

Defense *advocate*

BRAC Realized at Fort Lee

On January 9, 2009 Gov. Tim Kaine joined Army and other leaders in ceremonially opening Fort Lee's Sustainment Center of Excellence. The \$49 million headquarters, completed on time and on budget, is the first major BRAC project completed on the East Coast. Also in the works at the Prince George County installation is a new Logistics University, Ordnance School and other BRAC-necessitated construction expected to total \$1.2 billion.

The new 218,500-square-foot building is also another step in the enormous economic boost that Fort Lee's growth will provide the region. The center will serve as the headquarters of Army logistics, and will oversee the training of soldiers in 185 different courses.



Fort Lee's new Sustainment Center of Excellence is the first major BRAC 2005 project completed on the East Coast. VNDIA photo.



Left: Maj. Gen. James Chambers, Gov. Tim Kaine, Pfc. Maria Morgenstern and Gen. Martin Dempsey cut the ribbon opening the Sustainment Center of Excellence at Fort Lee, January 9, 2009.

Maj. Gen. Chambers commands Fort Lee's Combined Arms Support Command, and Gen. Dempsey commands the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) at Fort Eustis. Pfc. Morgenstern, the youngest trainee at Fort Lee, represents the future of Army logistics. VNDIA photo.

Coming Events

February 9-11, 2009

Assoc. of Defense Communities Winter Forum
San Antonio, Texas
Contact: La-Shawn Maloy, (202) 942-9469/
lmaloy@defensecommunities.org

February 12, 2009

Navy Enhanced Use Lease Forum
San Antonio, Texas (following the ADC Winter Forum)
Contact: See Navy site (www.navyeu.com)

March 10, 2009

Virginia Military Advisory Council
Fort Lee, Va.
Contact: Office of Commonwealth Preparedness,
Wendy.Hoffman@governor.virginia.gov

March 19, 2009

Fort Monroe FADA Meeting
Richmond, Va.
Contact: FMFADA, (757) 637-7778/
jbaker@fmfada.com

March 19, 2009

Radford Army Ammunition Plant Restoration Board
Radford, Va.
Contact: Joy Case, (540) 731-5762

March 27, 2009

Hampton Roads Mil. & Fed. Facilities Alliance Meeting
Norfolk, Va.

April 15, 2009

VNDIA Quarterly Meeting
Washington, D.C.
Contact: Patrick Tremblay, (810) 545-5716/
ptremblay@YesVirginia.org

Welcome Aboard!

Retired Marine Corps Gen. Robert Magnus was recently appointed to the VNDIA board by Gov. Tim Kaine. Gen. Magnus served as the 30th Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps from September 2005 until his retirement in July 2008 after nearly 40 years of service.

Gen. Magnus is a graduate of the University of Virginia and Strayer College. His military education includes Naval Aviator Training, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, and the National War College.



Gen. Magnus. USMC Photo.

New Administration, New Defense Priorities

The White House posted a list of defense priorities on its website shortly after President Obama's inauguration. Highlights include: expand the Army by 65,000 soldiers and the Marine Corps by 27,000; greater investment in unmanned aerial vehicles and essential systems "like the C-17 cargo and KC-X air refueling aircraft;" replace aging ships and modernize existing platforms; and invest in smaller, more capable ships. (White House defense agenda: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/defense/>)

Not all big-ticket defense programs will remain intact, however. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates recently told the Senate Armed Services Committee that steady increases in defense spending over the last seven years will soon end. "One thing we have known for many months is that the spigot of defense spending opened by 9/11 is closing," Gates said. "With two major campaigns ongoing, the economic crisis and resulting budget pressures will force hard choices on this department."

Specific programs that may be affected were not singled out, but Gates listed efforts in each of the services that have experienced contract or performance problems, including the Army's Future Combat Systems and the Navy's Littoral Combat Ship.



The Lockheed Martin-designed USS Freedom (LCS 1) is commissioned in Milwaukee, Wis., Nov. 8, 2008. General Dynamics has designed its own littoral combat ship, and the Navy will commission two of each before picking one design for future ships. *US Navy photo.*

The Air Force has announced its short list of six locations for the headquarters of 24th Air Force, a new numbered Air Force focused on the cyber mission. Langley Air Force Base in Hampton is among the finalist. Officials say the two most important evaluation criteria are cyber numbered Air Force mission synergy and communication/bandwidth capabilities.

AF Cyber Command

In addition to Langley, the proposed bases are Barksdale Air Force Base, La.; Lackland AFB, Texas; Offutt AFB, Neb.; Peterson AFB, Colo.; and Scott AFB, Ill. Final base selection is expected by the end of June 2009.

HB 2529

The 2009 General Assembly is underway, and one piece of legislation will directly affect VNDIA's operations. House Bill 2529 adds the Secretary of Commerce & Trade to the VNDIA board, bringing the board from 17 to 18 members.

The VNDIA board currently works closely with the Secretary's office, a relationship founded on the incredible importance of Virginia's defense installations on the Commonwealth's economy, and on Gov. Kaine's designating his commerce & trade secretary, the Hon. Pat Gottschalk, as the primary cabinet member on BRAC issues.



Delegate Sickles

Sponsored by Delegate Mark Sickles of the 43rd District, the bill is supported by both the VNDIA board and Sec. Gottschalk as an example of good government.

DoD Secretaries to Extend

Each service branch secretary has agreed to Defense Secretary Robert Gates' request to stay in office for at least several weeks to help ensure the DoD's smooth transition to the Obama administration.

Army Secretary Pete Geren and Air Force Secretary Michael Donley have not announced a timeline for their stay, have confirmed their willingness to stay until their successors are named and confirmed by the Senate.

Navy Secretary Donald Winter has agreed to stay on the job until March 13.



Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates. *DoD photo.*

The Mayport Decision

On January 14, 2009 the Navy announced its official decision to port an aircraft carrier at Naval Station Mayport. The move had been fought by Virginia leaders, as it could cost as much as \$1 billion to upgrade the Jacksonville, Florida-area base, a move Virginia Senator Mark Webb calls “a luxury [the Navy] simply cannot afford.” The strategic need for such a move is also in question.

The decision came just days after the Navy's top resource official, Vice Adm. Barry McCullough, said the service is facing “the most challenging fiscal environment” in decades and it cannot afford to buy the ships and aircraft it needs to meet its 313-ship fleet requirement. McCullough added that he didn't know what level of funding would be received in the fiscal 2010 defense budget.

Gov. Kaine issued a statement calling the decision “disappointing and fiscally irresponsible.” The governor has spoken with both President Obama and Navy Secretary Donald Winter regarding his concerns, and has pledged to continue to fight the decision with Sen. Webb, Sen. Mark Warner and the Virginia congressional delegation.

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Contact Patrick Tremblay to subscribe or unsubscribe to the *Defense Advocate*.

The USS George H.W. Bush

On January 10, 2009 the Navy's newest carrier, and last of the *Nimitz*-class, was commissioned. The \$6.2 billion *USS George H.W. Bush* (CVN-77) was sponsored by Dorothy W. Bush Koch, daughter of the ship's namesake and sister of the outgoing president. The ceremony held at Naval Station Norfolk featured an impressive list of guests, including both presidents Bush, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Gov. Tim Kaine and Secretary of the Navy Donald Winter.

In a rare move, the ship was commissioned prior to being fully complete. The Navy expects to take delivery of the *Bush* in the first quarter of 2009. A home port for the *Bush* has not been announced.



Sailors stand at attention during the commissioning of the *USS George H.W. Bush* (CVN-77), Jan. 10, 2009. The F/A-18 Super Hornet aircraft belongs to the “Red Rippers” of NAS Oceana's VFA-11.
US Navy photo.