



A sentinal from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) stands watch at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

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Tomb of the Unknowns marks 100 years

DoD will mark the 100th anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia with a yearlong commemoration, officials announced.

The centennial commemoration, directed by the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act, will feature a series of events leading up to a ceremony at the tomb on Nov. 11.

Members of the public will be able to experience and participate in events at the cemetery and virtually.

"As the stewards of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, it's our honor to lead the centennial commemoration of this site," Karen Durham-Aguilera, executive director of Army National Military Cemeteries and Arlington National Cemetery, said in a statement. "ANC is using this cen-

tennial commemoration to explore and share with the public the history, meaning and evolution of the tomb."

The commemoration was inaugurated on Nov. 18, 2020, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the new Tomb of the Unknown Soldier exhibit at the cemetery's Memorial Amphitheater Display Room.

A time capsule was also installed in the cornerstone of the Memorial Amphitheater. Intended to be opened in 2121, the time capsule contains items relevant to the year 2020, such as letters from Army leaders, a COVID-19 mask, 2020 coins and stamps and ANC's employee newsletter, "Hallowed Grounds."

This year, official events include the release of a free educational module for students and lifelong learners of all ages, available here; interpre-

tive presentations, panels and other events led by Arlington National Cemetery historians and other experts on dates to be announced; and an official commemorative publication in October from the U.S. Army Center of Military History about the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

In November, events will include a ceremony during which visitors may place flowers onto the tomb plaza.

"This will be the first time in many years that the public will be allowed to walk across the tomb plaza and honor the unknowns at their gravesite," said Charles Alexander, superintendent of Arlington National Cemetery.

On Nov. 11, Veterans Day, there will be a full honors procession and a wreath-laying ceremony.

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Leaders urge military families to get COVID-19 vaccine

First lady Jill Biden, Dr. Anthony Fauci and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Gen. Mark Milley were among a slate of high-profile leaders to appear in a virtual town hall urging military families to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

The vaccines are “extremely promising” in saving lives and reducing the spread of the virus, the leaders said, as DoD continues to encourage troops and their loved ones to get the shot.

According to senior defense leaders, the percentage of service members declining to get the shot is about the same as the general population—around half, the Associated Press reported.

“Today, we’re here to talk about the COVID-19 vaccine and protecting the 2.3 million men and women who wear the cloth of our nation and, equally important, the 2.7 million military family members,” Milley said during the Feb. 4 virtual town hall hosted by Blue Star Families.

Milley, who appeared with his wife, Hollyanne, who is a nurse, noted that getting the vaccine is “a personal decision,” but also that the vaccines have been shown to be safe and effective.

Milley and other DoD leaders have received the vaccine publicly, in another effort to reassure the force.

DoD has reported more than 143,000 cases of COVID-19 among military personnel as it races to distribute immunizations.

Right now, the vaccine, which is be-



The COVID-19 vaccines are ‘extremely promising’ in saving lives and reducing the spread of the virus, leaders said. (U.S. ARMY/MARIA CAVINS)

ing distributed through a phased approach, is available to individuals 75 and older, health care providers, first responders, residents in long-term care facilities and essential personnel such as teachers and child care providers.

“We’re encouraging individuals to take the vaccine,” said Army Lt. Gen. Ronald Place, director of the Defense Health Agency.

Place said vaccinations will soon be open to beneficiaries who are 65 and older, including those “who live near [a military treatment facility] but don’t rely” on it for care.

Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Dis-

eases, said the speed of the vaccine development “is completely related to the extraordinary advances in scientific platform technology for vaccines,” he said, stressing that “no corners” were cut.

“We did not sacrifice safety, nor did we sacrifice scientific integrity,” he said.

The available vaccines were determined to be safe and effective by “independent bodies”—comprised of vaccinologists, scientists, immunologists and other independent professionals—that serve the American public, he said.

Visit the Military Health System for information on the vaccine.

Tomb centennial

From Page 1

Congress approved the burial of an unidentified American soldier from World War I in the plaza of Arlington National Cemetery on March 4, 1921, according to the cemetery’s website.

Sgt. Edward Younger, a World War I veteran who was wounded in combat, chose the Unknown Soldier from among four identical caskets.

The tomb, which stands atop a hill

overlooking Washington, has since come to symbolize the sacrifices of all U.S. service members.

Inscribed on the back of the tomb are the words: “Here rests in honored glory an American soldier known but to God.”

To the west of the sarcophagus are the crypts for an Unknown Soldier from World War II and the Korean War. A crypt designated for the Vietnam Unknown was dedicated on

Sept. 17, 1999.

In 1926, Congress established a military guard to protect the tomb.

Sentinels from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) assumed those duties on April 6, 1948, and they have maintained a constant vigil ever since.

For more information about the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier centennial commemoration, please visit www.arlingtoncemetery.mil.

Germany troop drawdown on hold amid global posture review by DoD



Soldiers with the 2nd Cavalry Regiment conduct M777A2 howitzer air assault training at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany. (U.S. ARMY/MARKUS RAUCHENBERGER)

A plan to move almost 12,000 U.S. troops out of Germany, including the Army's 2nd Cavalry Regiment, is on hold, President Joe Biden announced Feb. 4.

In a speech at the State Department, Biden said Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin will be "leading a global posture review of our forces so that our military footprint is appropriately aligned with our foreign policy and national security priorities."

He added, "While this review is taking place, we'll be stopping any planned troop withdrawals from Germany."

The review will look at "U.S. military footprint, resources, strategy and missions," Austin said.

"It will inform my advice to the commander in chief about how we best allocate military forces in pursuit of national interests," he said, adding that the review will be led by the acting undersecretary of defense for policy in close consultation with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

The withdrawal plan, announced July 29 by then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper, would have repositioned about 11,900 service members, with 6,400 troops returning to the U.S. and nearly 5,600 moving to other parts of Europe.

Once completed, the plan would cut the number of U.S. troops in Germany to 24,000.

Among those returning to the U.S. would be the nearly 4,500 soldiers of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, which has been stationed at Rose Barracks in Vilseck, Germany, since September 2006. In their place, the Army would start rotating Stryker units into the Black Sea region.

Moving troops farther east will help the U.S. "better align with great-power competition" while helping with distance challenges in case Russia makes some type of "aggressive action," Esper said at the time.

The Pentagon also planned to consolidate and move various headquarters in Europe. This included moving U.S. European Command and Special Operations Command Europe from Patch Barracks in Stuttgart, Germany, to Mons, Belgium, where NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe is located.

EUCOM has been at Patch Barracks since 1967.

Other moves included moving an Air Force fighter squadron and elements of a fighter wing to Italy, while canceling plans to relocate about 2,500 airmen from Mildenhall, U.K., to Germany.

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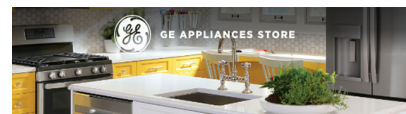
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Flat budgets threaten Army modernization, readiness

By Mark Haaland

The fiscal year 2022 federal budget request is not ready even though it was due to Congress on Feb. 1.

This is not unusual when we have a new president. Every new chief executive wants the budget to reflect the priorities they believe they were elected to carry out.

Fortunately, we do not expect dramatic changes to DoD's fiscal 2022

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budget request, but there will be some adjustments to reflect the priorities of the new administration and defense secretary.

For this year at least, we expect President Joe Biden to keep funding for national defense at about the same level. Inflation remains rather tame, but important increases for pay and



AUSA's advocacy priorities include asking Congress to support the Army's 'People First' initiatives, modernization priorities and readiness goals. (ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL PHOTO)

other items will still put some pressure on DoD's ability to support the National Defense Strategy.

We know the administration plans to review and update the National Defense Strategy in the next year or so, but for now the current strategy remains in effect.

One concern for the Association of the U.S. Army is the recommendation from the bipartisan commission that reviewed the National Defense Strategy for DoD's budget to grow 3% to 5% each year.

With last year's budget request

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being flat, with no increase even for inflation, the expectation of flat budgets again this year will complicate the Pentagon's ability to execute the National Defense Strategy.

AUSA is concerned about what Congress will ultimately pass as the defense appropriation bill and National Defense Authorization Act because there are some strong voices calling for significant changes or decreases to DoD's funding.

To help address this, we are finalizing our 2021 Focus Areas—our advocacy priorities for this year—to once again emphasize the need for Congress to pass the defense, military construction and veterans appropriations on time along with the National Defense Authorization Act.

We are also asking for Congress to support the Army's "People First" initiatives, modernization priorities

and readiness goals.

For the Army to compete effectively, our nation must modernize the Total Army: Regular Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, a former Army vice chief of staff, and Kathleen Hicks, the new deputy secretary of defense, refer to China as the nation's "pacing" threat.

In remarks before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Jan. 19, Austin said, "Globally, I understand that Asia must be the focus of our effort. And I see China, in particular, as the pacing challenge for the Department. If confirmed, I know I will need your help to tackle these problems ... and to give our men and women in uniform the tools they need to fight and win."

China is aggressively modernizing and growing its military capabilities, so AUSA is requesting that Congress support the Army's modernization

priorities and remain the world's most capable land force.

To bolster our impact on Capitol Hill, AUSA is teaming with the National Guard Association of the United States, the Reserve Organization of America and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States to advocate for the priorities we have in common.

These include on-time budgets and authorizations, programs prioritizing people, readiness enhancements and modernization of the force.

We believe our four like-minded organizations have the potential to help make a difference for the Total Army on Capitol Hill through our combined advocacy efforts.

Please look for more details on AUSA 2021's Focus Areas in our next column.

Mark Haaland is AUSA's Government Affairs Director.



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Members learn about Army's cyber, network security efforts

The COVID-19 pandemic and the Army's response have reinforced the importance of cyber and network security, leading the service to create "a new digital foundation," a top Army cyber officer said.

"We know the world is changing, and it's changing fast ... we have to move faster," said Brig. Gen. Matthew Easley, the Army's director for cybersecurity and chief information security officer, during a virtual forum hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army's George Washington chapter.

Easley assumed his role in September 2020 and oversees policy development to secure Army data and information in an environment resistant to known and emerging cyber threats, according to the office of the Army chief information officer.

Three other directorates within the office of the Army CIO are working with his own to lay the groundwork for future cybersecurity, Easley said.

They are the Cloud Enterprise Management Office, Army Enterprise Architecture, and Policies, Resources and Analysis.

"All those are going to come together ... to build the Army's enterprise digi-



Speeding up technology acquisition processes and personnel skills development will be critical, said Brig. Gen. Matthew Easley, Army director for cybersecurity. (U.S. ARMY/EDRIC THOMPSON)

tal environment," Easley said.

This new digital architecture will "allow us to pull information off of our endpoints, from the battlefield, to our 128 camps, posts and stations, to the Army Reserve and National Guard" and moved into a tactical cloud to enable quick decision-making, he said.

Speeding up technology acquisition processes and personnel skills development will be key to this effort, Easley said.

"In each of those areas, we need to understand how data can be our ally" through data collection, analysis and secure, accessible cloud storage, Easley said.

Artificial intelligence is tied in as well, he said. As with any major online platform, the data volume being pulled in is too massive to go through manually, making automation and intelligent decision aids an inherent part of the Army's strategy moving forward.

AUSA's Fort Campbell chapter elects new president

Charlie Koon, vice president of corporate and military business development for F&M Bank in Clarksville, Tennessee, will be the next president of the Association of the U.S. Army's Fort Campbell chapter.

"Charlie has served on the AUSA board for several years and is a tremendous asset to our organization," said Kelli Pendleton, the outgoing chapter president. "He possesses a strong passion for supporting our soldiers and this organization, which advocates for



Charlie Koon. (COURTESY PHOTO)

them. I know he will do great things as president."

Chapter presidents typically serve in the role for two years.

Koon has been previously honored

for his commitment to the community. In 2008, he was named Citizen of the Year by the city of Clarksville, and in 2019, then-Maj. Gen. Andrew Poppas, who was commander of the 101st Airborne Division, recognized him as a Champion of Fort Campbell.

"It is an honor to be named president of the AUSA Fort Campbell chapter," Koon said. "Kelli has done a great job as president over the last two years and elevated our chapter to new heights. I look forward to continuing that momentum by increasing our chapter's support for our Fort Campbell families."



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