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and research of John Greenewald, Jr., creator of:

The Black Vault



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document clearinghouse in the world. The research efforts here are
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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-2000

5720
Ser DNS-36KM/19U102910
August 20, 2019

Sent via email to: john@greenewald.com

Mr. John Greenewald
The Black Vault
27305 W. Live Oak Rd.
Suite 1203
Castaic, CA 91384

Dear Mr. Greenewald:

This is in reference to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)/Privacy Act (PA) request dated July 9, 2019. Your request was received in our office on the same day and assigned case number DON-NAVY-2019-008862.

In the course of processing your FOIA request this office contacted the United States Navy office of Information (CHINFO) to conduct a search for applicable records. Accordingly, that office searched their local files for records relating to "copy of records, electronic or otherwise all emails to/from/cc'd/bcc'd CAPT CHINFO Gregory Hicks and Politico reporter Bryan Bender".

The CHINFO office has identified 9 records totaling 15 pages that are responsive to your request. Upon review of these records, it has been determined that they contain instances of personally identifiable information (PII), such as the names, dates of birth, and social security numbers of individuals. These instances of PII are exempt from disclosure under 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6), since release of this information would result in a clearly unwarranted invasion of their personal privacy. The remainder of the records are released to you.

Because your request is partially denied, you are advised of your right to appeal this determination by writing to:

Office of the Judge Advocate General
1322 Patterson Ave SE Ste 3000
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5066

Your appeal must be postmarked within ninety calendar days from the date of this letter. A copy of your initial request and this letter must accompany the appeal. The appeal should be marked "FREEDOM OF INFORMATION APPEAL" both on the envelope and the face of the letter. In order to expedite the appellate process and ensure full consideration of your appeal, your appeal should contain a brief statement of the reasons you believe this decision to be in error.

In this instance, the fees associated with the processing of your request are waived, but this action is not indicative of how future requests will be handled.

For this determination, you have the right to seek dispute resolution services from either the DoD Navy Component FOIA Public Liaison, Mr. Chris Julka, at: Christopher.a.julka@navy.mil, via phone: (703) 697-0031; or by contacting the Office of Government Information Services at: (<https://ogis.archives.gov/>), (202) 741-5770, ogis@nara.gov.

Questions regarding the action this office has taken to process your request may be directed to our FOIA Service Center at (202) 685-0412 or via email at donfoia-pa@navy.mil.

Sincerely,



R. Strong
Deputy Director
DON FOIA/PA Program Office

(b) (6)

From: Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (US) (b) (6)
@navy.mil>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2019 10:13 AM
To: 'Bryan Bender'
Subject: RE: POLITICO request
Signed By: (b) (6) @navy.mil

Thanks Bryan. Pinged away to our folks this morning.

-----Original Message-----

From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 03, 2019 1:29 PM
To: Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (US) (b) (6) @navy.mil>; Bryan Bender
<bbender@politico.com>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] RE: POLITICO request

Hi Capt. Hicks.

I wanted to make sure this was in the top of your inbox when you get back Monday. I am swiftly moving closer to publishing a story and wanted to pass along a few more details for my request as you coordinate with ONI.

* I have learned one of the action items to come out of the recent briefings to the Hill was to publish a directive/instruction establishing a process by which pilots and other personnel can report sightings of unexplained craft. I understand this would be something new and is designed to make sure the department captures these reports. And it sounds like ONI is working on that now.

* One of the items briefed to members and staff in these recent briefings were more recent reports of so-called "unexplained aerial phenomenon" from the Theodore Roosevelt battle group during a cruise in 2015-2016, as well as more recent reports of highly advanced craft near Pax River.

I am hoping to get some comment from the Navy on the above as well as the any information that can be shared about the Hill briefings (how many, what sort of players, etc.) - in addition to what I mentioned earlier about what, if any, formal program the service now has in place to capture, analyze and potentially explain these UAP reports.

Happy Sunday!

Bryan

Sent from Mail <<https://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?LinkId=550986>> for Windows 10

From: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00 (b) (6) @navy.mil>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2019 2:01:02 PM
To: Bryan Bender
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

Sorry, nothing yet. I've asked the team to respond and reach out in our lifelines.

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com <<http://www.blackberry.com>>)

From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com<<mailto:bbender@politico.com>>>
Date: Friday, Mar 01, 2019, 1:57 PM
To: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00 (b) (6) @navy.mil<[mailto:\(b\) \(6\) @navy.mil](mailto:(b) (6) @navy.mil)>>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

Sent from my iPhone

(b) (6)

From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 12:08 PM
To: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] RE: POLITICO query

Thanks. I actually think there is something to this, given my sourcing and the previous revelations. But I should probably stop binging on the History Channel's "Project Blue Book" series.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00 <(b) (6)@navy.mil>
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 12:06:21 PM
To: Bryan Bender
Subject: RE: POLITICO query

Thanks. Sorry, received. Wearing my tinfoil hat now.

From: Bryan Bender [bbender@politico.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 11:36 AM
To: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] RE: POLITICO query

Just confirming you received this and haven't been abducted ☺

Sent from Mail<<https://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?LinkId=550986>> for Windows 10

From: Bryan Bender
Sent: Tuesday, February 19, 2019 3:02:59 PM
To: (b) (6)@navy.mil
Subject: POLITICO query

Sir,

Thanks for your help trying to catch this curve ball.

Here is my piece on the original Pentagon program established as a congressional earmark and subsequently wound down.

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/12/16/pentagon-ufo-search-harry-reid-216111>

The Times also covered it at the time:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/16/us/politics/pentagon-program-ufo-harry-reid.html>

What I am trying to chase down now are details regarding what I am told was a recent briefing by a two-star admiral to nine senators – some members of armed services and some from intel -- on the these unexplained sightings by military pilots – including more recent ones.

I am also told that there is now a formal Navy effort to assess these reports (since the Pentagon office we wrote about is no longer operating) as a part of the growing interest in Congress.

Again, appreciate any help or guidance you can provide.

Happy hunting. 😊

Bryan

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From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com>
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To: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00
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Happy hunting. 😊

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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

(b) (6)

From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2019 12:57 PM
To: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Re: POLITICO query

Any sightings? :)

Sent from my iPhone

> On Feb 21, 2019, at 10:06 AM, Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00

> (b) (6) @navy.mil> wrote:

>

> Thanks. Sorry, received. Wearing my tinfoil hat now.

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>

> From: Bryan Bender [bbender@politico.com]

> Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 11:36 AM

> To: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00

> Subject: [Non-DoD Source] RE: POLITICO query

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> Just confirming you received this and haven't been abducted 😊

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> Windows

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> rry-reid.html

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To: Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (US); Bryan Bender
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Happy Sunday!

Bryan

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00 <(b) (6)@navy.mil>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2019 2:01:02 PM
To: Bryan Bender
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

Sorry, nothing yet. I've asked the team to respond and reach out in our lifelines.

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com<mailto:bbender@politico.com>>
Date: Friday, Mar 01, 2019, 1:57 PM
To: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00 <(b) (6)@navy.mil<mailto:(b) (6)@navy.mil>>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

Sent from my iPhone

(b) (6)

From: Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (USA) <(b) (6)@navy.mil>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2019 6:43 PM
To: Bryan Bender
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

Thank you Bryan. Good article. VR/ Greg

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com>
Date: Tuesday, Apr 23, 2019, 6:35 PM
To: Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (USA) <(b) (6)@navy.mil>
Subject: Re: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

<https://www.politico.com/story/2019/04/23/us-navy-guidelines-reporting-ufos-1375290>

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 23, 2019, at 9:15 AM, Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (USA) <(b) (6)@navy.mil> wrote:

Bryan – Here is our official response. Let me know if there is something else you'd like to explore on this, although folks around here will not go much further.

VR/ Greg

"There have been a number of reports of unauthorized and/or unidentified aircraft entering various military-controlled ranges and designated air space in recent years. For safety and security concerns, the Navy and the USAF takes these reports very seriously and investigates each and every report. As part of this effort, the Navy is updating and formalizing the process by which reports of any such suspected incursions can be made to the cognizant authorities. A new message to the fleet that will detail the steps for reporting is in draft.

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From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com>
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2019 10:37 AM
To: Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (USA) <(b) (6)@navy.mil>
Subject: Re: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

Sorry to be a pest but should I hound ONR directly? Thanks.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 29, 2019, at 1:22 PM, Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (US) <(b) (6)@navy.mil> wrote:

Sorry Bryan, nothing really. Only that it is in the intel lanes. VR/ Greg

From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com>
Sent: Friday, March 29, 2019 3:02 PM
To: Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (US) <(b) (6)@navy.mil>
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

Any thing to report here yet? Thanks

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To: Hicks, Gregory CAPT CHINFO, OI-00
(b) (6) <[REDACTED]@navy.mil><[mailto:\(b\) \(6\) \[REDACTED\]@navy.mil](mailto:(b) (6) [REDACTED]@navy.mil)>>
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Sent from my iPhone

(b) (6)

From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2019 12:31 PM
To: Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (USA)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

Looking now thanks and will circle back with any follow ups, thanks

Sent from my iPhone

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Sent from my iPhone

(b) (6)

From: Bryan Bender <bbender@politico.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2019 1:07 PM
To: Hicks, Gregory L CAPT USN CHINFO WASHINGTON DC (USA)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: [Non-DoD Source] Free for a quick catch up?

One follow-up that comes remind is whether this process of formalizing such reports was driven at all by reports from pilots on the USS Roosevelt recently?

Sent from my iPhone

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