sworn in, several veteran legislators speaking here Saturday discounted the prospect of it doing anything to scrap the automatic budget cuts known as sequestration. The best hope they offered instead was that a presidential candidate for 2016 would adopt a strong-defense platform and effectively ride to the rescue on a white horse. “We’re going to have to do something,” said former Sen. Jim Talent, one of the leading Republican opponents of sequestration. That is what passed for optimism at the second Reagan National Defense Forum this Saturday……….

House Republican Leadership Taps Thornberry to Lead Armed Services Panel

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/house-republican-leadership-taps-thornberry-to-lead-armed-services-panel/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=022e811cece-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-022e811cecc-55784537&ct=(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

Defense Communities 360 © November 18, 2014

Texas Rep. Mac Thornberry (R), who has served as vice chairman of the House Armed Services Committee for the last four years, was selected by House Republican leaders on Tuesday to chair the committee when the 114th Congress opens in January. Thornberry will replace Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.), who is retiring at the end of the current session. His selection is expected to be approved by the entire Republican conference this week. “I am grateful for the opportunity and also mindful of the responsibility it entails,” he said in a written statement. “The men and women who serve our nation in the military deserve the full support and backing of the Congress and of the country. Providing that support will be my top priority.” Thornberry, whose district includes Sheppard Air Force ………
Dempsey Lays Groundwork for Larger 2016 Defense Budget


Defense News © November 18, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY

The top US military official on Wednesday made the case for growing the base defense budget significantly over the $535 billion spending cap imposed by Congress for fiscal 2015. While the 2015 budget has not yet been passed by Congress, drafts of the 2016 request are being passed back and forth between the Pentagon and White House, and the final top line number “is still moving,” said Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey. But the one thing the two sides are convinced of is that “we need additional top line [funds] for the emerging new requirements” faced by the US military, he said……..

The Pentagon's Budget Dilemma

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/11/19/the_pentagon_s_budget_dilemma

Foreign Policy © November 19, 2014

By Kate Brannan

The Pentagon has shared with Congress new details about its plan to train and equip vetted members of the Syrian opposition to fight the Islamic State in hopes of finally securing funding for the effort. With an initial tranche of $225 million, the Defense Department aims to train the first classes of Syrian rebels, each of which will have 300 fighters, according to a reprogramming request signed by the Pentagon's chief financial officer, Mike McCord……..

Vice CNO: Sequestration Threatens Littoral Combat Ship, Mission Modules
The littoral combat ship’s mine countermeasures module will be a key enabler for the Marine Corps that will keep expeditionary forces out of bomb infested waters, the vice chief of naval operations said Nov. 18. But if sequestration returns in fiscal year 2016, it could pose a risk to the program, Adm. Michelle Howard said at NDIA’s annual expeditionary warfare conference. “My biggest concern and challenge is whether or not we end up being sequestered. That is my biggest concern and challenge to the LCS and the mission modules and for us to be able to replace those aging mine countermeasure ships out there,” she said.

USAF Official: Budget Uncertainty 'Very Challenging'

By AARON MEHTA

The uncertainty over whether Congress will pass a budget has been “very challenging” for both the Air Force and its industry partners, the service's top military acquisitions official said Wednesday. “The last couple of years, and this year included, have been a real challenging time because of the uncertainty,” Lt. Gen. Ellen Pawlikowski, military deputy for acquisition, told reporters at an event hosted by the Defense Writer’s Group. “First the challenge of the budget going down, but even more the uncertainty of not knowing when you’ll have the ability to execute your contracts. “It’s made it very challenging, both for us and for industry.”

Military Budget Cuts Stand in Way of Obama’s Defense Strategy: Pentagon
Planned reductions to the US Department of Defense (DoD) budget would make it impossible for the military to follow US President Barack Obama's national security strategy, Pentagon spokesperson Admiral John Kirby has said. "Sequestration would literally render it impossible for us [DoD] to execute the defense strategy that President Obama signed out in 2012," Kirby said Thursday. Kirby described the potential spending reductions as "arbitrary and unnecessary", adding that if implemented, the cuts would take another $500 billion dollars out of the defense budget over the next ten years……..

Levin Says NDAA Conferees 'Not There Yet,' But Still Hopeful


By JOHN T. BENNETT

US House and Senate members hammering out a Pentagon policy bill are “not there yet,” says one of the conference committee’s leaders. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., told reporters on Tuesday that Senate and House Armed Services Committee leaders want to finish the compromise version of the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) by Friday. There will likely be no floor amendments, Levin said, largely because there are few remaining days in the legislative calendar. Asked when he hopes the panel will iron out differences, Levin replied: “I hope soon, but I just don’t know.”………..
The Pentagon expects to submit a five-year budget that will violate mandatory spending caps for the second consecutive year, according to the Defense Department’s comptroller. The fiscal 2016-2020 budget probably will “once again say ‘here’s what we think we need’ and not submit a budget that is directed at the caps” imposed under the spending cuts known as sequestration, Comptroller Mike McCord said in an interview. Though the Defense Department hasn’t received final budget guidance from the White House’s Office of Management and Budget, “I would be really surprised if we changed our position at this point and say, ‘Yes, we’ll submit a sequester-level budget and just call it a day,’” McCord said in the Nov. 12 interview

Emerging Threats Upend Assumptions behind Sequestration, Odierno Says

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/emerging-threats-upend-assumptions-behind-sequestration-odierno-says/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=eaee9b4b54-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-eaee9b4b54-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

Defense Communities 360 © November 19, 2014

Reductions in the size of the Army forced by the Budget Control Act spending caps need to be reconsidered given the emergence of multiple global threats over the past year, Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno said Wednesday. Many of the assumptions made when officials decided to shrink the size of the active-duty Army — initially to 490,000 and now to about 440,000 — have not played out as planned. “We made assumptions that we wouldn’t be using Army forces in Europe the way we used to. We made assumptions that we wouldn’t go back into Iraq. We are back in Iraq. Here we are worried about Russia again,” Odierno said at the Defense One Summit

Sources: Top Appropriators Focusing Solely on Omnibus, Have Had No CR Talks


Defense News © November 20, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT
Capitol Hill's top appropriators have yet to discuss another short-term measure to keep the government running, focusing solely on a longer-term bill they hope to drop in early December. Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Ky., and Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., chairs of the House and Senate Appropriations committees, respectively, are cobbling together an omnibus spending bill that would fund the Pentagon and other federal agencies through Sept. 30. A stopgap government-funding measure expires Dec. 11, and House conservatives’ desire to use repeated threats of government shutdowns to influence the White House’s pending action on immigration has House GOP leaders searching for options..........

Defense Secretary Hagel Warns That America’s Military Capabilities Are In Danger


IJ Review © November 22, 2014

By Kevin Boyd

In an interview on PBS, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel warned that U.S. military capabilities were being threatened. Hagel worries that potential rivals are catching up to American military capability, despite the amount of funding that goes into it. According to the Washington Free Beacon, Hagel said: “I am worried about it; I am concerned about it; Chairman Dempsey is; the chiefs are–every leader of this institution. Now today, right now, as we sit here, we still are the most dominant, most powerful, most effective country, economy and military in the world, There’s no one close to us right now,” Hagel told Rose during a PBS interview aired Wednesday…

McCain Emerges as Pentagon’s Last Hope to Avert Sequester

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=1678

National Defense Magazine © November 20, 2014
By Sandra I. Erwin
Pentagon pleas for relief from drastic spending cuts are getting scant attention as the lame-duck Congress becomes enmeshed in partisan fighting over immigration reform and the threat of a government shutdown. But there is still fresh hope for defense in the new Congress when Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., takes the gavel as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "With McCain, you have a very, very vigorous opponent to sequestration," Sen. Tim Kaine, D-VA, told a gathering of defense industry executives this week. Kaine, who has served with McCain on Armed Services, also firmly opposes the automatic spending cuts, or sequester. He urged defense executives to join forces with McCain. "He fundamentally believes that sequestration is harming our nation's defense," Kaine said…………

Prospects for Omnibus Drop following Obama’s Immigration Action

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/prospects-for-omnibus-drop-following-obamas-immigration-action/#

Defense Communities 360 © November 23, 2014

As Republicans continue to grapple with a response to President Obama’s executive order on immigration, the likelihood that Congress clears an omnibus bill during the lame duck session to wrap up appropriations for fiscal 2015 continues to fall. That calculation comes as time is running out to act on an omnibus by Dec. 11 when the current continuing resolution (CR) runs out and conservatives remain convinced that the must-pass spending legislation is their most potent weapon to confront Obama on his executive order shielding millions of illegal immigrants from deportation. On Friday House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) failed to reveal what tack his chamber would take, but told reporters that "we’re working with our members and looking at the options available to us. But I will say to you, the House will in fact act."………

Team Orlando –

Military Simulation Market to Remain Flat

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/archive/2014/December/Pages/MilitarySimulationMarkettoRemainFlat.aspx

National Defense Magazine © December 2014
By Sandra Erwin

Despite sharp military spending cuts in the United States and most NATO countries, the market for training equipment and services will stay relatively flat, according to analysts. But contractors in this sector, especially in the United States, face a bumpy road ahead as the Pentagon puts programs on hold and waits for Washington to settle budget disputes. Industry analyst Alix Leboulanger of Frost & Sullivan Aerospace & Defense has estimated the military training and simulation market worldwide will stay at about $6 billion a year for the foreseeable future. Annual contracts in this sector are expected to fall slightly from $6.74 billion in 2013 to $6.36 billion by 2022. The United States accounts for about 68 percent of the total...........

MacDill AFB –

**Socom leaders interested in cloaking technology**


Tampa Tribune © November 16, 2014
By Howard Altman

In its never-ending search for ways to give commandos an edge in combat, U.S. Special Operations Command is looking to take a page out of the Harry Potter playbook. Socom, headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base, is looking to research and development groups, academia, industry and individuals for technologies that can cloak, as much as possible, the electronic “signatures” coming from commandos and their equipment in the field. The harder it is for commandos to be found, the easier it is for them to do their job safely and come home. To that end, Socom has issued a request for information for “multispectral signature reduction for the individual soldier and his equipment including materials or technologies that reduce the likelihood of detection/identification/targeting of SOF operators and vehicles,” according to the request, put out on the FedBizOps website...........

Eglin AFB –

**F-35C shines in first carrier trials aboard carrier Nimitz**

After 10 days of sea trials here, the differences between the F-35C Lightning II and its predecessors are becoming readily apparent as the plane is launched, trapped and maneuvered topside. Sailors who got the opportunity to work with the next generation strike fighter said the F-35C has attributes that aren't found elsewhere in the airwing. It has a smoother ride, it's easier to taxi, and it has less complicated landing procedures. In many ways, it does a lot of the heavy lifting itself and takes work away from sailors. "It's truly an administrative task," said Cmdr. Tony Wilson, the lead test pilot for the F-35C, in an interview Nov. 13 as the 10 day testing wrapped up. Pilots and flight deck crews found the more compact plane easier to fly and maneuver aboard ship, good attributes for an aircraft that's seen many delays and is now slated for a 2018 fleet introduction.

F-22s, F-35s train together for first time

By Brian Everstine, Staff writer 4:59 p.m. EST November 19, 2014
F-22 Raptors from the 94th Fighter Squadron, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, and F-35 Lightning IIs from the 58th Fighter Squadron, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, fly in formation over the Eglin Training Range after completing an integration training mission Nov. 5.

The Air Force's newest fighters trained together for the first time this month. F-22s joined F-35s on Nov. 5 at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, for an integration training mission to ensure the jets could communicate with each other and work together on simulated missions. "The F-22 and F-35 squadrons integrated very well," F-22 pilot Maj. Steven Frosham said in a news release. "The lessons learned and tactics developed from this training opportunity will help to form the foundation for future growth in our combined fifth-generation fighter tactics." The jets flew offensive counter air, defensive counter air and interdiction missions together, according to the Air Force. The F-22s were deployed from the Air National Guard's 149th Fighter Wing at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia. The F-35s were from Eglin's 58th Fighter Squadron.
New ships play big role in Mayport future


Florida Times-Union © November 17, 2014

By Clifford Davis

With some misgivings along the way, the U.S. Navy is staking a significant part of its future, along with that of the Mayport Naval Station, on the success and long-term viability of the Littoral Combat Ship. Last week, the second LCS squadron, known as LCSRON2, was officially born at Mayport as Capt. Paul Young assumed command. The ceremony was yet another sign of the future taking hold at the First Coast base. In the wake of the three-ship Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group that arrived in the past year, the LCS will soon occupy spaces at Mayport’s piers formerly occupied by 1970s-era frigates that are slowly being phased out……..

NS Mayport Energy Effort Is ‘Platinum’


Mayport Mirror © November 19, 2014

By MC1(SW/AW) John S. Smolinski

U.S. Fleet Forces Command hosted a Fleet Energy Training Forum for more than 270 senior leaders and command representatives from Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville (Jax), Naval Base Mayport and Naval Submarine (SUBASE) Base Kings Bay at Dewey’s Grand Ballroom on board NAS Jax, Nov. 6. As part of the forum, McGinn presented a Platinum Level Secretary of the Navy Energy Award to Naval Station Mayport and gold level awards to NAS Jax and SUBASE Kings Bay. Featured speakers for the event included Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy, Installations and Environment), Dennis McGinn; Chief of Naval Operations, Director of Energy and Environmental Readiness (OPNAV N45), Rear Adm. Kevin Slates; and U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Director of Maritime Headquarters, Rear Adm. Bradley Gehrke……..

Tyndall AFB –
Bay County to consider development near Tyndall


News Herald © November 17, 2014

By JOHN HENDERSON
A community of 195 homes and commercial space would be allowed near Tyndall Air Force Base under a land use amendment Bay County Commissioners are slated to vote on Tuesday. The commission also is scheduled to vote on an unrelated rezoning that would allow a proposed 40-unit apartment development on Joan Avenue on Panama City Beach that has some neighbors concerned.....

Moving Targets: Old F-16s make ‘really good bad guys’ when converted for unmanned flight


News Herald © November 15, 2014

By LAUREN SAGE REINLIE

Not a lot of people crash three planes in a day and call it a job well done. Air Force Lt. Col. Matthew Garrison does. Garrison heads up the only squadron in the Air Force that takes retired planes from the bone yard — essentially a junkyard for planes — and resurrects them as aerial targets used for weapons testing and training. It’s a unique mission........

Other Items of Interest –

Four Bases to Vie for Air Force’s New Installation Support Center

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/four-bases-to-vie-for-air-forces-new-installation-support-center/
The Air Force this week announced four installations — Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va., Joint Base San Antonio, Texas, Scott AFB, Ill., and Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio — as candidate locations to host the headquarters for the new Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center (AFIMSC).

The Air Force plans to announce preferred and reasonable alternatives and continue the environmental impact analysis process through early 2015. Officials from Air Force Materiel Command will begin to conduct site surveys of each candidate base to assess a range of operational and facility requirements. They also will develop cost estimates to bed down the AFIMSC headquarters at each candidate location, according to a press release.

Following the site surveys, officials will present the results to the secretary and chief of staff to select preferred and reasonable alternatives.

“The Air Force is committed to a deliberate and open process to address AFIMSC HQ basing,” said Timothy Bridges, deputy assistant secretary for installations. “As we progress through the basing process, we will share information so interested communities are aware of what to expect.”

Retired admirals warn lawmakers against cuts to Navy

Navy Times © November 19, 2014

By Lance M. Bacon

A high-powered cohort of industry leaders and lobbyists has enlisted the help of 95 retired admirals and generals to pressure Congress to better fund the Navy, which, like the other services, faces heavy sequestration budget cuts in fiscal 2016. The group, called Navy Now, kicked off its campaign with a Nov. 12 letter that warns Congress the "underfunded and overextended" Navy places national defense, service members, and the stability of the global economy at risk........

A New Era for the Defense Department
By Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel

Today, the Defense Department is undergoing a defining time of transition. After 13 years of war fought by an all-volunteer force, we are reshaping our defense enterprise to adapt for a fiscal environment plagued by perpetual uncertainty and shrinking resources, and to contend with an historic realignment of interests and influences around the world. Right now our military is addressing today’s crises and security challenges around the world – from degrading ISIL to helping stop the spread of Ebola to reinforcing our NATO allies. ............

Chuck Hagel set to resign post as Defense secretary


By Associated Press

Administration sources say that Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel is resigning from President Barack Obama's Cabinet. Hagel, a former Republican senator, has served as Pentagon chief since early 2013. Obama is expected to announce the resignation Monday. The official insisted on anonymity because this person was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly ahead of Obama's official announcement. A senior defense official said that Hagel submitted his resignation letter to Obama on Monday morning and the president accepted it. Hagel agreed to remain in office until his successor is confirmed by the Senate, the official said........
December 2, 2014 – FDSTF Update

Task Force members –

1. **Next Meeting in January** – The next scheduled meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be January 15, 2015 at the Doubletree Hotel in Tallahassee beginning at 9:00 AM.

2. **Florida Defense Alliance (FDA)** – The Florida Defense Alliance will conduct its semi-annual membership meeting December 10-11 at the Hyatt Riverside in Jacksonville. Meeting agenda is attached.

3. **FDSTF Contract Extension Letters** – Attached are 3 contract extension letters to FDSTF grant recipients under contract. The three grant recipients formally requested time extensions in order to utilize their grant funding to complete approved projects. This information is provided to keep FDSTF members current on the status of contracts.

4. **Attachments** –

   - Monthly report from The Principi Group (TPG).
   - Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) Meeting Agenda

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget--

**Defense Cuts Stirring Republican Congress Confronting New Budget**


By Heidi Przybyla

Republicans led by Senator Jeff Sessions will insist that health care and other domestic programs absorb some of the Pentagon's share of cuts. That would be a deal breaker for Senate Democrats. Republicans led by Senator Jeff Sessions will insist that health care and other domestic programs absorb some of the Pentagon's share of cuts. That would be a deal breaker for Senate Democrats. Military supporters are counting on a new Republican-led Congress to roll back defense-spending cuts required by a 2011 budget agreement. First, they'll have to get past Jeff Sessions and his allies…….

**Hagel rallies chairmen around defense budget**


By Kristina Wong

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel met quietly with congressional leaders of three defense committees on Thursday as lawmakers prepare the Pentagon's budget for next year. Hagel spoke with Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas), the incoming leaders of the Armed Services committees, and Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.), who was reappointed as chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee on Defense. The chair of the Senate's
Appropriations subcommittee on Defense has yet to be announced. "He wanted to reach out to these leaders to discuss a wide range of issues of importance to the Defense Department, to include our budget pressures," said Pentagon press secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby.

**McCain May End Closed Markups for Authorization Bill**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/mccain-may-end-closed-markups-for-authorization-bill/

The Senate Armed Services Committee’s markup of the defense authorization bill may be open to the public next year, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), who is expected to take the gavel for the panel in the 114th Congress, said last week. “I lean towards it, but I want to get the sense of all the members of the committee,” said McCain. McCain has previously stated there is no reason to hold the markup in a closed session. Before going ahead, though, he said he wants to make sure a majority of the committee supports the move, reported CQ Roll Call.

**House Republican Plan Calls for Omnibus to Fund Most Agencies**

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/house-republican-plan-calls-for-omnibus-to-fund-most-agencies/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=5ae81517de-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-5ae81517de-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

House Republican leaders are expected on Tuesday to propose funding most government agencies through a year-long omnibus, with a short-term continuing resolution (CR) for immigration-related programs. The latest House GOP proposal to confront President Obama over the unilateral actions he took last month shielding millions of illegal immigrants from deportation would not necessarily avert a government shutdown, however, as House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) last week said Democrats would not support such a plan. “We will not be enablers to a Republican government shutdown, partial or otherwise,” Pelosi said, reported CQ.

**Defense Leaders Can't Answer This Question When Asked Why They Need A Larger Budget**
President Obama's fourth secretary of defense soon will be taking the reins at the Pentagon where discontent has been brewing over spending cuts, expanding missions and the growing realization that the generals’ stop-the-sequester campaign has been politically ineffective. The military message has not resonated, although that is not entirely the Pentagon’s fault, says retired Marine Corps Lt. Gen. George Flynn, who is a former director of force development on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Defense officials have built the bulk of their case against the sequester on the premise that abrupt and steep cuts threaten military "readiness." The problem is that few people outside the military understand what that means and, therefore, do not take it seriously. "Readiness to do what? We need to be able to answer that," Flynn tells National Defense in an interview………

This Week: 'It Is All Up in the Air' With Defense Bills Still Pending

Will Congress start work this week on two bills for which the Pentagon and US defense sector are clamoring? It’s anyone’s guess. The 113th Congress is expected to adjourn by the end of next week. In the remaining 10 or so legislative days, lawmakers are set to battle over corporate tax breaks and immigration while also flirting with a government shutdown. Caught in the partisan and intraparty squabbling are the 2015 defense authorization and appropriations bills. Senate Majority Leader Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., on Monday listed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) among his must-pass bills………

Armed Services Committees to Unveil Compromise NDAA Details
By JOHN T. BENNETT

After weeks of high-level talks, the House and Senate Armed Services committees on Tuesday will unveil details of a compromise 2015 Pentagon policy bill. With the Senate again unable to bring a SASC-passed version of the national defense authorization bill to the floor, leaders of the two panels were forced to hammer out a final version that is expected to pass both chambers in the 113th Congress’ final days. Senior staffers from both panels are slated to brief reporters on details of the 2015 NDAA around midday Tuesday.

House, Senate Resolve Impasse over Authorization Bill

Leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services committees reached agreement on a compromise fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill, after breaking an impasse over two Pentagon proposals intended to trim the cost of military compensation. Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, announced the breakthrough on Monday, but did not say how the issues had been resolved. “We compromised,” Levin told reporters Monday evening. “It takes two, not just to tango, but to compromise.” He indicated details would be released on Tuesday. The deal on the annual defense policy bill comes just in time for lawmakers to vote on it before the congressional session ends next week. If the compromise bill is released Tuesday, the measure could be brought to the House floor as soon as Thursday, reported CQ. The Senate likely would not vote until after the House approves the legislation.
Centcom helps fortify Iraqi forces against Islamic State

http://tbo.com/list/military-news/centcom-helps-fortify-iraqi-forces-against-islamic-state-20141127/

Tampa Tribune © November 27, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

Sometime in January, if all goes according to plan, forces with the terrorist Islamic State holed up since June in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul will be hit with a double whammy — Kurdish Peshmerga forces attacking from the west and Iraqi security forces from the south. If successful, the operation will go a long way toward proving the resolve of an army that had fled from the Islamic State forces en masse, leaving behind territory, weapons, ammunition and equipment that have fueled the terrorist group’s advances across Iraq and Syria. The Mosul operation has been designed by Iraqis and will be carried out by them……..

Eglin AFB –

F-35s and Cost Comparisons

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/November%202014/November%2026%202014/F-35s-and-Cost-Comparisons.aspx

Air Force Magazine © November 26, 2014

BY JOHN A. TIRPAK

The cost of F-35As in the eighth production lot is $94.8 million each, the system program office announced last Friday. We reported that this makes the cost comparable to that of some fourth generation fighters. Several readers have noted, however, that the cost quoted does not include the F135 engine. Pratt & Whitney, maker of the F135, declines to state the unit cost of its engines, for competitive reasons. The contract awarded to Pratt & Whitney in October for F135 engines was $1.052 billion for 48 of the motors, which would yield a unit cost of about $22 million each; however, a P&W spokesman noted that the contract also included other things, such as engineering work
and spares. At the gross figure, however, an F-35A with engine would cost about $116 million. That tracks with the Lot 7 price, provided by the F-35 SPO, of about $112 million for an F-35, engine included. In 2008, Boeing received a $2.3 billion contract from the Republic of Korea for 21 F-15K fighters. That contract, too, included things other than simply the aircraft. However, at the gross value, the unit cost works out to $109 million, or $120 million in inflation-adjusted dollars. The F-35 SPO is aiming for a base-year 2010 unit cost of F-35As in the $80-$85 million range, which would make the F-35 comparable not only to F-15s but to less expensive aircraft such as the F-16.

Hurlburt Field –

1st CLASS PRIVATE: Privatized Hurlburt housing taking shape

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/local/1st-class-private-privatized-hurlburt-housing-taking-shape-1.407288

Northwest Florida Daily News © November 28, 2014

By KELLY HUMPHREY | Daily News

This is not your grandfather's base housing. Former dependents who remember living in cinderblock row houses on military installations might be pleasantly surprised to see the new housing taking shape at Hurlburt Field. Corvias Military Living has begun construction on Osprey Landing, the base's eagerly anticipated new 63-house neighborhood. The project is just the first phase of what will ultimately be 404 new houses built over the next five years. The estimated cost of the total project is $50 million.………

NS Mayport –

Rubio: Having aircraft carrier group at Mayport is the goal


Action News Jax © November 24, 2014

By Lorena Inclán
The spotlight was on Naval Station Mayport on Monday afternoon as Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Florida, toured the USS Iwo Jima, getting a firsthand look at the ship’s role in national security. Rubio’s visit marks Mayport’s growing role as a strategic military hub. At least six more ships are expected to arrive in Mayport over the next few years. It’s clear that the U.S. Navy views the port as one of its most important locations. But Rubio said he would still like to see an aircraft carrier based there……..

Defense Industry –

DoD Shifts Acquisition, Tech Efforts Toward Major Powers


Defense News © November 23, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY

After spending 13 years fighting non-state actors in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, the US Defense Department is shifting its institutional weight toward developing a new acquisition and technology development strategy that focuses more on major state competitors, the Pentagon’s No. 2 told Defense News on Nov. 21. Deputy Defense Secretary Bob Work said that at the top of the agenda are powers like China and Russia, both of whom have “regional and global aspirations, so that’s going to increasingly take a lot of our attention.”……..

Other Items of Interest –

White House Needs Strategic Thinker at Pentagon, and Quickly, Former Official Says

By PAUL McLEARY

Eyebrows were raised earlier this month when an unannounced but widely anticipated trip by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel to Asia in early December was abruptly called off. When reporters in the Pentagon’s press room began to push for answers and speculate over the fate of the secretary, they were quickly assuaged by a host of officials who brushed away such concerns, pointing to upcoming Congressional testimony as the cause for what they insisted was merely a postponement of the trip. Now we know that — according to the official accounts, at least — Hagel had for weeks been in discussions with the White House about his future, and it was clear that he wasn’t long for the top job in the Pentagon……..

Air Force to Identify Candidate Reserve Bases to Host New Tankers


Defense Communities 360 © November 23, 2014

The Air Force has released the basing criteria it will use to select candidates for the first Reserve-led KC-46A main operating base. Officials plan to announce candidate installations in the spring of 2015, select the preferred and reasonable alternatives and begin the environmental impact analysis process in the fall of 2015, and announce a final decision in calendar year 2016, according to a press release. The Air Force will evaluate all Reserve-led global mobility wings with a runway of at least 7,000 feet against the criteria, which will include……..

Congress Has Less Than 10 Days To Make All of These National Security Decisions

http://www.defenseone.com/politics/2014/12/congress-has-less-10-days-make-all-these-national-security-decisions/100145/?oref=d-topstory

Defense One © Dec 2, 2014
By Molly O’Toole

In 10 days, on Dec. 11, a continuing resolution to fund the federal government will expire, forcing another shutdown if Congress doesn’t approve more money. It’s also the deadline for members of Congress to push through a long list of defense and national security issues they once again have put off until the last minute before planning to head home for the holidays. But first, Congress has to pass either another stop-gap spending measure to continue funding the government at the previous year’s levels, or an omnibus budget bill to fund the government for the rest of the fiscal year — or some combination of the two. It also has to address supplemental spending requests from the White House, including $5.6 billion in additional war funds to fight the Islamic State (also known as ISIS, or ISIL)…..........
December 8, 2014 – FDSTF Update

Task Force members –

1. **Next Meeting in January** – The next scheduled meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be January 15, 2015 at the Doubletree Hotel in Tallahassee beginning at 9:00 AM.

2. **Welcome to Two New Task Force Members** – The House Speaker has just announced his appointment of two new Task Force members – Representative Ritch Workman and Representative Clay Ingram – effective immediately. Rep. Workman returns to the Task Force where he previously served as Chair. These new members will assume duties on the Task Force from Rep. Jimmy Patronis and Rep. Matt Gaetz. On behalf of all Task Force members, we would like to welcome Rep. Clay Ingram as a new member and Rep. Ritch Workman as a returning member. We look forward to working with you and will welcome you in person at the January meeting!

3. **Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) Meeting This Week** – The Florida Defense Alliance will conduct its semi-annual membership meeting December 10-11 at the Hyatt Riverside in Jacksonville. Meeting agenda is attached.

4. **Attachments** –

   - NDAA – Language Supporting Florida Eastern Ranges/Space Coast
   - Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) Meeting Agenda

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**

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Articles of Interest:

BRAC –

**Justification Study for New BRAC Stripped out of Compromise Measure**


Defense Communities 360 © December 3, 2014

Leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services committees struck language calling for DOD to prepare a comprehensive assessment of the need for additional base closures from the compromise versions of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill unveiled this week. The provision, part of the House version of the annual policy bill, was viewed by analysts as the first step toward future congressional approval for a new BRAC round. At the same time, though, the two committees acknowledged the need for the Pentagon to update the analysis of excess capacity it performed prior to the 2005 round and stated that DOD already has the authority to prepare such a study. As a result, the significance of the committees’ decision to remove the original provision may merely be to put some distance between them and any actions taken to trigger the next base closure round............

DOD Budget–

**Lawmakers reach breakthrough on defense bill**


The Hill © December 1, 2014

By Martin Matishak
House and Senate lawmakers have reached a compromise on a joint fiscal year 2015 defense policy bill and hope to unveil the measure Monday night or early Tuesday morning, according to one of the chief negotiators. “We’ll have a statement on it. If it’s not out already, we’ll have a statement tomorrow morning,” Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.) told reporters late Monday. He said he and his House counterpart, Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.), had resolved “all” of their issues. Talks had been stalled over Defense Department budget proposals that raise out-of-pocket costs for military families on housing and Tricare, their healthcare plan. The House threw out those ideas in the legislation it approved earlier this year, but the Senate version, which never reached the chamber floor, includes them………

Pentagon budget efforts trapped by a cycle of ‘madness’

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/pentagon-budget-efforts-trapped-by-a-cycle-of-madness/2014/12/01/861a4a00-7654-11e4-bd1b-03009bd3e984_story.html

Washington Post © December 1, 2014

By Walter Pincus

Congress has 10 days to “stop the madness” — Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work’s description of the legislative process that he says has prevented the construction of a coherent defense budget. “This is the fifth time in five years that Congress has been unable to do their basic business: pass a budget on time so that we can plan,” Work said at the Center for Strategic and International Studies’ Fifth Annual Global Security Forum on Nov. 12. “We’re in the third straight year of zero real growth in defense budgets,” he said, noting that former defense secretary Robert Gates had argued that the military needed about 2 percent to 3 percent in real growth to maintain a balanced program……..

House, Senate Resolve Impasse over Authorization Bill

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/house-senate-resolve-impasse-over-authorization-bill/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=1aa9d85d8d-
Defense Communities 360 © December 1, 2014

Leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services committees reached agreement on a compromise fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill, after breaking an impasse over two Pentagon proposals intended to trim the cost of military compensation. Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, announced the breakthrough on Monday, but did not say how the issues had been resolved. “We compromised,” Levin told reporters Monday evening. “It takes two, not just to tango, but to compromise.” He indicated details would be released on Tuesday. The deal on the annual defense policy bill comes just in time for lawmakers to vote on it before the congressional session ends next week. If the compromise bill is released Tuesday, the measure could be brought to the House floor as soon as Thursday, reported CQ. The Senate likely would not vote until after the House approves the legislation……..

Panel Asks Congress to Repeal Sequestration

http://www.airforcemag.com/DRArchive/Pages/2014/December%202014/December%2003%202014/Panel-Asks-Congress-to-Repeal-Sequestration.aspx

Air Force Magazine © December 3, 2014

BY AUTUMN A. ARNETT

The House Armed Services Committee gathered Tuesday to discuss the 2014 National Defense Panel’s assessment of the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review. Outgoing HASC Chairman Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) has been critical of the QDR itself, but praised the NDP’s assessment as being “an excellent report” during his opening remarks. McKeon has blasted the review as being too political and not solution-oriented enough. In their remarks before the committee Tuesday, former undersecretaries of defense for policy Michele Flournoy and Eric Edelman, both members of the NDP, focused heavily on the detrimental effects of the Budget Control Act of 2011, calling it a “‘serious strategic mishap’ that has dangerously tied the hands of the Pentagon leadership.” “Sequestration, in our view, is a national security issue,” Flournoy said. “I would call it a threat to national security.” Referencing “Air Force pilots unable to fly sufficient hours to keep up their skills” among a list of things contributing to a “readiness crisis within our armed forces,” the two urged “Congress and the President [to] repeal the Budget Control Act immediately” and return at least to 2012-level defense spending proposals. “Sequestration obviously had a devastating impact on the defense budget, … but if you go back four years and look at what we were planning to spend on defense, we’re not even close,” said Ranking Member Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.).
Shutdown-Avoiding 'Cromnibus' Emerges in House - With Reid's Endorsement


Defense News © December 2, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT
A plan is emerging on Capitol Hill to avoid a government shutdown while also passing a full 2015 Pentagon spending measure, and a key senator is on board. Republican lawmakers trickled out of a morning caucus meeting in the Capitol basement and signaled they have decided to move a bill that would fund all but one federal agency for all of 2015. Excluded would be an appropriations measure that funds the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for all of fiscal 2015, the GOP’s first legislative response to President Barack Obama’s executive action on immigration. But included would be a bill to hand the Pentagon around $500 billion in base funding and likely over $60 billion in war funding, one House Appropriations aide said……..

Years in, Congress still stalled on sequestration fixes
http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/capitol-hill/2014/12/02/sequestration-hopes-again/19778749/

Military Times © December 2, 2014
By Leo Shane III
Lawmakers said Tuesday's House Armed Services Committee hearing on long-term defense strategy planning was a perfect goodbye for departing chairman Rep. Buck McKeon, given his big-picture focus on the military's future. But, perhaps more fitting, the hearing quickly turned into yet another event to bash sequestration, a recurring and frustrating theme for the committee over the last three years. Lawmakers and defense review panel members took turns predicting irreversible harm if Congress doesn't address sequestration in coming months, saying the budget cuts dig too deep into needed training and modernization accounts to keep the military ready for future fights…….
Defense Bill Not Guaranteed Smooth Path to Passage


Defense Communities 360 © December 3, 2014

The House is scheduled to take up the final version of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill today, after the House Rules Committee on Wednesday passed a rule to expedite its passage. While the House is expected to approve the compromise legislation unveiled earlier this week, its path in the Senate has been complicated by a decision by congressional leaders to append a package of almost 100 public lands provisions to the defense bill. Oklahoma Sen. Tom Coburn (R) has vowed to block the Senate’s attempt to pass the legislation next week over the land swaps, reported CQ. In a letter to Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), Coburn said he would “utilize all procedural options at my disposal as a United States Senator, including objecting to any unanimous consent agreements or time limitations, if [the authorization bill] contains extraneous public lands provisions.” ……………

John McCain: Defense cuts destroying U.S. military


Washington Times © December 3, 2014

Future chairman of the Senate Arms Services Committee Sen. John McCain says the continued sequestration cuts are destroying the United States military. Tell DC and The Washington Times caught up with Mr. McCain at the Foreign Policy Initiative at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday. “They are destroying the military. That’s the words of the chief of staff of the Army and the commandant of the Marine Corp. It’s doing irreparable damage to the ability to defend this nation,” he said. The Arizona Republican commented on the automated budget cuts and how they threaten U.S. national security………..

Nonmilitary provisions snag defense bill

http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/defense-bill-packed-with-non-military-matters/2014/12/03/b6eaa4e0-7b13-11e4-b821-503cc7efed9e_story.html
By Ed O'Keefe

A sweeping $521 billion package that authorizes the military to expand operations against the Islamic State and provides billions for the upgrade of military equipment hit a snag on Tuesday over something that has nothing to do with the military. Tucked inside the bill’s more than 1,600 pages is language creating six national parks, expanding nine others and establishing a bipartisan commission to explore building a national women’s history museum. It would even settle a long-simmering dispute in the District of Columbia by redesignating the downtown Pershing Park as a national World War I memorial while leaving a small white structure on the Mall dedicated only to D.C.’s war veterans..........

**Congress Pushes to Keep an 11 Carrier Navy in Budget Agreement**


DOD Buzz © December 3, 2014

By Kris Osborn Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 7:43 pm

Congress has taken steps to ensure that the Navy is able to operate and maintain 11 aircraft carriers by providing funding for the refueling and overhaul of the USS George Washington carrier. The House and Senate armed services committees included a measure in the National Defense Authorization Act to transfer up to $650 million from shipbuilding accounts for the refueling and complex overhaul of the USS George Washington. The continued service of the USS George Washington will keep the Navy’s carrier fleet at 11, something which had been the source of both speculation and debate. Many defense analysts said the Navy deliberately kept the proper funding for refueling
the George Washington out of their budget request because service leaders knew the White House was committed to 11 carriers..........

Changes in Defense Bill Should Spur Community-Installation Partnerships
Defense Communities 360 © December 5, 2014

Language in the compromise version of the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill should overcome military services’ concerns about taking advantage of the authority first enacted two years ago allowing installations to enter into intergovernmental support agreements with their host communities to share support services for most municipal functions. Since section 331 was enacted as part of the FY 2013 defense authorization bill, the services had expressed concerns that the new authority conflicts with existing acquisition rules and regulations. The new language transfers section 331 from a chapter of the U.S. Code that deals with procurement to a chapter focused on real estate, a move to emphasize that the shared services authority is focused on installations and should not be subject to the Federal Acquisition Regulation............

US House Sends Massive Pentagon Policy Bill to Senate
Defense News © December 4, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT

The US House on Thursday easily passed a massive Pentagon policy bill, sending to the Senate a bill that would clear the military to spend $559.2 billion in fiscal 2015. By a bipartisan vote of 300-119, the lower chamber approved a compromise version of the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that includes $495.5 billion in base funding and $63.7 billion in war funding. The measure had to be negotiated behind closed doors after a Senate Armed Services Committee-passed version stalled on the north side of the Capitol. The compromise version keeps alive the Air Force’s A-10 fleet and green-lights President Barack Obama’s plan to train and arm vetted Syrian rebels, among other things............
UCF, Navy partner to boost C. Fla. modeling and simulation industry


Jacksonville Business Journal © December 2, 2014

By Jim Carchidi

The University of Central Florida and the Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems Division have teamed up to enhance the modeling and simulation industry in Central Florida. UCF President John C. Hitt and Capt. Wes Naylor, commanding officer of the Naval Air Warfare Center, on Dec. 2 signed an agreement that not only creates more opportunities for UCF students interested in the modeling and simulation industry, but also expands collaborative work, the sharing of resources and the potential for joint projects between the college and the Navy……..

Talent pool attracts simulation conference to Orlando


Orlando Sentinel © December 3, 2014

By Marco Santana

Waymon Armstrong has a simple answer when asked to explain why one of the world's largest simulation and modeling conferences takes place in Orlando. It is all about talent. "What Silicon Valley is to tech startups, Orlando is to simulation," said Armstrong, CEO and president of Engineering & Computer Simulations in Orlando. "It's the place you want to be developing the technology and getting it out." The Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference, known as I/ITSEC, has been at the Orange County Convention Center since Monday and closes Thursday. Organizers say the conference set up shop in Orlando years ago because of strong resources in the field, from military-simulation companies to educational programs at University of Central Florida and other schools………..

Industry Pivots From New Simulators to Services
By AARON MEHTA

Amid a global downturn in defense spending, the training and simulation world is booming. But in a series of interviews at this year’s I/ITSEC conference here, executives for some of the world’s largest defense firms acknowledged that the sector’s market strategy is changing. The biggest market trend, they said, is a growing emphasis on providing services to customers. In the past decade, companies could feast on providing the technology of simulators and classroom education. Now, governments are buying less new equipment, which means industry needs to focus on upkeep and training opportunities in existing systems.

Mike Blades, an analyst with Frost & Sullivan who attended I/ITSEC, said the emphasis on providing services is a major industry trend.

MacDill AFB –

Defense bill impacts MacDill

The defense spending bill passed by the House of Representatives today authorizes a 10 percent budget increase for U.S. Special Operations Command, extended authority for it to carry out its missions and more money to keep its troops healthy. But it also includes reductions in benefits for troops and their families. It also includes funds for new aerial refueling tankers that, while not coming to MacDill Air Force Base, will allow additional KC-135 Stratotankers to be based there, according to U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor.

Eglin AFB –

The F-35 on Final Approach
BY JOHN A. TIRPAK

The huge, hyper-complex F-35 strike fighter program, rightfully described as the Pentagon's most expensive—and most capable—fighter aircraft project ever, is only seven months away from its most critical milestone and acid test: operational service. The program is tightly focused on giving the Marine Corps everything needed to declare initial operational capability with the F-35B variant by July 1, 2015. The list of essentials includes 10 identical aircraft with the 2B version of software, trained pilots and maintainers, an adequate stock of spare parts, and mission computers fully loaded with combat-relevant data. There's a countdown calendar in the program office's conference room, marking days to Marine Corps IOC, and for the Air Force's, 13 months later.........

Here's The Latest Setback For The Troubled F-35

By Yasmin Tadjdeh

While the number of training systems for the F-35 joint strike fighter program continues to grow, the simulators the services and foreign military customers use are unable to connect to each other, said the program’s executive officer on Dec. 2. “Right now I don’t have the capability to take an F-35B simulator at Yuma and connect it to an F-35A simulator at Hill Air Force Base, or eventually to an F-35C simulator for the Navy anywhere in the U.S.,” said Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan at the annual Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference.......
effective, immersive training experience for F-35 pilots and maintainers. The F-35 team is one of six winners, across industry and defense, honored for advancing modeling and simulation technologies. The 33 FW on Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, was re-designated under the Air Education and Training Command on Oct. 1, 2009, to establish the F-35 Lightning II training mission. The pilot and maintainer qualifications are accomplished through simulations to ensure efficient mission readiness........

Hurlburt Field –

801st SOAMXS earns DoD level award

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/hurlburt/801st-soamxs-earns-dod-level-award-1.407052

Northwest Florida Daily News © November 28, 2014

By SENIOR AIRMAN CHRISTOPHER CALLAWAY | 1st SOW Public Affairs

A Hurlburt Field maintenance squadron received the Secretary of Defense Maintenance Award for field-level medium category units, in Birmingham, Nov. 18. The 801st Special Operations Aircraft Maintenance Squadron received the award for superior aircraft maintenance during the period of Oct. 1, 2012, through Sept. 30, 2013. The squadron, comprised of more than 480 Air Commandos, maintained 16 CV-22 Osprey and nine MC-130H Talon II aircraft during that period........

Florida National Guard –

NDAA: US Army Apache Consolidation Blocked Until 2016

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20141203/DEFREG02/312030040/
Defense News © December 3, 2014

By JOE GOULD

Congress would authorize the active-duty Army to begin absorbing the Army National Guard AH-64 Apaches as part of the Army’s aviation restructuring proposal, but not until 2016, according to compromise National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) language revealed Tuesday evening. The bill bars the transfer of the Apaches in 2015, allowing as many as 48 aircraft to be moved the following year. In effect, the language allows the Army to begin its Aviation Restructuring Initiative (ARI) in fiscal 2016 but leaves a decision on its completion to the next Congress, according to a summary of the legislation obtained by Defense News. The move also limits any related personnel transfers and reductions of Army National Guard personnel related to the Apache before March 31, 2016........

Defense Industry –

Lockheed Develops Portable F-35 Trainer
http://www.defensenews.com/article/20141201/DEFREG02/312010012/Lockheed-Develops-Portable-F-35-Trainer

Defense News © December 1, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The F-35 joint strike fighter is a highly advanced, stealthy fighter that requires significant amounts of training to master. If program officials have their way, it will also be used by US forces and international allies around the globe. If that international dream becomes reality, keeping current on training becomes a problem. After all, there are only a few major training centers scheduled for the plane, and bringing pilots back from the field costs time and money. Enter Lockheed Martin’s new Deployable Mission Rehearsal Trainer (DMRT), which the company says will help keep pilots current as well as provide high-fidelity mission planning.......
Obama’s New Look Pentagon Trio of Carter, Work, Kendall Excites Defense Industry

President Barack Obama’s expected nomination of Ashton Carter to become the next defense secretary would give the Pentagon a strong, top tier team steeped in business, acquisition and budget issues. Assuming his confirmation, which is all but a given since he is highly regarded on Capitol Hill, Carter would form a trifecta, joining Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work and Under Secretary of Defense Frank Kendall, two highly regarded Defense Department managers. It’s a team that would dramatically improve the chances of chances to push major reform projects across the finish line, say defense watchers……..

Defense Acquisition Reformers Propose Streamlining Authority, Empowering the Workforce

By Charles S. Clark

With new chairmen on deck at both the House and Senate Armed Services panels, the National Defense Industrial Association on Tuesday released detailed recommendations for streamlining the Pentagon’s weapons buying process to curb waste, upgrade the acquisition workforce and take better advantage of industry innovation. The report, titled “Pathway to Transformation,” the product of eighth months of consultation with lawmakers, Defense Department leaders and industry specialists, arrives as Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., prepares to take the gavel for the new Republican majority at the Senate defense panel and Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas -- who has been working on acquisition reform for more than a year -- takes over from Howard “Buck” McKeon, R-Calif., on the House side………..

For Ash Carter, a Complicated Relationship With the Defense Industry
As Washington waits for the White House to nominate Ash Carter as the next defense secretary, questions remain as to how he would ultimately run the department, and how he would operate under an executive branch that famously likes to call the shots. And despite overall positive reviews from congressional lawmakers when news outlets reported Tuesday that Carter would receive the nod, he has a mixed history when it comes to relations with the major players in the defense industry. When he was deputy defense secretary in 2010, Carter and chief weapons buyer Frank Kendall kicked off one of the largest acquisitions reform packages in years — dubbed Better Buying Power (BBP) — which was focused on regulating the approximately $400 billion that the department spends annually on goods and services.

How Defense Offsets Help Drive the Global Defense Industry

Amid all the talk surrounding the Pentagon’s new Defense Innovation Initiative, also called the “third offset strategy,” we should be mindful of another type of offset that is in the forefront of defense companies’ growth strategies and increasingly becoming a C-suite agenda item. I refer to defense offset agreements, pledges that U.S. defense companies make to foreign entities—usually foreign governments—in order to secure their business.

Other Items of Interest
Carter nominated for defense job


Great Falls Tribune © December 5, 2014

President Barack Obama nominated Ashton Carter on Friday to replace Chuck Hagel as secretary of defense. Carter served as the deputy secretary of defense from October 2011 to December 2013. He also served as under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics from April 2009 until October 2011. During the Clinton administration, he was assistant secretary of defense for international security policy. In that role, he oversaw efforts to counter weapons of mass destruction, the U.S. nuclear arsenal and missile defense programs, policy regarding the collapse of the former Soviet Union. In 1994, he directed military planning during a crisis with North Korea’s nuclear weapons program and played a role in removing nuclear weapons from the territories of Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus, according to Harvard………

Reports: Ash Carter Tapped as Next Defense Secretary

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20141201/DEFREG02/312010024/Reports-Ash-Carter-Tapped-Next-Defense-Secretary

Defense News © December 1, 2014

By PAUL McLEARY

Ashton Carter, the former deputy defense secretary, will be nominated to be the next defense secretary to replace Chuck Hagel, sources have told CNN and The Associated Press. Carter served as the Pentagon’s No. 2 civilian official from October 2011 to December 2013, and had a stint as the Pentagon’s chief weapons buyer before that. He has mostly kept quiet since leaving the Pentagon. Described as an “uber wonk” by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey at Carter’s farewell ceremony last year, Carter was in the thick of the wartime rapid fielding initiatives of the past decade, playing a key role in procuring tens of thousands of hulking MRAPs to Iraq and Afghanistan in just about two years………
Forbes ‘Incredibly Optimistic’ On NDAA, Sequester — Not SecDef

http://breakingdefense.com/2014/12/forbes-incredibly-optimistic-on-ndaa-sequester-not-secdef/

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

In an era of partisan bitterness and gloom, Rep. Randy Forbes is feeling good. “Maybe I’m just too optimistic,” the chairman of the House subcommittee on seapower told me over the phone on his drive back to Washington last night. But after some positive feedback from GOP leadership, he said, “I’m incredibly optimistic” that Congress will not only manage to pass the annual National Defense Authorization Act — which it’s done for 52 straight years — but also to address the defense cuts known as sequestration. “If we can have the debate, we can win the debate,” he said………

Compromise NDAA Blocks A-10 Retirement, OKs White House’s Syrian Rebels Plan


By JOHN T. BENNETT

House and Senate negotiators have agreed on a Pentagon policy measure that blocks A-10 retirements and greenlights plans to arm Syrian rebels, a measure that should hit the House floor this week. Senior aides from the House and Senate Armed Services committees told reporters Tuesday a compromise 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) would clear the military to spend $519 billion (including $19 billion for the Energy Department) in base funds and $63.7 billion for America’s conflicts. The Air Force had proposed retiring its A-10 attack plane fleet to save billions over the jets’ remaining life. But lawmakers rejected the idea, saying, among other arguments, the planes are needed now in Iraq.
BRAC Offers Growth Opportunity for Ft. Rucker, Local Advocacy Group Says

Defense Communities 360 © December 4, 2014

The quality of life and other economic factors in southeastern Alabama make Fort Rucker a prime candidate for mission growth in a future base closure round, according to a leader of the installation’s local support group. Rodney Wolfe, chairman of Friends of Fort Rucker, cited the low cost of living, outstanding schools and highly trained workforce in Alabama’s Wiregrass region as examples of community assets that play a role in base closure decisions made by the Pentagon. “With the proper planning and preparation that is in place, BRAC could bring about the opportunity for growth at Fort Rucker,” he told the Coffee County Republican Women, reported the Southeast Sun..........

House Passes US Coast Guard Bill

Defense News © December 3, 2014

By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

The House voted overwhelmingly late Wednesday to approve a policy bill for the US Coast Guard, 413-3. The bill now moves to the Senate where, as of late Thursday, it has yet to be scheduled for floor action. Legislators remain hopeful, however, that the upper house will vote on the bill before it closes out this year’s session. The House bill, formally dubbed the Howard Coble Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014, is also known as the Coast Guard Reauthorization Bill. Funding for the Coast Guard is included as part of the much larger
Department of Homeland Security budget request. But Congress, in an effort to give the service some specific attention, crafts an annual policy bill to address specific service issues……..

Why Eel Drones Are the Future of Naval Warfare


Defense One © December 4, 2014

By Patrick Tucker

In the decade ahead, unmanned underwater vehicles, or UUVs, may have the same sort of disruptive effects on militaries as their flying counterparts. More than 12 countries are at work on undersea robots, which some militaries, including the United States, use to check for mines, map the sea floor and collect weather data. There’s no reason they couldn’t be used to defend battleships from small boats or even carry out attacks on enemy divers. But what will they look like? A team of researchers from Singapore led by Jianxin Xu recently debuted a robotic eel design prototype that could signal the future of undersea warfare……

Congressional Block on Tanker Retirements Could Delay KC-46

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20141207/DEFREG02/312070010/Congressional-Block-Tanker-Retirements-Could-Delay-KC-46

Defense News © December 7, 2014

By AARON MEHTA

The KC-46A Pegasus tanker is one of the three major recapitalization priorities for the Air Force. But with Congress moving to block retirement of older tankers, the Pegasus could find itself short on maintainers as it attempts to come online. The core of the issue begins with the battle between the Air Force and Congress over the A-10 close-air support plane, and the future of its maintainers. The service is arguing that the Warthog
needs to be retired quickly in order to move those maintainers over to the F-35 and have them ready to go for the joint strike fighter’s operational date of August 2016……

Installations, Operational Energy Posts at DOD to Merge under Authorization Bill


Defense Communities 360 © December 7, 2014

The Pentagon’s top installations and environment position would be merged with the department’s operational energy chief post, under the compromise fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill unveiled last week. The new position would be called the assistant secretary of defense (ASD) for energy, installations and environment. The combined organization would “equally prioritize” the functions of the deputy undersecretary of defense (DUSD) for installations and environment with the ASD for operational energy plans and programs, according to the joint explanatory statement accompanying the annual policy measure……
Task Force Members --

1. **Next Meeting in January** – The next scheduled meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be January 15, 2015 at the Doubletree Hotel in Tallahassee beginning at 9:00 AM.

2. **Attachment** – NDAA – Florida excerpts

Regards, BG.

**Bruce Grant**  
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Articles of Interest:

**BRAC** –

**To Avoid BRAC Fate, Purchase Leased Buildings, Orlando Officials Say**


Defense Communities 360 © December 18, 2014

To ensure Orlando does not lose its defense simulation cluster, state funds should be used to purchase the buildings where those organizations are now leasing space, industry officials told a regional economic development group this week. Thomas Baptiste, CEO of the National Center
for Simulation, told the Central Florida Partnership that he fears DOD could end its leases in Orlando and move to other federal or military sites that have spare capacity. “The risk is that the Team Orlando workforce has outgrown the infrastructure,” he said, reported WOFL Fox 35 Orlando. “I’m going to tell you today, there will be another round of BRAC. As the other services get smaller, there are empty federal buildings all over this nation that could house pieces and parts of Team Orlando, and undermine the fabric that drives this $5 billion industry,” Baptiste said……..

DOD Budget–

An Armed Services Chairman's Final Plea: Stop Failing the Military, End Sequestration

http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2014/12/05/an_armed_services_chairmans_final_plea_stop_failing_the_military.html

Real Clear Defense © December 5, 2014

By Rep. Buck McKeon

I hope sometime next year a compromise can come to this floor that will end sequestration. There isn’t some magical solution that Republicans can support and the President can sign without sacrifice on both sides. When that solution comes, it will be a tough vote on both sides. For some of my colleagues, it might be a fatal vote. I pray that you will hold this thought in your hearts when that vote comes: Remember the great sacrifice our troops are making around the world. Right now, they are walking patrol in the mountains of Afghanistan. They are at sea within missile range of Iran. They are flying wingtip-to-wingtip against Russia bombers over the North Sea. They are nose to nose with the North Koreans. They are sweating in the equatorial heat of Africa, fighting a horrible disease. They are standing on the sand of Iraq, risking everything against a brutal enemy………

‘CRomnibus’ Clears House in Close Vote

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/cromnibus-clears-house-in-close-vote/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=00471354d7-
After almost collapsing due to Democratic opposition, the $1.1 trillion omnibus spending bill passed the House Thursday night 219-206, averting what likely would have meant Congress passing a short-term continuing resolution (CR) allowing Republicans to have the last word on fiscal 2015 appropriations early next year. The House also passed a two-day CR to give the Senate time to debate the spending package, as the existing stopgap was set to run out at midnight Thursday. The Senate was expected to pass the two-day CR before midnight to avoid a government shutdown. The chamber planned to take up the year-long spending bill beginning on Friday…………

Lawmakers move to restore commissary funding

By Karen Jowers
Lawmakers have rejected a White House request to start reducing funding for commissaries, and instead have restored $190 million. In the budget resolution compromise announced Tuesday, the House and Senate Appropriations committees agreed to that decision, pending the report due to Congress Feb. 1 from the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission. The bill must be voted on by the full House and Senate. In their original budget request, Pentagon officials had proposed cutting $200 million from the Defense Commissary Agency budget that funds about 245 stores on military installations around the world, part of a three-year plan that would bring the annual commissary budget down from about $1.3 billion to just $400 million………..

After Dramatic Day, House Approves $554B for Pentagon

By JOHN T. BENNETT
The US House on Thursday narrowly approved a $1 trillion government-wide spending bill, but only after shouting on the floor, the changing of votes and arm-twisting behind closed doors. The massive spending bill was only unveiled Tuesday evening by congressional leaders, including several controversial provisions that nearly wrecked it. The measure, which now moves to the Senate, includes $554 billion for the Pentagon. The final vote was 219-206. The House also passed a two-day continuing resolution that should pass the Senate by vote Thursday night. That will keep the government open while the Senate works through its procedures on the bill……..

FY’15 Omnibus Spending Bill Crosses the Finish Line


Defense Communities 360 © December 14, 2014

Congress on Saturday night wrapped up work on fiscal 2015 appropriations for all agencies except for the Department of Homeland Security, after the Senate cleared the $1.1 trillion “CRomnibus” spending package 56-40. President Obama has indicated he will sign the spending package — new funding blueprints for 11 of the 12 annual appropriations titles through Sept. 30, 2015, and a continuing resolution (CR) for Homeland Security through Feb. 27 — by Wednesday when the current stopgap runs out, reported CQ. The good news for the Pentagon is it will be funded through an individual spending bill rather than a CR for the remainder of the fiscal year. The legislation contains about $554 billion for defense and intelligence programs, including war operations, but a scaled-back budget for military construction……..

FY’16 Appropriations Expected to Follow More Torturous Path

http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/fy16-appropriations-expected-to-follow-more-torturous-path/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=0bb180e5a-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-0bb180e5a-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#

Defense Communities 360 © December 16, 2014
The fiscal 2015 omnibus spending package cleared by Congress this past week experienced its share of twists and turns as elements of both parties attempted to remove objectionable provisions, but on the whole its passage represented a mostly bipartisan process that likely won’t be duplicated in the 114th Congress. Negotiations over the “CRomnibus” did not focus on spending allocations because that issue already had been settled last year as part of the budget deal between Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.) and Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) that relaxed the defense and non-defense spending caps for FY 2014 and 2015.

Defense authorization bill heads to White House

Army Times © December 12, 2014

By Leo Shane III, Staff writer

Senate lawmakers finalized work on the $584.2 billion annual defense authorization bill on Friday, putting in place a 1 percent pay raise for troops starting in January and limiting growth in housing allowance rates. The legislation, which President Obama is expected to sign into law in coming days, drew criticism from outside military advocates for the compensation trims, but it also ensures that authorization for a host of pay and other programs will continue without interruption into 2015. This marks the 53rd consecutive year in which Congress has passed a defense authorization bill, but this time the measure faced a bumpy passage process in a lame-duck session.

MacDill AFB –

New command formed in effort to defeat Islamic State

Tampa Bay Times © December 8, 2014

A new command has been created to oversee U.S. and coalition operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria that is based overseas, a task that formerly fell to U.S. Central Command chief Gen. Lloyd Austin III. Combined Joint Task Force — Operation Inherent Resolve is commanded by Army Lt. Gen. James Terry. Officials of the new command declined to say Monday where overseas the new headquarters is located, though some published reports place it in Kuwait. It is unclear why the change came about or what it means exactly. A spokesman for
the new command referred the *Tampa Bay Times* to a news release announcing the command, but that statement contained few details………

**Defense Budget Cuts Ground MacDill AirFest**


The Ledger © December 16, 2014

By SHARON KENNEDY WYNNE, TAMPA BAY TIMES

Defense budget cuts have canceled MacDill Air Force Base's popular Tampa Bay AirFest next year, and even a 2016 air show "isn't set in stone," a MacDill spokesman said. The free on-base event, which always draws large crowds, was called off in 2013 in the face of federal budget cuts when both the Thunderbirds and the Navy Blue Angels flying groups were grounded. In March, the Thunderbirds and the newly renamed Tampa Bay AirFest returned with fewer military aircraft and more civilian fliers and stunt pilots filling the gap………..

**Eglin AFB –**

**Eglin’s F-35 fuel trucks to remain green**


Northwest Florida Daily News © December 9, 2014

By KELLY HUMPHREY | Daily News

While it gets plenty hot on the flight line in Florida, apparently it’s not hot enough to interfere with refueling the F-35. That’s a good thing, because other bases that house the state-of-the-art fighter jet are running into problems. At Luke Air Force Base in Arizona and Edwards Air Force Base in California, desert temperatures have been known to exceed 110 degrees. The F-35 has a fuel temperature threshold, and may malfunction if its fuel temperature is too high. At the desert bases, the decision has been made to repaint the dark green, heat-absorbing fuel tankers. ……..
Hurlburt Field –

Secretary of the Air Force to visit Hurlburt


Northwest Florida Daily News © December 16, 2014

By KELLY HUMPHREY | Daily News

Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James will visit Northwest Florida today to present the Air Force Cross medal to a local special operations pararescueman. Master Sgt. Ivan Ruiz is being honored for his extraordinary heroism while saving the lives of two wounded teammates on Dec. 10, 2013, during an operation in Afghanistan. The Air Force Cross is the nation's second highest award for heroism. James is the highest ranking official to visit a local military base since Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel stopped by Eglin Air Force Base in July.

A former assistant secretary of defense during the Clinton administration, James is a veteran of the defense industry. She was the president of the Technical and Engineering Sector at Science Applications International Corporation when President Obama appointed her to her current position in 2013………..

1ST SOW to get new commander

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/military/top-story/1st-sow-to-get-new-commander-1.414039

Northwest Florida Daily News © December 15, 2014

By KELLY HUMPHREY | Daily News

On Jan. 6, Col. William West, commander of the 1st Special Operations Wing and the installation commander at Hurlburt, will be handing over command of the wing to Col. Sean Farrell, current commander of the 27th Special Operations Group at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M. West, who assumed command of the 1st SOW in July 2013, is
responsible for preparing Air Force special operations forces for missions worldwide in support of Army, Navy and Marine forces, as well as special operators from allied countries. An ROTC graduate of Texas Tech University, he received his commission in 1989. He has served as a special operations commander at the squadron and group level, and as the commander of the Combined Joint Special Operations Air Component in Afghanistan............

NAS Jacksonville –

Omnibus appropriations bill to benefit Northeast Florida defense, port


Jacksonville Business Journal © December 15, 2014

By Jensen Werley

The Omnibus Appropriations Bill for the next fiscal year is expected to benefit the Jacksonville Port Authority and military bases in Northeast Florida. "The $3.15 million in the Omnibus to complete the Preconstruction, Engineering, and Design Phase (PED) of the St. Johns River dredging puts JAXPORT in the strongest position ever to begin construction," said Congressman Ander Crenshaw in a statement. "That's a 'win-win' for economic growth and job creation and an achievement that would not be possible without passage of this legislation." .......

NS Mayport –

Mayport's newest ships ready for deployment


WOKV © December 10, 2014
By Stephanie Brown

It’s been only four months since the USS Iwo Jima and USS Fort McHenry joined the USS New York at their new home Naval Station Mayport, but a quick turnaround has them heading back out to sea. Collectively, the ships make up an Amphibious Ready Group which deploys together. The USS Iwo Jima and USS New York are leaving December 11th for a seven month deployment. The USS Fort McHenry will join them later in the deployment………..

**USS Samuel B. Roberts, among Navy's last frigates, returns to Mayport after final deployment**


Florida Times-Union © December 16, 2014

By Steve Patterson

Danger and history traveled close by the USS Samuel B. Roberts for generations. The ship’s namesake was a Navy coxswain killed during World War II’s Battle of Guadalcanal, and the first vessel carrying his name sank during combat in the Pacific before the war ended....

**New destroyer heading to Mayport in 2016 could protect littoral combat ships in dangerous waters**


Florida Times-Union © December 17, 2014

By Clifford Davis

The First Coast will be an unlikely beneficiary of rising tensions in the waters between China and Japan. In a high-profile move to add more American Navy muscle to the Western Pacific, the Navy announced it is sending two more destroyers capable of defending against possible Chinese ballistic missile attacks to its 7th Fleet based in Yokosuka, Japan. In a multi-ship swap, the Aegis missile-equipped destroyer USS Lassen, with its crew of more than 300 sailors, will leave its forward-deployed base in Japan and keep the total number of Mayport destroyers at four………..
Tyndall AFB –

DOT plans flyover on State 22 from Tyndall Parkway


News Herald © December 11, 2014

By BEN KLEINE

The Florida Department of Transportation’s tentative plan for State 22 is to widen the highway by four lanes and to connect its eastbound section with a left-turning flyover from Tyndall Parkway. The flyover, a center lane between two lanes each of southbound and northbound traffic on Tyndall, would begin at Martin Court and extend about a ¼ mile through the area where a CVS store is located now well past the Alamo Money Mart on the south side of the street. “I’m happy to see that DOT is taking a thorough look at an in depth plan,” Callaway City Manager Michael Fuller said. “The traffic on 22 is bad. Turning out of City Hall at rush hour, you’ll be sitting there awhile.”...........

Florida National Guard –

Army Details Future Controversial Helicopter Swap With the National Guard


Defense One © December 18, 2014

By Marcus Weisgarber
The U.S. Army is moving ahead with a controversial plan to shift helicopters between the active-duty and National Guard and buying new aircraft without competition, despite ongoing litigation trying to block it. Getting rid of military equipment is never easy. Over decades, planes, tanks and ships become engrained in military bases throughout the country, building vocal and powerful supporters in local communities, Congress and the defense industry. It makes any attempt to retire or move equipment to other bases difficult if not impossible………

Defense Industry –

**Major Adjustments Not Needed for Industry as Air Force Centralizes Installation Support**

[link](http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/major-adjustments-not-needed-for-industry-as-air-force-centralizes-installation-support/?utm_source=dc360&utm_campaign=804ca3221b-RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_04f8ff45e8-804ca3221b-55784537&ct=t(RSS_dc360_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN)#)

Defense Communities 360 © December 16, 2014

The Air Force’s move to centralize mission support functions under a new agency should not dramatically change how the service deals with industry, Col. Brian Duffy, vice commander of the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center (AFIMSC Provisional), told business representatives last week. “While some organizational changes may take place to align functions under AFIMSC, in general, the people and offices within the Air Force that small businesses work with today remain the ones you will work with in the future,” Duffy said during the Society of Military Engineers Small Business Conference in Kansas City. The newly created AFIMSC will consolidate installation management functions that had been performed at 10 major commands, two direct reporting units and multiple field operating agencies. The center’s support capabilities will include security forces, civil engineering, base communications, logistics readiness, installation ministry programs, services and operational contracting………

**Pentagon Gets a Better Grip on Spending for Services Contracts**

[link](http://www.govexec.com/contracting/2014/12/pentagon-gets-better-grip-spending-services-contracts/101154/?oref=river)
By Charles S. Clark

Defense Department managers in fiscal 2013 came in $500 million under spending limits on contract services required by the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, a watchdog found, an improvement over the previous year, when departmental caps were exceeded by $1.72 billion. But more precision and consistency in multi-year data are needed to “budget and manage contract services spending,” the Government Accountability Office reported on Thursday. Of all Pentagon components, only the Army broke the limits on the services contracts that the congressional Armed Services committees determined were needed to maintain the proper balance between the civilian and contract workforces…….

Other Items of Interest –

**LCS Lives: Hagel Approves Better Armed Upgrade**

http://breakingdefense.com/2014/12/lcs-lives-hagel-approves-bigger-gunned-upgrade/

Breaking Defense © December 11, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

The controversial Littoral Combat Ship dodged a big torpedo today, when outgoing Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel approved the Navy’s plan for a larger, better armed and better protected version of the ship. Critics had called for a radical redesign or an entirely new ship. The “modified LCS” simply adds new weapons, electronics, and armor to the two existing LCS variants for an additional $60-$75 million per ship. “After rigorous review and analysis, today I accepted the Navy’s recommendation to build a new small surface combatant (SSC) ship based on upgraded variants of the LCS,” Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said in a statement early this evening. “The new SSC will offer improvements in ship lethality and survivability, delivering enhanced naval combat performance at an affordable price.”……….
The Pentagon’s Slush Fund: How the military gets what it wants—even when it’s not in the budget.


Politic© December 11, 2014

By JULIA HARTE

What does an $810 million U.S. defense “initiative” to “reassure” Europe in the wake of Vladimir Putin’s Crimean land grab have to do with emergency war needs in Afghanistan and Iraq? Absolutely nothing. So why does that hefty sum appear in the military’s budget, now pending on Capitol Hill, meant to support operations in those two Middle Eastern countries? This is not how America’s war budget—otherwise known as the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) fund—is supposed to work. The White House in 2011 said that the OCO, originally established in 2001 under a different name, was just for “temporary and emergency requirements” for fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Now, many experts are saying that its continued use is emblematic of a five-year collapse in Washington fiscal discipline……

No Draft Required: States Increasingly Volunteer to Support Military Installations, ADC Report Reveals


Defense Communities 360 © December 19, 2014

State support for military installations has grown steadily over the past two decades, marked by a sharp increase in the number of states forming organizations dedicated to the preservation and promotion of their bases, along with an expansion in the amount and kinds of support invested, according to a new report from the Association of Defense Communities. Only a few states had military affairs organizations prior to 1990, but now 34 states have such organizations. Much of the growth has occurred since the 2005 round of base closures, with the looming threat to military installations resulting from stringent spending caps on the Pentagon’s budget and
significant excess capacity in DOD’s infrastructure accounting for the heightened awareness on the state level of the importance of defense facilities. The findings in *State of Support: Highlights of State Support for Defense Installations* are based on responses from the leaders of 23 state military affairs organizations that participate in ADC’s State Advisers Council. State organizations take on a gamut of responsibilities to carry out their primary mission serving as a focal point to coordinate statewide efforts for promoting, preserving and providing mission support to military installations; attracting new missions; serving as the liaison between state government and installation officials; and fostering growth of the state’s defense sector………
Task Force Members --

1. **Next Meeting in January** – The next scheduled meeting of the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be January 15, 2015 at the Doubletree Hotel in Tallahassee beginning at 9:00 AM. Draft meeting agenda is attached.

2. **Call In Number for Task Force Meeting** -- Call in number: 800-501-8979  Access Code: 8784566

3. **Attachments**
   - FDSTF – Grant Contract Extensions
   - TPG Monthly Report for December
   - Draft Agenda for Task Force Meeting
   - Notes from TPG Bi-Weekly Conference Call

Regards, BG.

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

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Articles of Interest:

DOD Budget–
With Final FY15 Defense Budget, the Devil’s in the Details


Council on Foreign Relations Blog © December 18, 2014

by Janine Davidson

After a process that could generously be described as touch-and-go, President Obama signed a $1.1 trillion dollar omnibus and continuing resolution spending package—the “cromnibus”—on Tuesday evening. It obligates $554 billion dollars for defense spending, which includes $490 billion for the base Pentagon budget and another $64 billion to the Overseas Contingency Fund (OCO). As Military Times reports, this marks an $18 billion dollar decrease from FY14—although the entirety of that reduction comes from a reduced OCO concurrent with the drawdown in Afghanistan. This top-line figure lines up almost exactly with President Obama’s original March request……..

The Drop in Oil Prices Could Save the Pentagon Billions of Dollars


Defense One © December 19, 2014

By Marcus Weisgerber

The sharp decline in crude oil prices over the past five months could end up saving the Pentagon billions of dollars in the coming years, freeing up the money for weapon purchases and improving military readiness, some experts say. Since June, the price of crude oil per barrel is down more than 40 percent. But while these low prices could be seen as a positive at the Defense Department, they could hurt U.S. weapon sales to oil-rich Middle Eastern countries, which have been the prime target of American defense companies looking to make up for a decline in Pentagon sales. It is also possible the drop in oil prices trigger further instability in the volatile region, leading to more American forces deploying there……..

Joint Chiefs warn: 'We can't do more with less'

The nation's top military officer praised the troops on Monday in his annual holiday message while pressuring Congress to accept the “hard choices” he says are needed under a tightened budget. "The Joint Chiefs and I remain concerned that we still lack support for the reforms necessary to ensure that you are combat ready and to preserve military options for our nation," Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in a video. "Simply said, we can't do more with less. Sequestration, if fully implemented, will diminish our advantages over our adversaries."........

Quality-of-Life Milcon Projects Shortchanged in Budget, Appropriators Point Out


Defense Communities 360 © December 23, 2014

Cuts in the services’ military construction budgets to free up funds for operational readiness are placing the needs of service members in peril as essential quality-of-life milcon requirements such as child development centers, physical fitness facilities and troop housing are going unfulfilled, according to the House and Senate Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations subcommittees. “Deferral of needed QOL [quality-of-life] investment can adversely impact troop readiness and jeopardize the health and safety of service members,” according to the joint explanatory statement accompanying the FY 2015 omnibus spending bill signed into law last week by the president.......
By Jim Turner - News Service of Florida

Space Florida is trying to land a couple of private companies, including one that could service human flights, by promising to upgrade two launch pads at Cape Canaveral. Board members of Space Florida, the state’s aerospace arm, have agreed to put up a combined $6.4 million as part of two matches with the state Department of Transportation for improvements at Launch Pad 36 and Launch Pad 41. “I want to see the space program coming back to life in each of its different forms,” board member Jesse Biter said during a teleconference meeting last week.

MacDill AFB –

Task force denies reports U.S. engaged in ground combat with Islamic State


Tampa Tribune © December 22, 2014

By Howard Altman | Tribune Staff

Contrary to reports coming out of Iraq, U.S. troops have not engaged in ground combat with the Sunni insurgent group Islamic State, according to the task force in charge of running daily operations in the U.S. and coalition mission known as Operation Inherent Resolve. “We have seen the recent media stories and there has been absolutely no contact between U.S. military forces on the ground and ISIL (Islamic State) near al Asad airbase or anywhere else in Iraq,” said Gary Boucher, a spokesman for the Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve. “The reports are unfounded. Throughout the past week, Iraqi security forces have had engagements with ISIL in the vicinity of al Asad Airbase. However, U.S. forces were not a part of those engagements.”

Eglin AFB –

UPDATE 1-Lockheed meets 2014 target for 36 F-35 deliveries-Pentagon

http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/12/22/lockheed-martin-fighter-idINL1N0U621220141222
Reuters © December 23, 2014

Lockheed Martin Corp met its target of delivering 36 F-35 fighter jets to the U.S. government in 2014, paving the way for the firm to collect most of the associated performance fees, a spokesman for the Pentagon's F-35 program office said Monday. The U.S. government on Monday accepted the last of the 36 jets due to be delivered by Lockheed this year, said Joe DellaVedova, spokesman for the F-35 program office. The company accelerated deliveries in the final months of the year to meet the target despite weeks of delays after flight groundings were imposed following engine failure on an Air Force jet in June..........

NS Mayport –

Part of $132M shipboard electronics system job to be done in Mayport


Jacksonville Business Journal © December 19, 2014

By Jensen Werley

A small portion of work connected to a $132 million contract for shipboard electronic systems will be done in Mayport. The contract is a $26 million extension to Raytheon Company Integrated Defense Systems, based in San Diego California. Raytheon will provide life cycle engineering and support services for LPD 17 class integrated shipboard electronic systems........

Florida National Guard –

Army, Guard Set On Collision Course For 2015


Breaking Defense © December 19, 2014

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.
A major battle is brewing between the regular Army and National Guard. While Congress has frozen the planned transfer of the Guard’s Apache gunships to active-duty units, the Army is already taking steps that may make it much harder to keep the helicopters in the Guard. The Aviation Restructure Initiative calls for all Apaches to be moved from the Guard to the active Army. That proved so controversial that Congress, in the recently-passed National Defense Authorization Act, created a National Commission on the Future Structure of the Army to evaluate not only ARI but the overall balance between active, Guard, and Reserve forces. In the meantime, the NDAA bans any Apache transfers in ’15 and limits transfers in ’16 to 48 aircraft. Of course, the commissioners need to get appointed, summon witnesses, hear testimony, reach consensus and write their report between now and February 1st, 2016……

Independent Commission to Consider Army Size, Force Mix under Authorization Bill


Defense Communities 360 © December 23, 2014

An independent commission will make recommendations regarding the proper end strength of the Army and mix between its active and reserve components by Feb. 1, 2016, under the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill President Obama signed into law last week. H.R. 3979 follows language in the House and Senate Armed Services versions of the annual policy bill calling for an eight-member National Commission on the Future of the Army. The members are slated to be appointed by the president and Congress within 90 days. Support for creating a commission to study the Army’s future structure gained momentum on Capitol Hill after the service released its plan earlier this year to trim the size of the National Guard below 350,000 soldiers and shift its fleet of 192 AH-64 Apache attack helicopters to the active component. The commission and its role would bear a strong resemblance to the panel the Armed Services committees created two years ago to study the balance between the Air Force’s active and reserve components……

Army's Aviation Restructure Unhindered By Congressional Block

Congressional language limiting Apache consolidation in fiscal 2015 won't derail the Army's controversial Aviation Restructuring Initiative (ARI), already underway, Army officials said. Officials spearheading the effort, which has been challenged by the National Guard and its advocates, were confident the plan would proceed, saying the service has already taken broad steps toward it, canceling training, transferring air frames and shuffling budget dollars. The point is we are moving out with implementation," Col. John Lindsay, the director for Army aviation in the service's operations, plans and policy arm. "Aviation restructuring is happening, and if you haven't heard too much about it, it's because most if not all of the change is happening in the active component." 

National Guard’s advocate presses for representation on panel
http://thehill.com/policy/defense/227897-national-guards-advocate-presses-for-representation-on-panel

An advocate for the National Guard is urging the Obama administration not to shirk the service when an independent board considers making changes to Army policies. The National Commission on the Future of the Army was created by a defense bill approved by Congress this month. It will examine and evaluate the Army’s makeup, training and deployment, and offer recommendations on how to reshape the service. That could have major implications for the National Guard, which has implored Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel not to reduce the size of its force. Retired Maj. Gen. Gus Hargett, president of the National Guard Association, said the commission “should have an understanding of each Army component and possess experience in cost and capability analysis.” 

NAS Whiting Field –
Bahlau takes command of NASWF as Coughlin retires


Santa Rosa Press Gazette © December 22, 2014

By Aaron Little

With Santa Rosa County and Baldwin County Commissioners, state representatives, distinguished military personnel, friends, and family in attendance, Captain Matthew Coughlin was relieved of his three-year command of Naval Air Station Whiting by Captain Todd Bahlau, a Jackson, Michigan native. During his speech before the assembly, Coughlin said, “Most of you are aware that today’s ceremony also doubles as my retirement.” Welcoming Bahlau to not only his new command, but Santa Rosa County, Coughlin said, “You’re gonna love this place. Whether you are judging the rubber ducky contest on the Blackwater River, or judging the most prestigious floats at the Christmas parade, or working more on professional matters, this will become your new home. You will be welcomed beyond your wildest imagination. I was proud to call this home and I will continue to call it my home.”

Other Items of Interest –

Senior Republicans to McConnell: Move Carter Nomination Before AG

Defense News © December 18, 2014

By JOHN T. BENNETT
Two senior Republicans want the incoming majority leader to take up Ash Carter’s nomination before an expected more contentious one for US attorney general. Carter’s nomination to replace Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel came too late for the Democratic-controlled 113th Senate to address it. That means a GOP-run upper chamber will take it up in January. Also on the chamber’s docket when senators return in the new year will be Loretta Lynch’s nomination to become attorney general. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., the incoming Senate minority leader, has yet to state which nomination he prefers to bring up first on the floor.

F-35 Program Weighs Security Concerns as It Creates Global Supplier Base
The U.S. military's most technologically sophisticated aircraft was designed to overwhelm enemies in combat but also as a novel multinational business consortium. A dozen countries so far have signed up for the F-35 either as buyer or as co-producer. Six nations recently were selected to provide depot maintenance for future F-35 fleets based in Europe and Asia. Pentagon officials and executives from F-35 manufacturer Lockheed Martin Corp. have hailed global partnerships as essential to the success of the program and, as stated in Lockheed's marketing materials, as a model for "unprecedented technology transfer and innovation that is invaluable to the development of the F-35." 

KC-46A Tanker: First Test Flight Next Week

The first flight of a KC-46A test model is expected to occur before the end of the year, a major, albeit delayed, milestone for the Air Force’s tanker replacement program. The first test flight of a Boeing 767-2C, a test version of the KC-46A without the refueling boom and other tanker equipment, is currently scheduled for just after Christmas, a source tells Defense News. Assuming that test flight occurs without an issue, the next step would be to fly a KC-46A with the tanking equipment on it. That test flight remains on track for a Spring flight, the source added.

A closer look at the 'Modified LCS'
By Christopher P. Cavas

The announcement Dec. 11 by the senior leadership of the Pentagon and US Navy that the Small Surface Combatant (SSC) will be a modified version of existing Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) was no surprise to most followers of this saga. What was surprising was the absence of any major changes to the ships. Here are the designs presented by the Navy that show what changes will be made to the designs of Lockheed Martin's Freedom (LCS 1)-class and Austal USA's Independence (LCS 2)-class ships. Both teams gave the Navy several options for what could be done with their designs — we show high-end illustrations of them next to what the Navy has chosen…….

Navy 2015: Congressional Clashes Over LCS, UCLASS & Carriers

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR.

Smooth sailing is not in the Navy’s forecast for the next year. The service faces big decisions on major programs, and we can expect clashes between Navy plans, congressional politics and budgetary realities on three of the biggest: the upgunned Littoral Combat Ship, the UCLASS armed drone, and the jewel in the Navy’s crown, the nuclear aircraft carrier. The fate of all three programs — and countless others — is tied up with the looming budget cuts known as sequestration. But this isn’t just another sequestration story. Each program carries its own unique controversies that may doom it regardless of whether the sequester is solved…….

Obama, Hagel Mark End of Operation Enduring Freedom

DOD News / Defense.gov © December 28, 2014

President Barack Obama and Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel each issued statements today marking the end of the combat mission in Afghanistan. After 13 years of combat
operations, Operation Enduring Freedom drew to a close today in a ceremony at the International Security and Assistance Force headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan. “Today's ceremony in Kabul marks a milestone for our country,” Obama said. “For more than 13 years, ever since nearly 3,000 innocent lives were taken from us on 9/11, our nation has been at war in Afghanistan. Now, thanks to the extraordinary sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, our combat mission in Afghanistan is ending, and the longest war in American history is coming to a responsible conclusion.”

Air Force Range Infrastructure Study Underway

By AARON MEHTA
The Air Force began a major study into the future of its test-range infrastructure, one which could decide how the service runs its live-flight testing for the next 20 years. Ed Chupein, chief for Air Force ranges, airspace and operations sustainment, told Defense News that a review is underway to provide Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh with options on how to revitalize the training infrastructure. "At a very high level, that's to see where this enterprise fits in with all the other enterprises, whether it's manpower installations, weapon systems, and its used for very high level guidance and then drops down and pushes down," Chupein said.