



BIG SKY-HIGH VICTORY

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B1



KEVIN MELTON

New Chennault Airport director plans big growth

A8

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Trump's trade warning to Canada

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump warned Canada on Saturday that it "will be out" of a revised North American trade agreement unless it's "fair" to the United States, and he threatened to scrap the current deal should Congress "interfere" with the negotiations.

"There is no political necessity to keep Canada in the new NAFTA deal," Trump said in one of a series of tweets as he visited his Virginia golf club while three former presidents and a range of political dignitaries attended a Washington memorial for John McCain. Trump wasn't invited.

But it's not clear whether the Trump administration has the authority to strike a deal with just Mexico, as it announced Monday, and exclude Canada. Also, Congress must approve any rewrite of the North American Free Trade Agreement, signed under President Bill Clinton, and might refuse to endorse a deal that leaves longtime ally Canada on the sidelines.

Talks to keep Canada in the trade bloc are to resume this coming week as Washington and Ottawa try to break a deadlock over issues such as Canada's dairy market and U.S. efforts to shield drug companies from generic competition.

"As we've said all week, we're working toward a modernized NAFTA that is good for the middle class and people working hard to join it," said Adam Austen, a spokesman for Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland. "With good will and flexibility on all sides, a win-win-win outcome is achievable. Canada, of course, will only sign a deal which is good for Canada."

Trump notified Congress

See **CANADA, A4**



Rick Hickman / American Press

Lake Charles Port Board director Bill Rase said the overall tonnage at City Docks has not decreased, but because more of it is shipped in bulk it requires less labor.

LC Port Board votes to protect commercial cargo from bid process

By John Guidroz
jguidroz@americanpress.com

Earlier this week, Port of Lake Charles board members took action to increase competition for companies seeking to handle bagged U.S. Department of Agriculture cargo, while protecting commercial cargo from the bid process.

In a 4-3 vote Aug. 27, the board agreed to renew its existing contract with Federal Marine Terminals, starting in February, for exclusive rights to handle commercial cargo, plus an option to renew for another year. Of the five stevedore licenses at City Docks, FMT is the only one that handles all bagged agricultural cargo, an agreement that has been in place since 2013.

The panel's decision also opens the handling of USDA bagged cargo to FMT and another licensed company that will be approved by the board. Bill Rase, port director, said a request for proposals will be issued to determine which additional

'We looked at our customers who ship commercial and considered what they wanted. The port is here mainly for its customers and the transfer of cargo.'

Bill Rase
Port director

stevedoring company will be considered to handle USDA bagged goods.

The decision, Rase said, protects local commercial agricultural business "from any kind of upheaval." The port currently ships virtually 100 percent of local commercial bagged agricultural cargo.

The board rejected an option that

See **PORT, A3**

Final farewell

Politics play a part as McCain tributes echo with criticism of Trump

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — John McCain's daughter and two former presidents led a public rebuke of President Donald Trump's divisive politics at the late senator's memorial service Saturday in a call for a return to civility among the nation's leaders.

The nearly three-hour service at the Washington National Cathedral was a remarkable show of defiance against a president McCain openly defied in life as the antithesis of the American spirit of service to something greater than any individual.

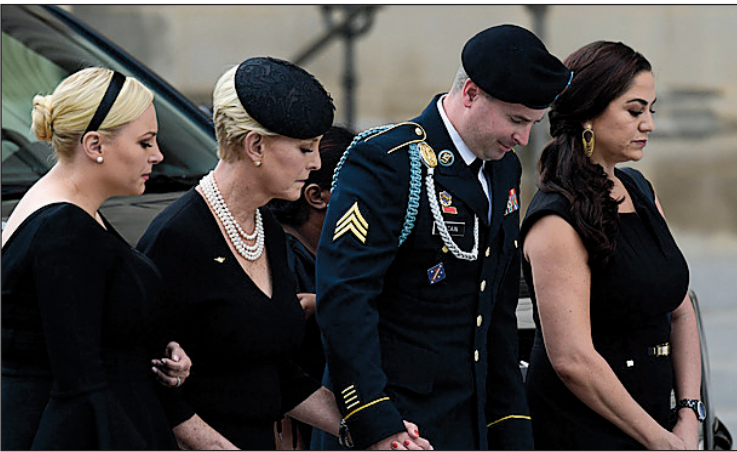
Standing near McCain's flag-draped casket and with Trump's daughter in the audience, Meghan McCain delivered a broadside against the

McCain had asked George W. Bush, a Republican, and Barack Obama, a Democrat, to speak at his memorial service.

uninvited president without mentioning his name.

"We gather here to mourn the passing of American greatness — the real thing, not cheap rhetoric from men who will never come near the sacrifice he gave so willingly, nor the opportunistic appropriation of those who lived lives of comfort and privilege while he suffered and served," she said,

See **MCCAIN, A3**



Associated Press

From left, Meghan McCain, Cindy McCain, Jimmy McCain and his wife Holly pause as they watch the casket of Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., arrive at the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, Saturday.

Second vendor wants Louisiana voting machine contract redo

By The Associated Press

BATON ROUGE — Another losing bidder for Louisiana's voting machine replacement work is calling for a new selection process and the cancellation of the current contract award.

Hart InterCivic sent a letter to the Office of State

Procurement supporting the protest filed by a second vendor spurned for the voting machine contract. Hart said the evaluation was "flawed and lacked the fundamental transparency that Louisiana voters deserve."

Contract negotiations with the winning bidder, Dominion

Voting Systems, are stalled while the protest is under review.

The secretary of state's office described Dominion as the low bidder for the voting machine replacement, with the company estimating the work would cost between \$89 million and \$95 million. Bid

evaluation and financial documents released by the Office of State Procurement also showed Dominion with the least-expensive proposals for either leasing or buying voting machines.

But Hart said it offered a less-expensive proposal that doesn't appear in the scoring

documents, even though it was demonstrated to the selection committee. Election Systems and Software, the losing vendor that filed the official protest, also said it offered alternative proposals that were millions of dollars cheaper, but weren't scored in the bid review.

"I believe all stakeholders in the process, especially the voters of Louisiana, deserve to know about all viable options available to them," wrote Phillip Braithwaite, Hart president and CEO, in his letter to Paula Tregre, the head of Louisiana's procurement office.

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Life at Home C1-C4
Local/State A3, A5, A12
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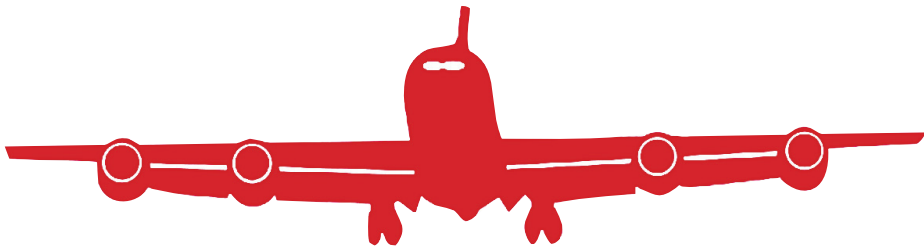
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Chennault International Airport encompasses 1,554 acres, with nearly 700 acres of undeveloped land available for growth.



THE SKY’S THE LIMIT

Kevin Melton aims to expand and grow Chennault International Airport

By Crystal Stevenson
cstevenson@americanpress.com

Kevin Melton is on a mission with one goal in mind: growth. Melton, a retired Air Force colonel who served in the military for 24 years and later worked as a project manager for American Airlines, took over the helm as executive director of Chennault International Airport Authority in April.

“My objective is to take us to the next level,” he said. “The team at Chennault has been doing great work but we’ve got to think bigger, we’ve got to think globally, we have to think ahead to the future. Where do we want to see ourselves not just a year from now, but five years, 10 years, 30 years from now?”

To do that, he said, the facility’s focus must be on economic development.

“Economic development is what we’re all about,” Melton said. “How do we do that? By bringing business, making sure our existing tenants are taken care of and we focus on the basics, which is safe and compliant airfield and airport operations.”

Melton said over the course of the past five years, the facility has spent \$32 million on recapitalization projects to the airfield to sustain it for the next 30 years. Some of those improvements included converting a taxiway to a backup runway; the rehabilitation of the main runway with new concrete, lighting and blast pad; and construction of a new building for Louisiana Millwork (Masonite).

“We want the people in the community to understand that this is a real airport here, and that there are real significant national security-level issues that are going on,” he said. “With Northrop Grumman, they completely tear down one of our nation’s best assets from an intelligence capability in our Air Force jets.”

Another tenant, Landlocked Aviation Services, paints commercial air carriers.

“On any given day you’ll see Delta, Continental and United jets being repainted



Donna Price / American Press

Kevin Melton took over the helm as executive director of Chennault International Airport Authority in April. Melton said Chennault has the longest runway of all airports located between Houston and Cape Canaveral, Fla.

and receiving basic maintenance at Chennault,” he said.

The airport’s newest tenant, Citadel Completions, will be taking over Hangar H and plans to invest \$17.6 million on a new aircraft center dedicated to interior modifications and maintenance for luxury and commercial aircraft.

“They’ll come in and retrofit the Donald Trump-type of airplanes and above,” he said. “There’s a lot of opportunities here.”

Melton said the airport has an annual economic impact of \$300 million and more than \$7 billion since 1986.

The airport, which encom-

passes 1,554 acres, has nearly 700 acres of undeveloped land available for growth. Melton said the facility has entered a contract with Cushman & Wakefield and NAI Latter & Blum to market the land, which includes Mallard Cove, to global investors.

“Right now the airport keeps roughly 1,500 employees across all the tenants, but we want to grow that,” he said. “We want to grow Chennault to be a bigger economic driver not just for Lake Charles, but for the region. Ultimately, my vision, is for Chennault to be the hub for aviation activity.”

He said Chennault is posi-

tioned strategically because of its multi-move capability. He said the facility’s master plan, which is coordinated through the Department of Transportation and Development and the Federal Aviation Administration, calls for bringing in distribution capabilities and building cold storage facilities.

“We have easy access to multi-move,” he said. “We have a rail that goes all around the airport so we’re looking at where Mallard Cove is now and developing some kind of distribution or storage facilities or something along those lines that will allow us to get rail into that area. We’ve

got access to a major taxiway through there and we have direct access to jets so we have those two pieces of the puzzle — rail and air. We also have the port that’s close to us and obviously we have access to Interstate 210 and I-10.”

The master plan also calls for bringing in more maintenance repair organizations to the facility.

“I want to look at building our general aviation footprint,” he said. “We’re taking off the blinders to make sure that we’re really exploring all opportunities to bring growth into the area.”

Melton said the success of

Chennault will depend on collaboration.

“We want to make sure the local taxpayer understands what his and her dollars are going for and how it can support the community and grow the community and where’s the return on investment for the community,” he said. “It doesn’t happen overnight but through a collaborative effort and through a bit of foresight and good strategic thinking there are certainly opportunities here for Chennault that we want to capitalize on.”

Melton said Chennault has the longest runway of all airports located between Houston and Cape Canaveral, Fla., and was named the FAA Louisiana Airport of the Year in 2017.

“But we’re not going to rest on our laurels,” he said. “We have even more reason to work even harder to prove that we’re one of the best out there but make sure we grow to that next level and don’t get caught flat-footed.”

Air show

Melton said family is important to Chennault “and that’s why economic development is so incredibly important because we want Lake Charles and the region to be the place to come for families to grow and thrive.”

One of the family-focused events Chennault is looking forward to hosting is its 2019 air show.

“It’s still in the early stages, but we have gotten confirmation from the Canadian Snow Birds that they are definitely coming,” he said.

Melton said his plan is to make the 2019 air show even bigger and better than the last one.

“Historically, they’ve all been wonderful but I would like to create that ‘wow’ factor for our local community,” he said.

Melton said the air show serves as a recruiting tool for young people interested in aviation, STEM-related fields or military service.

“We want to create an excitement about aviation and STEM,” he said. “We want to make education as a whole a big, big focus of the air show.”