

THE OUTPOST

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New commander ready to lead YPG into future

By Yolie Canales

Col. Randy Murray assumed command of Yuma Proving Ground from Col. Reed Young on June 19 during a change of command ceremony on Cox Field before an audience numbering in the hundreds.

Murray's last position was at Fort Eustis, Va., where he was Chief of Capabilities Assessment at the Army Capabilities Integration Center. In this position he worked on "capability assessments" for the overall Army. These assessments included the prioritization of systems and identifying capability gaps that result from lack of manpower, training, facilities, material, or whatever else.

Maj. Gen. Peter Utley, Commanding General for U.S. Army Test & Evaluation Command, began by addressing the audience, thanking everyone for attending. "To Team YPG, you truly make a difference each and every day and I sincerely mean this. You make YPG the premier test center it is because of your hard work and dedication," said Utley.

He said that since 2011, Col. Reed Young has served YPG with distinction and has achieved organizational objectives and accomplishments in order to ensure YPG remains capable and successful into the future. "Col. Young, I would like to congratulate you for an outstanding and phenomenal job. You made a dedicated

commitment to our Army. Today, we thank you for your unwavering dedication to duty and steadfast service," said Utley. "You have been a true asset to the Army."

"As we bid farewell to a Soldier of great accomplishments, we're fortunate to welcome a new YPG commander, Col. Randy Murray," said Utley. "I welcome you and your family to the great YPG command. I also want to congratulate you on being selected to command one of the busiest test centers in the Army. There is no doubt in my mind you are the right Soldier for the mission, and you are committed to meeting the demands of testing equipment and materiel our Soldiers will use when called on by our nation. I wish you the best during your command and look forward to working with you."

In Young's closing remarks, he said, "Col. Murray and family, you're the luckiest people in the world. You get to stay here and be a part of this fantastic team. I wish you the very best, and I know that this team is going to support you as well as they supported me," said Young. "I know you are going to take this to bigger and better places. Congratulations and well done."

Young added that YPG could not be a richer environment. "There is so much excellence here. The hard working, clever,

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(PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER)

Col. Randy Murray accepts the YPG flag from Maj. Gen. Peter Utley, signifying his acceptance of command responsibility.

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COMMANDER

FROM PAGE 1

patriotic workforce is second to none,” he said. “Every hour of every day, you can see the toughest challenges solved. You can see the care and concern striving towards perfection beginning right here at YPG to the tropics of TRTC and the cold regions of CRTC.”

Before the conclusion of the ceremony, Col. Murray thanked Maj. Gen. Peter Utley for being at the ceremony and Col. Young and Norma for the excellent and truly warm transition. He thanked his family for supporting him to continue serving the nation as a Soldier.

“It is great to return to the Army’s test and evaluation command family. I am humbled and honored this morning. Humbled, because the mantle of command is a great responsibility that I take dear to heart,” said Murray. “I am honored to be a part of a great organization with roots that spread back to WWII. I’m proud to be the commander of a test organization that has such a profound impact on America’s forces. We will continue this high level of dedication and I truly look forward to serving all of you.



Mrs. Deborah Murray smiles as she receives yellow roses welcoming her to the YPG community.

One team, one YPG. Thank you.”

Col. Murray was commissioned in 1990 as an aviation officer. Upon completion of the Aviation Officer Basic Course and Initial Entry Rotary Wing training at Fort Rucker, Ala., in 1992, he was assigned to B Company 2nd Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, Camp Humphreys, Korea, where he

served as a Section Leader and Assistant Operations Officer. Thereafter, Murray served in numerous positions throughout his 24 year career.

Murray’s military education and training include Aviation Officer Advanced Course, Operations Research/Systems Analysis Military Applications Course, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Program Managers Course,



Col. Randy Murray visits with Patt Parker (right) Coordinator for Strategic Military Affairs for Arizona Governor Jan Brewer, Yuma Mayor Douglas Nicholls and Greg Wilkinson, City Administrator, during his welcome reception at Palm Garden.

Senior Service College Fellowship Program. His awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters (OLC); Army Commendation Medal with OLC; Army Achievement Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Korea Defense Service Medal; Global War on Terrorism; Afghanistan Campaign Medal; NATO medal; the Air Assault Badge;

the Parachutists Badge, and the Army Aviator Badge.

He holds a Master’s in Industrial Engineering from New Mexico State University; a Bachelor’s of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology from South Carolina State University; and Associates in Mechanical Engineering Technology from Orangeburg Calhoun Technical College.



Members of the civilian artillery crew fire howitzer rounds near the beginning of the ceremony. Everyone was impressed.

THE OUTPOST

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New commander takes reins of YPG

By Chuck Wullenjohn

It's amazing the impact a helpful adult can have on a young person.

When incoming YPG Commander Col. Randy Murray attended Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College, S.C., in the late 1980's, a friendly teacher took him aside to discuss the future. He advised Murray to attain a four year mechanical engineering degree at the state university after the technical college's two year program. He went on to suggest that Murray consider enrolling in the Army ROTC program, which could result in a scholarship.

"I didn't have the Army in mind up to then," said Murray in a recent interview. "That conversation led me to look seriously at an Army career for the first time."

That decision ended up changing his life. He enrolled in ROTC and was sent to a camp at Fort Knox, Ky., and received a two year scholarship that helped fund his degree program. Because of that caring advice, a 24-year Army career blossomed that saw him serve overseas in locations like Korea and Afghanistan, as well as numerous spots in the United States. He went on to receive a Master's degree in Industrial Engineering at New Mexico State University.

Commissioned as an officer in 1990, Murray has performed in numerous roles over the years, from platoon leader and aircraft pilot to test officer and program manager. He piloted the CH-47D cargo aircraft for eight years,



(PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER)

Col. Randy Murray takes time out for an interview before he takes command of Yuma Proving Ground.

performed as an operations research analyst at White Sands Missile Range, became assistant product manager for the UH60A Black Hawk helicopter recapitalization program and went on to product management of the MH47G Chinook helicopter program.

As a member of the Army Acquisition Corps, he performed as test officer and division chief at the Operational Test Command at Fort Hood, Texas, a subcommand of ATEC, for four years. He spent

several days at YPG in 2006 inspecting testing taking place for systems used to defeat the threat of improvised explosive devices. That same year, he journeyed to Bagram, Afghanistan, where he served on the ATEC Forward Operational Assessment team, looking at deployed systems and reporting how they were being utilized, as well as on any shortcomings that existed.

His last assignment before assuming his present position was as Chief of Capabilities Assessment at the Army

Capabilities Integration Center at Fort Eustis, Va. In this position he worked on "capability assessments" for the overall Army. These assessments included the prioritization of systems and identifying capability gaps that result from lack of manpower, training, facilities, material, or whatever else.

Murray visited Yuma Proving Ground earlier this year to tour the installation and witness its wide variety of test and training activities in both the aviation and ground systems realms. It was

a busy visit that squeezed as much into three and one-half days as possible.

"I was impressed with the testing capability I saw and its importance to the military," he said. "The thing that struck me the most, however, was the 'can do' attitude of the workforce – people obviously do whatever is necessary to get the job done."

As a former aviator, he expressed admiration for YPG's aerial activities, but was particularly impressed by the extent of the testing capability throughout the organization. He was also struck by the military-commercial sector integration he witnessed at the General Motors test facility.

Now that he's at YPG on a permanent basis, Murray is spending his initial weeks assessing his new job – learning about the three YPG test centers and meeting people – all with an eye to gaining a full understanding of the mission. He plans to visit CRTC and TRTC soon.

Murray likes the Yuma area, which he feels has a "hometown atmosphere." He and his wife, Deborah, have enrolled their two boys in local schools, with the oldest, 17-year-old Jonathon, already involved in football practice. Their younger son, Michael, 13, is also a sports fanatic and plays all sports, but favors football and basketball.

"As an organization, YPG executes its mission well and has a great reputation," he said. "I'm following in the steps of a great command team and look forward to the future."

62nd Army Band performs at the Historic Yuma Theater



Members of the 62nd Army Band Concert stand to take a bow, in appreciation for the support shown to them by the Yuma community.



The booming sounds of the trumpets resounded in the Historic Yuma Theater during the concert.

**SFC
Matthew
Tanner
(right) of
the 62nd
Army Band
sings from
the heart
during his
performance
of God Bless
the U.S.A.
by Lee
Greenwood.**



A member of the 62nd Army Band makes beautiful sounds on the clarinet (above) during the Star Spangled Banner. And the crowd goes wild! The Yuma community (below) was on their feet in appreciation of the great music played by the 62nd Army Band.

(PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER)

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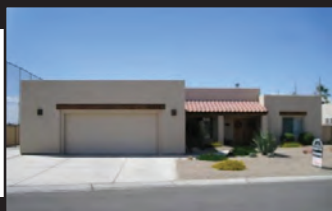
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Prototype represents future of Army artillery

By Chuck Wullenjohn

The intelligent use of artillery has proved a decisive factor in battle-after-battle over the years, on many occasions raining devastating, accurate fire on enemy troop concentrations.

This mission is as important today as ever.

A prototype version of the Army's newest self-propelled 155mm howitzer is being tested right now at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground.

The system, to be designated the M109A7, will eventually become the standard Army self-propelled howitzer, with the first vehicle slated to roll off the assembly line in December of this year.

Originally designed in the 1950's, this new version of the venerable M109 howitzer incorporates a number of improvements to enhance its battlefield lethality.

It features a 600 volt electrical power system that operates the gun drive and supports future network devices, as well as new fire solution software. Though the upgrade retains the main armament and turret structure as the last version of the howitzer, the chassis has been replaced with components, such as an upgraded diesel engine and transmission, used



LOANED PHOTO

YPG testing of this howitzer system began in the 2008-timeframe when the original concept demonstrator was brought out for testing.

on the commonly-used Bradley fighting vehicle.

Using Bradley-common components will significantly reduce the logistics burden and save money in the long term. The electrical power that drives the weapon system is more precise than in the past and will ultimately be more reliable than the older hydraulic system, as will the engine.

YPG has been testing artillery systems for many decades, so managing and tailoring test programs for a variety of systems is no problem. As explained by test engineer Steve Flores, the basic test framework is typically the same. "You need range space, an impact area, ammunition, gun crews, and the specialized equipment and skill sets necessary to collect a wide variety

of detailed data," he said. "We do this day in and day out. What changes is the complexity of individual tests."

YPG testing of this howitzer system began in the 2008-timeframe when the original concept demonstrator was brought out for testing. Formal developmental testing began after that. Over 10,000 rounds have been fired during this time.

During YPG testing that took place in April 2014, an extensive amount of data was gathered as the firing tests took place. A huge number of yellow cables exiting the back of the howitzer transmitted 190 channels of data to ensure standards were met. These included things like measuring the shock loads on the generator, blast over pressure, whole body vibration

to record the types of shock the vehicle driver and commander would experience in the field, and much more.

Test officer Ramon Moreno oversaw the testing which was geared toward putting a tremendous amount of pressure on the vehicle and its components. He performed a great deal of planning and coordination in advance to ensure the testing would run smoothly.

The gun was fired at maximum elevation and with the greatest charge of gunpowder it could handle, plus, the propellant was warmed to 145 degrees Fahrenheit in a conditioning chamber. "Our intention was to ensure the system can successfully withstand these worse-case scenarios," he said. "Almost 50 people are out here, so there is a lot going on."

Like other systems, the M109A7 must be thoroughly tested before being fielded to troops around the world. "Our job is to make sure it meets requirements and is safe," said Moreno. "It's always a challenge, but satisfying at the same time."

As the Army's artillery test leader, Yuma Proving Ground is well positioned to get the job done.

—CHAPLAIN'S CORNER— Beacons of Hope

By Chaplain (Maj. Douglas Thomison)

Good day Yuma Proving Ground. There are some buildings I would define as "beacons of hope." For example, the United States Capitol. It was in 1793 that President George Washington laid the cornerstone for our Capitol. Did you know it is going through a major structural renovation?

On the 100th anniversary of the laying of the Capitol's cornerstone William Wirt Henry (descendent of Patrick Henry) reviewed the success of the United States of America saying, "For more than a century, we have demonstrated, as no other people have ever done before, our capacity for self-government. Our Federal system has been tested in peace and in war, and by violent forces from without and within, yet every fiber has stood the strain, and its perfect adaption to our needs under all circumstances had been demonstrated."

Another 100 years has gone by, but what Henry wrote still holds true today. America has been tested in "war and peace" and we continue to drive on. The Capitol is a symbol of our sustenance and perseverance. If you have visited the U.S. Capitol (if you have not, please do so), you will confirm it is truly a beacon of hope for us all.

If you do not have the time to visit the U.S. Capitol this summer, there are nearby beacons of hope to see. For instance, the Yuma Proving Ground Chapel Steeple. An artist recently asked me "what would be a good subject to paint on YPG?" I said, "The Chapel Steeple." Often I run in the morning when it is still dark out as well as take walks in the evening after sunset. From near and far the Chapel Steeple glows at night, and its comforting radiance causes me to reflect. Like an inviting lighthouse on the seashore, the steeple provides one with hope.

Spend a moment considering what your beacons of hope are. Do savor beacons of hope. Be blessed and have a great day!

YPG celebrates Army's 239th Birthday

By Yolie Canales

In honor of the Army's 239th birthday, Yuma Proving Ground recently hosted a celebratory luncheon at YPG's Cactus Café.

Attendees were treated to patriotic songs performed by Sgt. Chasidy Tenison, the traditional cutting of the Army birthday cake by the proving ground's youngest and oldest Soldiers, Lt. Col. Kary Reed and Pvt. Diamond Yongblood, and the youngest and oldest civilians, Justin Croutch and John Snyder.

The keynote address was delivered by former YPG commander Col. Reed Young. The theme of the event was, "America's Army: Our Profession."

Our nation's leaders established the Continental Army nearly 250 years ago, beginning a rich heritage of successfully defending this country and her citizens. Today, we celebrate the continued strength, professionalism and bravery of our ready and resilient Soldiers and civilians. They remain Army Strong with a lifelong commitment to the Army's core values and beliefs.

Following more than 12 years of war, the Army today remains committed to the readiness, training and advancement of the Army through the following initiatives: Ready and Resilient; The Army Profession and Soldier for Life.

This 239th birthday commemorates the Soldiers, families and civilians



(PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER)

Col. Reed Young (left) takes a photo with the youngest and oldest YPG Soldiers and civilians of YPG before cutting the celebratory birthday cake, which was donated by Geico Insurance of Yuma. From left: Col. Young, John Snyder, Lt. Col. Kary Reed, Pvt. Diamond Yongblood, Justin Croutch, and Command Sgt. Maj. Sean Ward.



Soldiers from YPG's Airborne Test Force (ATF) were presented with Army Achievement Medals for their support of C147A testing. They are (left to right) Staff Sgt's John Copley and Jesse Robbins; Sgt. Luis Montejano of the YPG Health Clinic received the Army Commendation Medal for being selected Soldier of the Year and Sgt. Colin Alexander from ATF received the Army Commendation Medal for being selected YPG's NCO of the Year.

achieving a level of excellence that is truly Army Strong. Also being celebrated are local communities for their steadfast support.

Keynote speaker Col. Reed Young, former YPG commander, began by thanking everyone for participating in the Army's birthday celebration. "Thanks for coming out and helping in the celebration; thanks to the

Soldiers from the Airborne Test Force for putting on a great program and to Sgt. Tenison for delivering such a great rendition of the National Anthem," he said.

As his presentation began rolling, he asked the audience a question: Why do we get together in order to celebrate something like a birthday?

Young answered in this way. "We get together for our

own birthdays to celebrate the fact that we've made it through another year and are able to come back and forth to work and enjoy life."

To an organization like the Army, he said, it's pretty much the same. "We're celebrating the enterprise, the Army, the organization that defends the nation's constitution against all enemies. We support that enterprise that goes overseas and prosecutes our nation's battles and assures we can enjoy the freedoms that everyone in America enjoys today," he said.

He feels we live in "the best nation in the entire world because of institutions like the Army.

He closed his remarks by praising the Soldiers and civilians within the Army. "It's the people who wear the uniform, the people who deploy. It's the civilians and contractors who work on YPG who also go overseas to participate in operations where they, too, get shot at like anyone else. The Army is 239 years old today and continues to get the job done."

VIEWPOINTS

The Fourth of July is one of America's most special holidays. We asked members of the YPG family about how they typically celebrate our country's independence, and if they have any particularly special memories of doing so.

Rick Bielke Contracting officer's representative

Many years ago as a young corporal, I was stationed in Japan going to NCO school. I had duty on the Fourth and everyone else was out having fun, but I remember watching the fireworks display out in the bay that the Japanese put on for us. I was watching from the roof of the school and thought it was pretty cool to be in a foreign country that we had been at war with decades earlier and that they were supplying the fireworks, time, and effort to recognize our holiday. I never thought I'd be in the position of seeing another country honoring our Declaration of Independence.



Vanessa Gleich

Program manager

We have a barbecue and watch fireworks in Chandler, Ariz. It's a pretty big show. They charge admission to park, and they have vendors that sell knick-knacks and food, and then they have a live band. Of course you can put your blankets out and watch the fireworks, too.

Nick Carlson IT specialist

It's basically Thanksgiving in summer. This year, I'm going to see family in Cleveland and get out of the heat and enjoy ourselves. I'm a Yuma native, but I have family all over the place.



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Memorabilia donated to YPG museum



(PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER)

Yuma resident Gary Sherman, whose father served in the early World War II battle at Corregidor and was taken captive by enemy forces, visited YPG last month to have various documents and memorabilia from his father scanned and presented to the YPG Heritage Center Museum. He and his wife also took time to meet with YPG Technical Director Julio Dominguez, who served in the Philippine Islands many years ago in the Marine Corps and visited the defense-works on Corregidor. Corregidor today holds a hallowed position in Philippine and U.S. military history. In this photo, Dominguez (center) looks over one of the documents.

The World Is Mine

Author Unknown

Today, upon a bus, I saw a very beautiful woman and wished I were as beautiful.

When suddenly she rose to leave, I saw her hobble down the aisle.

She had one leg and used a crutch. But as she passed, she passed with a smile.

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine. I have two legs; the world is mine.

I stopped to buy some candy. The lad who sold it had such charm.

I talked with him, he seemed so glad. If I were late, it'd do no harm.

And as I left, he said to me, "I thank you, you've been so kind.

It's nice to talk with folks like you. You see," he said, "I'm blind."

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine. I have two eyes; the world is mine.

Later while walking down the street,

I saw a child I knew.

He stood and watched the others play, but he did not know what to do.

I stopped a moment and then I said, "Why don't you join them dear?"

He looked ahead without a word. Then I realized, he couldn't hear.

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine. I have two ears; the world is mine.

With feet to take me where I go.

With eyes to see the sunset's glow.

With ears to hear what I know.

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.

I've been blessed indeed, the world is mine!

If this poem makes you feel thankful, send it to your friends.

After all, it's just a simple reminder that we have so much to be thankful for!

Give the gift of love. It never comes back empty!

2014 USAYPG Armed Forces Voter's Week Activities

June 30 – July 7, 2014

The YPG Unit Voting Assistance Officers will be available to provide general Federal Voting and State Voting Assistance information during the following dates/times:

Monday, 30 June 2014

0900-1000

Airborne Test Force (Bldg 2970)

1030-1130

Kofa Firing Range (Bldg 3185)

1200-1300

ROC Atrium (Bldg 2105)

Tuesday, 1 July 2014

0900-1000

Vet Clinic (Bldg 226)

1300-1400

Health Clinic (Bldg 990)

Wednesday, 2 July 2014

1600-1800

Desert Oasis Community Center (Information Table)

Thursday, 3 July 2014

1100-1300

Coyote Lanes Bowling Alley



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SAFETY CORNER

Am I a Good Driver?

Jason Walsh, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there were 32,788 deaths on American roads in 2010. That means one person died on our roadways every 16 minutes that year. The good news is that according to NHTSA, fatalities have been declining during the past five years. Experts believe this is due to the strict enforcement of seat belt and car seat use, improvements in overall vehicle design safety and increased attention to safety when building or refurbishing roadways.

However, when it comes to staying out of the statistics column, the responsibility rests on you. Ask yourself truthfully, "Am I a good driver?" Most of us would answer, "Yes, I'm a great driver." But are we? The truth is most of us, perhaps without thinking about it, engage in dangerous activities while driving that make us anything but great, safe drivers.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do I text, dial a cellphone or engage in a thoughtful conversation with someone in the vehicle?
- Do I play with the radio or CD player while driving?
- Do I fish around in the glove compartment looking for something?
- Do I comb my hair or check or apply makeup?
- Do I engage in "dashboard dining" — trying to eat and drink while going down the road?
- Do I light a cigarette or fumble for a dropped lighter?
- Do I read maps or enter locations into my GPS while driving?
- Do I discipline restless children in the car or feed them snacks?
- Do I stare in amazement at how bad others are driving and then get upset or frustrated and drive

aggressively?

Unfortunately, most of us can answer "yes" to at least a few of these questions. According to www.smartmotorist.com, there are four factors that contribute to accidents:

1. Equipment failure
2. Roadway design
3. Poor vehicle maintenance
4. Driver behavior

More than 95 percent of motor vehicle accidents involve some degree of driver behavior combined with one of the other three factors. When the facts are truthfully presented, however, driver behavior is usually the primary cause. Many accidents are caused by driving distracted, excessive speed or aggressive driver behavior. So what can each of us do to stay safe?

- Make sure you use cellphones safely. The safest thing is to make your calls before you set out. If you receive a phone call while you are driving, let the caller leave a message and then pull over to a safe area and return the call. Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

- Set a good example. Consider how your children might be observing your unsafe habits and assume your actions are something normal that everyone does. If you don't want your child talking on a cell phone while driving, don't do it yourself.

- Be aware that using a hands-free device can still distract you. In fact, a study done by the University of Utah found using a cell phone while driving, whether it's hand-held or hands-free, delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent.

Safety employee, recognized at award ceremony



(PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER)

Mary Svoboda, radiation protection manager for the YPG Safety Office was recently recognized with the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service for serving as acting director of Safety from September 2013 to March 2014. She was instrumental in ensuring the Safety mission continued during the extended medical absence of the Safety Director. Mary took the lead in an outstanding manner and her ability to work with senior staff and outside agencies has been priceless. While acting in the capacity of director of Safety, she continued accomplishing her normal duties, as the radiation protection manager (Health Physicist) which encompasses all of Yuma Proving Ground. She ensured we worked all issues in Safety and especially her radiation areas as we underwent a Department of Army Ammunition and Logistics review. As a result, YPG received high marks for our readiness with no deficiencies and the only test center to achieve such a high rating. This was due to Mary's leadership and dedication to maintaining a safe work environment for all YPG employees.

- Stop before checking maps and addresses, looking at paperwork or dealing with similar distractions.
- Plan and map out your trip before you leave home.
- Don't allow arguments or stressful conversations with passengers to divert driver attention from the road.
- We know better than to drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, but fatigue, stress and

strong emotions such as anger can also impair the ability to drive safely.

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