

Note from AFA President -- Cyber Warfare

AFA members, Congressional staffers, Civic Leaders, DOCA members, a piece from the Atlantic caught my attention this week (thank you Jack for bringing it to my attention). It is by James Fallows. It starts out with an analysis of the Chinese military (with which I do not necessarily agree) - but most of the piece is about the cyber threat facing our nation. I think Mr. Fallows does a great job of summarizing this very difficult area.

From the piece: "When will China emerge as a military threat to the U.S.? In most respects the answer is: not anytime soon-China doesn't even contemplate a time it might challenge America directly. But one significant threat already exists: cyberwar. Attacks-not just from China but from Russia and elsewhere-on America's electronic networks cost millions of dollars and could in the extreme cause the collapse of financial life, the halt of most manufacturing systems, and the evaporation of all the data and knowledge stored on the Internet."

You can find a link to the piece at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/201003/china-cyber-war> Secondly, as most of you know, AF Space Command is the command responsible for both space and cyberspace. Recently, AFSPACECOM published 10 principles for Cyber. The lead for the piece is the rise of the Cyber Wingman ... and the first bullet states: "**Every time we log onto the network, we are entering a contested domain where the threats and vulnerabilities are real.**" Not only does the piece make you think, but it has the added value of being concise. You can find the piece on our website at: http://www.afa.org/EdOp/2010/edop_21210.asp.

Finally, it is clear the US military has to focus more on this domain. The AF has established a Cyber numbered Air Force. DOD has announced the stand-up of a Joint Cyber Command. The cyber domain affects almost everything we do. It is for this reason that AFA has begun a high school cyber competition. We have the finals of this competition in Orlando this week.

We are especially proud of this event - it is a project that is already having significant positive impact and helping to solve a critical national security problem. In a little over a year, CyberPatriot has grown from a concept to a national competition involving nearly 200 teams in 41 states (even a DoDDS high school in Japan). We believe it to be the largest such competition ever conducted, and next year it will double or triple in size. You can watch a short video describing the competition at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/AirForceAssocHQ#p/a/u/0/bqfSLVGYTY8>.

For your consideration.

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