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Box 205 • Mayport, Florida 32228-0205 • 904/246-5226 • Fax: 904/246-5329

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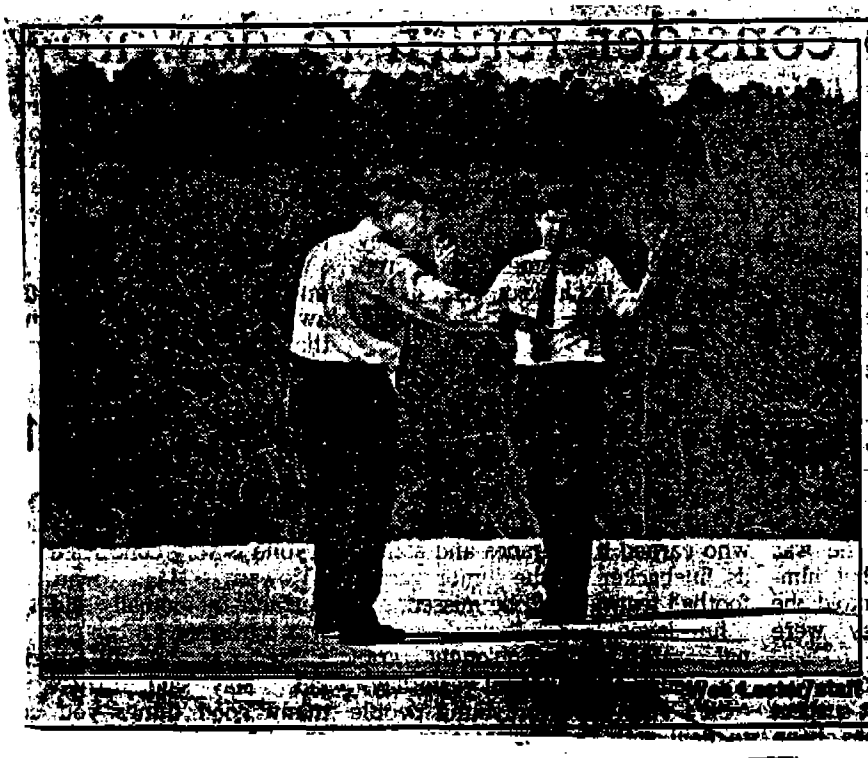

NAS waste site needs cleanup

Philip Georgariou (left) of ABB Environmental Services, Tallahassee, and Carl Froede of the Environmental Protection Agency discuss the old Child Street waste site at Jacksonville Naval Air Station. It tainted groundwater and will cost $20 million to clean, officials said yesterday. A public meeting is at 7 p.m. today at the Orange Park Holiday Inn.

Navy being asked to maintain presence

By Susan P. Respess
Staff writer

The competition for Navy bases, ships and aircraft is growing fierce and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce's military task force is jumping into the fray today in Washington.

The task force, formed in November, is sending 24 representatives to Washington for two days to ask [illegible] and elected officials not to take away Jacksonville's aircraft carrier, other warships and warplanes or close any of its four Navy installations.

The chamber's military affairs committee members have been lobbying in small groups and individually for Jacksonville's Navy community for years. The new task force has a single purpose: to save the city's Navy assets and bring more to Jacksonville as national defense cuts force consolidations.

At risk is a $1 billion Navy economic [illegible] in Jacksonville from the bases and about 50,000 military and civilian employees.

The task force is pushing hard for Mayport Naval Station to be upgraded to handle nuclear-powered carriers after the last of the Navy's conventionally powered carriers are retired during the next 10 years.

Norfolk, Va., already home to nuclear and conventionally powered carriers, is pushing just as hard for the Navy's East Coast-based nuclear carriers.

The chamber will be seeking up to $30,000 a year from area businesses for a new military development fund to help pay the salary of a lobbyist and send some of Jacksonville's 36 retired admirals to Washington.