

Visitor services centered in one building

By Chuck Wullenjohn

Security has been a major and growing concern at Army installations since 9/11. Before that time, Yuma Proving Ground was primarily an open post without security gates – in other words, anyone could easily drive onto many areas of the proving ground.

For a number of years, proving ground visitors were required to present three official documents to security personnel at the gates in order to gain access: driver's license; vehicle registration; and proof of insurance. In December of last year, the Department of the Army added a fourth requirement that applied to all Army installations -- that a computer background check be conducted on each visitor. This resulted in long waits and major congestion at access control points.

To improve security and make the process more convenient for everyone, YPG has consolidated a wide array of services into a single facility – the Visitor Control Center. All visitor access is now handled here. This includes looking at the three items of documentation, conducting the computer check, and issuing passes to be presented to officers at entrance gates. If a visitor needs to access a test range, this is where he or she will be issued a range pass as well as watch the range safety video. If a hunter needs a hunting permit, this is where he or she comes.

When YPG officials began explor-



Cutting the ceremonial ribbon at the Visitors Control Center (VCC) are left to right: Julio Dominguez, YPG's Technical Director, Command Sgt. Maj. Sean Ward, YPG commander Col. Randy Murray, 1st Lt. Jess Laurie, Corps of Engineers, Garrison Manager Gordon Rogers and Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. James DeBoer. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

ing where exactly to locate the Visitor Control Center, a number of factors had to be taken into account. For instance, the center needed to be located outside YPG's perimeter, but, at the same time, in a central, convenient location. The demographics of YPG visitors also needed to be considered, for it includes test customers, drivers delivering supplies, business associates, local residents, and winter visitors. On Sunday morn-

ings people drive out to attend religious services in the base chapel.

The Wahner Brooks Military Equipment Exhibit Area off Imperial Dam Road, best meets these requirements. However, this area also falls within the well-preserved historic footprint of Camp Laguna, where training for thousands of Soldiers took place during World War II. For this reason, officials worked closely with the Arizona State Historic Preserva-

tion Office. As construction took place, an archeologist was on hand and numerous artifacts were uncovered. An exhibit of photos inside the center helps interpret the story of Camp Laguna and the tens of thousands of troops who underwent challenging training here.

"Using our own funds to construct the building meant we had to do it for less than \$1 million," said YPG Garrison

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For Manns, physical fitness is a part of life
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YPG Display at GAIN event enjoyed by hundreds /Page 4



A round every two seconds – mortars fired to the limit /Page 6



For Manns, physical fitness is a part of life



By Teri Womack

When Tina Manns first set foot on YPG in 2010, she hit the ground running. She literally arrived with a passion for fitness and a sense of dedication toward bringing it to the workforce. In addition to her then duties as YPG Adjutant, she established the YPG Wellness Program and encouraged other proving ground employees to join in support of fitness.

Manns departed YPG in 2012 for an over three year stint in Germany and recently returned as YPG's Chief, Manpower & Force Management in the Resource Management Office. That same enthusiasm for physical fitness and passion for helping others returned, with her as well.

Many years ago, I'd catch sight of Tina in the early morning hours at YPG Wellness Walk/Run events cheering on fellow employees after she completed her own run. I would also catch a glance of her when she ran through my Yuma

neighborhood. Each time, I would ask myself "How the heck does she continually maintain the motivation to exercise?"

Like many others, I started an exercise routine, dropped a few pounds and then somehow lost my motivation. So when I was given the opportunity to interview her, this was the first question I wanted to ask.

But first, I wanted to get to know her better. Manns was born in Yuma and was the first college graduate in her family. Her academic achievements include two Associate's degrees (General Studies and Business Administration), one Bachelor's degree (Management Studies), and two Master's degrees (Management Information Systems and Business Administration). With a notable military background, retiring as a Sergeant Major in the Army, and a civilian career that is still going strong, she's had the privilege of working with numerous inspirational people and is a solid believer in teamwork. She derives great satisfaction by volunteering

and supporting events in the Yuma community.

Her philosophy for physical fitness mirrors her personal outlook on life -- believing that when facing peaks and valleys in life, when you think you just cannot go on, you have to. She wouldn't change a thing about her life, believing that all things happen for a reason and although she encountered struggles along the way, it has been worth the journey.

I asked the question that my inquiring mind wanted to know - How does she keep herself continuously motivated to exercise and summon the discipline to continue even when she doesn't feel like it. Basically, she can't imagine herself being any other way. Her youngest son recently left for college so she is committed to remain healthy and fit just to keep up with him!

Editor's Note: The first YPG Wellness Series Walk/Run event will be held on 22 October at 5:15 am. Check out the other events on the YPG Wellness Series Sharepoint Site.

Tina Manns' passion for physical fitness, then and now, can be contagious since she already has inspired more people from YPG to join in on the band wagon of either running or walking. Whatever it takes, Manns will be right along your side. (Loaned photo)

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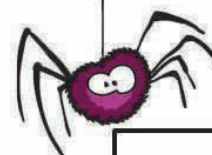


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Run OR Walk



ATEC's top NCO awed by what he sees today

By Mark Schauer

After three decades of service and multiple deployments overseas, Command Sgt. Major Andrew Connette is well aware of the immense importance of Soldiers having the best equipment possible.

Yet the Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC)'s highest ranking enlisted Soldier said during a recent visit to Yuma Proving Ground that he is still surprised by what he sees firsthand visiting the command's test centers.

"You don't realize the extraordinary amount of experimentation and testing that is going on every day behind the scenes. It's what awed me most about this job: it is kind of like pulling the curtain back and revealing all of the things going on behind the scenes of the big show."

Many of the platforms Connette used in the earliest days of his Army career are still fielded today, albeit in significantly enhanced forms that were tested at YPG and other ATEC test centers.

"It helps put things in perspective," he said. "If it is still in the Army's inventory, it probably at one point or another has gone through an upgrade. Every time something goes through an upgrade, the equipment comes back for test. It is validated before it goes out."

His first official visit to YPG as

ATEC Command Sgt. Maj. was not his first brush with what goes on here: In 2011 he paid a visit to witness one of the more arduous and short fuse tests in what was a record-breaking year in the proving ground's test mission.

"My brigade was to use the double-V hull Stryker for an Afghanistan deployment, and those vehicles were going through testing at Yuma," recalled Connette. "We had a platoon of infantry down here working as part of that test, and my commander and I came to observe."

Not only was he here for the testing, but he subsequently used the improved variant in Southwest Asia, to good results.

"I was on the flat bottom variant of the Stryker earlier in Iraq. The double V hull I was on in Afghanistan appeared much more survivable from our point of view."

A native of Wilmington, N.C., Connette joined the Army in 1985. As a



young cavalry scout he was in Operation Desert Storm in 1991, and returned to Iraq twice during Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. He served in Bosnia in the 1990s and had multiple other overseas tours up to his last deployment to Afghanistan. It has been quite a career:

He recently celebrated his 30th year in the Army, yet says he never anticipated serving as long as he has when he first enlisted.

"I don't think many people think about the Army as a career when they first enlist," he said. "I don't think they realize what they are getting into: it's something exciting and new. Probably somewhere after my second or third enlistment I made the decision to make it a career."

Once he made the commitment, he found it difficult to walk away, despite the hardships of Army life during a

tumultuous time.

"I remember getting to 20 years and being faced with the question of whether it all just ends right now, or should I keep going? It was a decision point to really think about."

His sense of duty prompted him to choose to stay the course. Being part of ATEC, he says, makes his service especially rewarding.

"The level of planning and detail that goes into the plethora of testing we do at all of the test centers is very impressive. I'm proud to be part of the organization and struck by what I see when I go out and visit folks who really enjoy what they are doing. It makes me feel good to be around a team like that."

For the past 30 years, Connette says he and other Soldiers have seen immense improvements in equipment, and are grateful to those in the test and evaluation community that contributed to making it possible.

"We've become more lethal, more accurate with precision guided weapons, and see fewer civilian casualties," he said. "All of these things have contributed significantly to saving Soldiers' lives. Everything that goes on here enables the Warfighter to do their mission while they are as protected as they can be in a very dangerous environment."

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YPG's static display at GAIN event enjoyed by hundreds of visitors

By Yolie Canales

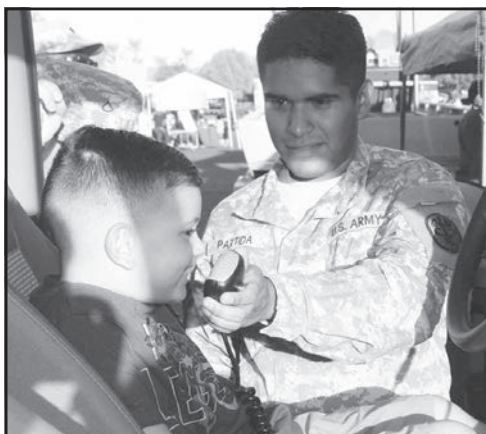
It was a fun-filled cool evening for Yuma Proving Ground as they participated in the 2015 Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods (G.A.I.N.) event on Saturday, Oct. 3 in Yuma. YPG's participation involved displays from YPG's Emergency Medical Services; an Airborne Test Force Parachute display, a Public Affairs Office table display with numerous informational brochures and a display of vintage military helmets for the public to try on and, a HMMWV with an imitation mounted .50 caliber machine gun for everyone, from young children to adults to get a 'hands-on' opportunity with.

This event is a statewide annual event designed to encourage Neighborhood Watch programs and bring together communities throughout Yuma for a common goal -- to let criminals know that citizens of Yuma are seriously united in the fight against criminal activity. This is also the perfect time to turn your front home lights on and get to know your neighbors.

Why is it time to get to know your neighbors? Because it's the best crime prevention device. GAIN Night is a great opportunity to get together with your neighbors and get to know each other better. Did you know, when neighbors know and care about each other, they feel more comfortable reporting crime and suspicious activity to the Police Department?



YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Sean Ward (rear) looks on as two youngsters get up close and personal with a HMMWV on display. "Yuma is the friendliest, nicest town I've ever been in," Ward said. "Anything we can do to get out and show the people of what we do, is worth doing."



Jack Quintero tries out the loudspeaker on one of YPG's ambulances with a hand from Spec. Jesus Partida. (Photos by PAO staff)



Public affairs specialist Mark Schauer (left) stayed busy showing curious spectators a table display that included such items as genuine Army helmets used in both World Wars.



Spectators also appreciated the chance to have a look at a real Army ambulance, and, from left, Sgt. Christopher Pierson, Spec. Jurail Simpson, and Pfc. Terry Figg were happy to oblige.

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VIEWPOINTS

By Mark Schauer

Yuma is known far and wide for its intense support of the military, and YPG Soldiers participate in most of the city's major community events, from the Yuma Air Show to Military Appreciation Day. Though it is hard to choose just one, we asked YPG Soldiers if they had a favorite community event.



Pfc. Terry Figg, Medic:

I like Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods. This is my second straight year participating: the first year, I was volun-told to, but I like seeing the variety of equipment and uniformed personnel, military and civilian, that participate. You get to see a lot of new faces and meet new people, and there are free hot dogs.



Sgt. Chris Pierson, Patient Administration NCOIC

I really like Military Appreciation Day. I look back at the history of the military and see there were many people that came before us and there will be many people that come behind us. It's a humbling experience and it is great to interact with all of the people.



Staff Sgt. Aaron Ahn, Parachute Rigger:

I like the Veterans Day Parade. It's nice to march and see all of the people lining the streets, having a good time and being together.

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A round every two seconds – mortars fired to the limit



Mortar team leader Arturo Anaya unloads M1061 60mm mortar rounds at the gun position prior to the rate-of-fire test. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

By Mark Schauer

For versatility and power, the mortar has been a key indirect fire weapon for generations, and virtually every type and variant of mortar in the ground combat arsenal goes through rigorous developmental testing at YPG.

The man portable M224A1 60mm mortar is of particular importance to infantry Soldiers. Consisting of an Inconel cannon attached to a base plate and supported by a bipod, the mortar system provides high-angle fire for close-in support of ground troops. When a mortar cannon is fired for a sustained period of the time the cannon becomes extremely hot, so testing is conducted to determine the rate of fire the weapon system can be

fired at without overheating. Overheating of a cannon, can result in a failure of the cannon presenting a safety issue to the crew.

For these reasons, YPG recently conducted a rate-of-fire test to verify that the Army's M1061 60mm mortar round could be used at the specified rate of fire without overheating the weapon system. Most YPG mortar tests are conducted remotely, with weapons operators remotely firing with a lanyard system while under protective cover. The realism necessary for this test, however, made that procedure impossible.

"We're man-firing this test because it is the only way we can achieve the rate of fire we need," said Ken Morrison, test officer. "The purpose of the test is to en-



Ready to go: Weapons operator Gerald Miller takes one last look at the 320 mortar rounds he will soon be feeding into a 60mm mortar tube. The test called for an initial rate of fire of 30 rounds per minute for four minutes, or one every two seconds.

sure the M1061 won't overheat the tube at the specified maximum rate of fire."

"It is one of our toughest tests, because it is manned with a very high rate of fire and not a lot of time to react between rounds," added Eddy Patchet, branch chief.

In fact, the test called for the weapons operation crew to fire 320 rounds within 15 minutes, with an initial rate of fire of 30 rounds per minute for four minutes, which means one every two seconds.

To make the test as safe as possible, the team of six operators donned Kevlar vests, helmets and ear protection, and knelt on pads beside the weapon to minimize knee discomfort. Also, within arm's reach was a bucket of water to extinguish any stray burning embers

that could fly into the weapon operator's hands or face. The rounds were wax-filled to the same weight of an armed mortar bomb, making the propellant the only explosive part of the test rounds.

Despite the increased risks, the weapons operators were confident of the additional safety measures, and proud that the intense test would help Soldiers in theater.

"It's emotionally moving when we do a test like this and know what it is going towards," said Joe Torres, gun crew leader. "This is for the Soldiers, so we are always highly motivated."

The unique test required a hand from other divisions within the proving

MORTAR

FROM PAGE 6



After a successful test, Greg Warner, Chad Narcisse, Joe Torres, Matt McDaniel, Brent Totty, Gerald Miller, Mike Barron and Ken Morrison took time for a group photo.

ground. The automotive instrumentation branch provided thermocouples at the mortar tube that constantly measured cannon temperature as the firing was in progress. A siren and light was set up that could be activated from within the gun position's bombproof to halt the test immediately if a safety concern was identified. Unlike the typical test, two additional test officers assisted during the test to ensure safety: Mike Barron was stationed with the gun crew and had constant communications with Chad Bloomingdale and Ken Morrison who were monitoring cannon temperature and three live video feeds from inside the bombproof.

Even more special equipment was required: a sensor at the mortar's base plate accurately recorded the rate of fire throughout the test. Then there was the matter of how to stack 320 four-pound mortar rounds for quick access to sustain the extremely rapid rate of fire. Toward that end, YPG's support services constructed a stout two-shelved wooden structure behind the mortar emplacement. As the test moment approached, weapons operators and test officers carefully unloaded ammo can after ammo

can of mortar rounds delivered to the gun position by truck, stacking them onto the shelves.

Once the test began, the weapons operators performed flawlessly, feeding weapon operator Matt McDaniel round after round and easily achieving the desired rate of fire while experiencing a mere three cook-offs of the 320 wax-filled mortars at the tube.

YPG testers attribute the flawless performance to careful planning, gun crew expertise, and rigorous adherence to safety procedures.

"It was highly successful," said Patchet. "Even when we had the cook-off at the muzzle, the crew knew to remove the round and keep going. As a result, we met the test objective."



Each wax-filled round was carefully inspected as the weapons operators and test officers stacked the rounds prior to the test. The rounds were wax-filled to the same weight of an armed mortar bomb, making the propellant the only explosive part of the test rounds.

VISITOR

FROM PAGE 1



Gordon Rogers visits with Chaplain Steven Smith while touring the newly built Visitor Control Center along with other visitors.

Manager Gordon Rogers. "We sat down with the Army Corps of Engineers to design a facility that does exactly what we needed, and we accomplished it in under one year." The final price tag was \$750 thousand.

Mark Hanley, chief of engineering at YPG's Directorate of Public Works, says the issue of utilities was a major factor in the location and design of the center.

"Electrical power and communications were extended over one mile in order to complete the project," he said. "We have very reliable power at YPG, though, so I knew we'd have no problem."

Future facility improvements include constructing a left turn lane on Imperial Dam Road and paving the facility parking lot. Both projects may be completed within the next year.

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Chaplain's Corner Prayer is right for You!

By Chaplain Steven D. Smith

The question must be asked, how is your prayer life? If you are like most of us, it has seasons, and sometimes lacks consistency. I cannot think of anything more important than intimacy with our Heavenly Father. "But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works." (Psalm 73:28) In the King James Version the word pray is mentioned 313 times. Prayer is so important! Don't stop reading just yet, ok?

This is not an exhaustive research on prayer. What I have is simply some ideas that have helped me in my time with God. I encourage you to maybe look closely at a few of these.

I found five encouraging ideas about prayer to help us through our daily walk in this life:

1. Find the right time. Are you a morning person or a night person? When are you most alert? "Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray." (1 Peter 4:7) Identify your "optimal prayer time."

2. Separate yourself somewhere private, Quiet and without Interruptions. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matthew 6:6) This will be your "refuge," your place of retreat.

3. Be quiet and listen. "Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10)

Contemplate His presence. Take a moment to realize that Almighty God, the Creator of the universe, is waiting to hear from you!

4. Talk with your best friend. Be yourself. Remember you are relating to a real Person. Do not be formal or ritualistic.

5. Pray with A.C.T.S. - A.C.T.S. is an easy way to remember key elements of prayer. My prayer time has improved dramatically since I started using it. It's simply prayer in four parts: Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication.

Have a "Mini Worship Time." Listen to praise music before you begin your quiet time. I love to do this while I drink my coffee. Sometimes, I sing along. Try singing without music. Begin with a Bible reading or devotional. Even a short reading can help get your mind focused on God. I love to read the Psalms and the Gospels. I start with a devotional, and then spend time in God's Word. He often uses this time to speak to me. In addition, use a prayer journal. A prayer journal is simply a list of people and things to pray for. It keeps you focused and consistent in your time with God. And finally, get "Out of the rut." "But when you pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." (Matthew 6:7) Occasionally, your prayer time may get stale. Change it! If you usually sit in a chair, get on your knees, or stand up. Ask God to restore you. Prayer changes things and situations in our lives.

Suggestion: Cut this article out and put on your refrigerator for future reference.

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Abusive Relationships

Submitted by Paul J. Kilanski, Family Advocacy Program Manager

Frequently people who are in abusive relationships don't recognize the nature of their situation. It's easy to look past abusive tendencies when you love someone, but it is simply not safe or fair to anyone involved.

No one deserves to be abused yet many people are. Statistics show that 36-50 percent of American women will be in at least one abusive relationship during her life. Next time you are with two friends, look around and realize that one---if not two---of you will be in an abusive relationship at some point, statistically speaking.

Fortunately, there is something you can do. Educate yourself on the signs and symptoms of abusive relationships and share this knowledge with your loved ones. Promise yourself never to accept abuse. You are worth more than that.

There are many signs to look out for in an abusive relationship. One of the principal indicators is the characteristic jealousy. Now, most people get jealous or possessive on occasion...sometimes it can even be seen as a sign of how much they care for you. But if your partner's jealousy is unfounded, persistent, or leads them to irrational and hurtful behaviors, you may want to re-evaluate.

Possessiveness and controlling behavior go along with jealousy and are often the next step down the path to abuse. Watch out for partners who are very bossy and who expect you to heed their demands. Also, if your partner tries to isolate you by insisting that you cut off social con-

tacts and friendships, pay attention. That is a clear warning sign!

Keep your eye out for other signs that your partner is abusive. Some of these include violent behavior (not necessarily against you), a short temper, drug or alcohol addiction, a history of bad relationships, and the tendency to pressure you to do things you are not comfortable with (sexual and otherwise). An abusive person is also likely to blame you for his or her emotional state and to say that you deserve it when they hurt you.

While these signs are indicators that something is wrong, there are other behaviors that actually constitute abuse. If your partner abuses you, get out of the relationship. Nothing else matters---your life is on the line. Abusive people get more abusive as time passes. A partner that hits you today could kill you tomorrow. There are many different types of abuse. Physical abuse includes pushing, hitting, slapping, kicking and cutting. Emotional abuse includes threats to hurt you or people you love, and constant criticism and belittlement. Sexual abuse includes when someone forces you to have sex or take part in sexual acts when you don't want to. Just because you have sex sometimes doesn't mean that your partner is entitled to have sex with you anytime he or she wants to.

If you feel that you might be in an abusive relationship, talk to someone immediately. Start with friends and family that you can trust and don't be afraid to see a counselor. There are also hotlines you can call such as the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233).

Chief's Corner Foreign visitors to YPG



By YPG Chief of Police, Dennis Brown

Those familiar with the Yuma area are well aware of the impending increase in the local population due to the arrival of "winter visitors." This holds true for YPG also as many of these visitors are drawn to the installation to visit the museum and other amenities we have to offer. With that in mind, some of the visitors and guests will be from foreign countries, and therefore, they and those sponsoring them on the installation must adhere to YPG access control policies.

Visitor access at Yuma Proving Ground has changed considerably in the last 12 months, especially regarding foreign visitors. Thanks to a reciprocal agreement between Canada and the United States, Canadian

citizens can now be vetted through the National Crime & Information Center database. The NCIC check is a requirement for unescorted access to the installation and due to this agreement, Canadian citizens can now apply for an installation access pass for up to (30) thirty days.

Unfortunately, this is not the case for unofficial visitors from other foreign countries. Therefore, foreign visitors from other countries not sponsored by a Garrison-Yuma organization or individual in possession of a DoD identification card or approved YPG pass, must be escorted onto the installation and kept under escort for the entirety of their visit. Unofficial foreign visitors that arrive at an access control point unescorted will be denied access onto the installation.

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Col. Randy Murray (center), YPG commander, cuts the ceremonial grand opening ribbon for YPG's new material analysis laboratory on Tuesday, October 6. Assisting, are left to right: 1st Lt. Jess Laurie, Command Sgt.



Present at the event but not in photo were: Ernesto

Elias, Tony Covarrubias, Troy Morris and Stephen Maurer. Boasting 4400 square feet, three separate laboratories that each will have a specific

function, and modern laboratory fume hoods, the new facility greatly enhances the material analysis team's ability to analyze oil and

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