



THE OUTPOST

U.S. ARMY YUMA PROVING GROUND, YUMA, ARIZONA 85365 | VOLUME 49 NO. 15 MONDAY, AUGUST 31, 2015

YPG test branch conducts six to eight weekly firing events

By Chuck Wullenjohn

The crump of artillery fire has formed part of the background noise at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground since its earliest days as a test center way back in 1951. The firing of artillery, mortars and assorted direct fire weapons like tank cannons have long been a bread and butter portion of the proving ground workload.

The YPG organization responsible for performing this important mission is the Munitions and Weapons Division of Yuma Test Center's Ground Combat test directorate. Though the people who make up the division fire an enormous number of artillery and mortar systems each year, they do much more. They perform counter-battery radar work, conduct countermine and demolition testing, fire the complex Counter-Rocket, Artillery and Mortar system that detects and fires at incoming enemy projectiles, and lots more.

It's an immense job from a variety of perspectives, says Steve Flores, chief of the division's artillery and mines branch.

"From the production standpoint, we perform testing that verifies that newly produced ammunition meets all specifications and is safe," he said. "From the engineering viewpoint, we prove weapon systems and munitions are safe, reliable and meet all

performance requirements." His branch conducts between six and eight firing events of artillery and mortar systems each week throughout the year.

"If you don't properly test systems during the development cycle, you end up getting what you paid for," said Flores. "Proper testing ensures systems perform exactly as they're supposed to."

YPG plays an important role in the weapon system and munitions acquisition process, for the proving ground's work ensures poorly performing or outright bad equipment never makes it to the field.

"Our role is to function as 'gatekeeper,'" Flores explained. "We ensure weapon systems and munitions meet specifications, but when they don't, and are later fixed, we test them again." In the end, YPG's people get the satisfaction of knowing that items that get fielded were faithfully and rigorously put through their test paces.

Although most work takes place for the direct benefit of U.S. forces, a small portion of the workload is in support of foreign customers, who pay for YPG's test services. Friendly foreign nations, such as Britain, Germany, Japan, and Saudi Arabia, have transported their systems here because of YPG's huge test range, its proven ability to gather accurate, reliable data, and depth of test experience. In the last few years,

for example, German forces put the PZH-2000 self-propelled howitzer through its paces at YPG, as did Japan with its Type 99 155mm howitzer.

Flores credits YPG's gun crews and data gathering experts for the quality of work they provide throughout the year.

"Our people are proficient at what they do, for they perform it day in and day out," said Flores. "Most members of our gun crews are retired military personnel who were once gunners, plus, people tend to stay here for a long time." He also credits a good training program within his division that provides effective training to new employees and includes mentorship from experienced personnel.

The work schedule can sometimes be harsh, with hot summer temperatures climbing above 115 degrees, requiring safety precautions for those working outdoors. These include mandated break periods, shade structures at test sites, air

conditioned trailers, and the availability of cool water. "We do whatever we can to mitigate the negative effects of high heat," said Flores.



Munitions and Weapons Division personnel, load a round prior to firing. "If you don't properly test systems during the development cycle, you end up getting what you paid for," said Steve Flores, chief of the division's artillery and mines branch. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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Yuma Test Station – Veteran recalls early days

By Mark Schauer

Wilton “Buzz” Sawyer retired as a command sergeant major, but began his service before the rank was even created.

He follows the progress of Yuma Proving Ground from retirement, and served here in its earliest days.

A native of Camden, N.C., Sawyer became a motorcycle enthusiast at a young age. His nickname came not from the mid-20th century comic strip hero Buzz Sawyer, but from something a motorcycle dealer said after the teenaged Sawyer won a local race against famed motorcycle and stock car driver Joe Weatherly.

“He was jumping up and down yelling, ‘he buzzed past that guy like a pay car passing a tramp.’ People picked up on the ‘buzz’ part and started calling me that,” explained Sawyer.

He joined the Army in 1948 and two years later deployed to Korea as an infantryman. He was part of Task Force Dog, which spent five grueling days assisting embattled Marines and Soldiers surrounded by the Chinese army at the Chosin Reservoir. During his tour he occasionally used C2 and C3 explosives for demolition work and operated a flamethrower.

“In my last days in Korea, I

taught South Korean soldiers to fire flamethrowers,” he said.

Sawyer’s war ended in August 1951 and his time in the infantry along with it, due to injuries.

He became part of the Army’s Chemical Corps at Maryland’s Edgewood Arsenal. In August 1952, a permanent team was organized at the recently-reopened Yuma Test Station, and Sawyer began the first of two stints here.

“We tested all of the chemical war gasses that were kept in environmental storage,” he said. “We periodically sampled containers—sometimes a one ton container, sometimes a 500 pound bomb—by drilling into them and analyzing samples in the lab to see how they were holding up in desert storage.”

The group also tested improvements to equipment he had used in Korea, such as a re-designed flamethrower with more leverage for the operator. Though the test station was then made up of multiple entities like Sawyer’s that didn’t share range space or communicate much with other operations, Sawyer was on good terms with YPG commander Col. Walter Abbey, post adjutant Maj. Bradley, and Master Sgt. Sam Massey, the post’s senior non-commissioned officer. He recalls Abbey and Marshall racing to various unit Christmas parties in a

commandeered provost marshal’s squad car one year, and interacting with them when he submitted a daily report. It was then that he occasionally was assigned other duties.

“One day I delivered my morning report and Maj. Bradley said, ‘Buzz, we have a civilian coming into the airport at 0830 and we don’t have anybody who can pick him up, can you do it?’ I said ‘sure’, and they made a sign that read ‘Mr. Siple’.”

The visitor turned out to be Dr. Paul Siple, the famed Antarctic explorer and Army geographer who selected the site for Yuma Test Station. At some point during Sawyer’s trip to pick him up, others on post realized how distinguished their approaching visitor was.

“By the time I got back to the main gate with him, Col. Abbey was waiting and got into my car with us to apologize to Dr. Siple for not properly identifying him. He told him they were setting up a reception for him at the officer’s club that evening, and Dr. Siple said, ‘Buzz and I already have plans.’”

Siple attended the reception after all, but accompanied Sawyer to San Luis, Sonora, the following night, and went prospecting in the desert with Sawyer and a group of Soldiers the day after.

It was a different time, but some things—like the dangerous commuter traffic on Highway 95—haven’t changed much. Sawyer car pooled with three fellow Soldiers and remembers one terrible accident.

“We were on our way into town after work one night near the long curve with a steep drop-off to the left, and a car flying through, passing illegally, went off that embankment and rolled several times,” he said. “We pulled up and stopped, and our safety officer Curtis Mullins, who had been a combat medic in Korea, took control of the scene, assigning people to tend to each of the injured. I took my t-shirt off and used



Wilton “Buzz” Sawyer follows the progress of YPG “since serving at YPG from 1952 to 1955 and again from 1957 to 1960, with his second stint bookended by an assignment in Panama. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

it to hold a gushing head wound on one guy. Nobody died- we saved them all.”

Sawyer served at YPG from 1952 to 1955, and then from 1957-1960, with his second stint bookended by an assignment in Panama. He transferred out of the chemical corps in 1962 and retired from the Army in 1975, his last assignment being Command Sgt. Maj. of Pine Bluff Arsenal in Arkansas. He was stationed in Alaska on two separate occasions, and had temporary duty assignments in Vietnam during America’s involvement in that conflict.

In his retirement, Sawyer volunteered for a number of years at the Veterans Administration hospital in Prescott, Az. Today, he lives in Yuma with his wife of 62 years, Amelia, a Bard native he met on his first day at Yuma Test Station. They have three sons and four grandsons, and have been active volunteers for groups ranging from the Boy Scouts to the Knights of Columbus over the decades, continuing a lifetime of service to his community and nation.

THE OUTPOST

The Outpost is an unofficial publication authorized under provisions of AR 360-1. The Outpost is published every two weeks by the Public Affairs Office, Yuma Proving Ground. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Army. This newspaper uses material credited to ATEC and ARNEWS. While contributions are solicited, the PAO reserves the right to edit all submitted materials and make corrections, changes or deletions to conform with the policy of this newspaper.



News may be submitted to:
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Next Outpost deadline is noon *August 20th*

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Cheifs's Corner Piggybacking, tailgating at unmanned access points

By Dennis Brown, Chief of Police"

Piggybacking or tailgating is a method for gaining access to controlled access areas when control is accomplished by electronic or mechanical locking devices. Typically, an individual positions themselves by the locked device and when an authorized individual arrives and is granted access, the unauthorized intruder goes in as well. The success of this method of piggybacking depends on the quality of the access control mechanism and the alertness of authorized personnel in resisting cooperation with the perpetrator. On YPG, it is often a co-worker or spouse who assist in this type of unauthorized access.

Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD) mandates Identity proofing on all Federal Facilities. Identity proofing is the process of providing or reviewing federally authorized acceptable documentation for authenticity. Identity proofing includes visually matching the photograph with the face of the person



presenting the identification and verifying authenticity by visually checking the anti-counterfeit or fraud protection measures embedded in the credential.

In addition,

Yuma Proving Ground Directorate of Emergency Services Standard Operating Procedure 19-13, provides guidance for who is authorized access through unmanned access points.

Personnel who violate access control procedures or assist others in such matters are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (military); and administrative actions, to include possible dismissal (DA Civilians/ Contractors). Non-DoD related personnel and family members can lose their driving privileges or have their installation access restricted.

Every individual living and working on YPG is responsible for maintaining a safe and secure environment. Be a good steward of security and help make a difference by assisting in the presentation of a good security posture. Make a difference, not a problem.

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Religious services pianist shares musical stylings

By Mark Schauer

Religious services are as much a source of strength and solace to Soldiers as to civilians, and across two stints at the proving ground since the late 1970s. Steve Embry has enhanced the worship of multiple generations of parishioners at YPG's Sunday Protestant church services with his joyous piano stylings.

Embry is two years into his second tour here, and also served as the Protestant service pianist for most of the period from 1978 to 1989. He has seen enormous changes during that time, as YPG grew into the busiest of the Army's six test centers even as its Soldier population decreased.

"The chapel was the tallest building on post," he recalls. "Now the Candlewood Suites hotel holds that honor, of course. The post has grown phenomenally since the '80s."

In his youth, Embry wanted to be a concert pianist, and was classically trained by Gertrude Turnell, a local pianist taught by the famed instructor William Sherwood, who was a student of Franz Liszt. His repertoire extends far beyond classical music, however.

"I'm very versatile. If you make a living in Yuma as a musician, you have to be versatile."

This versatility extends to other artistic endeavors. He recently exhibited a selection of his Yuma-themed

paintings at the Yuma Art Center, and he plans to extend his "Icons of Yuma" series with even more ambitious desert landscape canvasses in the future. Yet music remains his primary love and major source of acclaim.

"He is the best jazz pianist in the city of Yuma," said Monsignor Richard O'Keefe, YPG Catholic chaplain.

Embry has lived in Yuma since early childhood, coming here with his family in 1948. He was in the first graduation class of Kofa High School in 1963.

"Every school I went to growing up was a brand new school."

This continued as he attended Arizona Western College, where he learned that new schools experience growing pains, sometimes in a very public way.

"The football team won a national championship game in Nevada their second year and the college didn't have a band or cheerleaders. For the halftime show, they had me and a couple of other guys play some jazz stuff in the middle of the field. It was awful."

A lay minister himself, Embry admires the dedication of the Army's Protestant chaplains.

"A Protestant chaplain has to open up their range of ministry so they can minister to more kinds of people with different denominational backgrounds. That's an interesting challenge for them."

The multi-faceted Embry plans to



Steve Embry has enhanced the worship of multiple generations of parishioners at YPG's Sunday Protestant church services with his joyous piano stylings. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

stay at YPG for the foreseeable future, teasing out new strains of emotion and spiritual power from even the most well-known songs in the hymnal.

"Everything I play is my own arrangement. I never play exactly as it is written—that's boring."

Wild Burro killed along Highway 95

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Yuma Field Office is asking the public to use caution when traveling on Highway 95, especially between Mile Posts 40 and 70. "During the last few weeks, there has been numerous traffic accidents associated with wild burros in that area. BLM has a great concern about the safety of the traveling public and also the burros that roam in the area. Please be extra careful when you drive through that stretch of the road. Wild burros normally live along the Colorado River during the summer months," stated Wild Horse and Burro Specialist John Hall. "However, because of the

the burros and other wildlife have been attracted to the standing water along the highway and have been congregating near Highway 95."



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VIEWPOINTS

By Mark Schauer

First jobs may seem modest in terms of pay, but they often have a lifetime impact. We asked members of the workforce about their first job.



Willie Farrley Transportation Officer:

I worked in tobacco fields when I was 13, but my first real paying job was as a line cook at Hardees in Fayetteville, North Carolina, when I was 17. I did that very, very briefly, until I went to college and then joined the military.



Richard Bloomfield Test Officer:

I worked for the water and sanitation department in Ramon, New Mexico, the summer I was 16. They had us clean the gutters. We would go up and down the streets with a flat head shovel and a broom and scoop all of the junk out of the gutters and cut back weeds and mow. It was a lot of work, and we made minimum wage.



Roland Borro, Test Officer:

My first real job was working in a Japanese Foods supermarket in Guam. I did everything: I started out stocking shelves and working in the warehouse, then did deliveries, worked as a cashier and a butcher's assistant, and then became the produce man. I worked there three years and then joined the Army. It was a character builder and gave me a sense of responsibility.

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Blackhawk helicopters replacing venerable Hueys



The first UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter to join YPG's air fleet is wheeled out onto the tarmac for its first flight at the proving ground. Replacing the iconic Vietnam-era UH-1, the UH-60 is a larger, faster airframe with more-modern digital controls that didn't exist when the Huey entered service. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

By Mark Schauer

With capable maintenance personnel and a dry desert climate, YPG has often been the final working home of venerable military equipment.

From Korean War-era M101 howitzers to the Vietnam era O-2 Skymaster observation airplane, a variety of rugged platforms have supported YPG's test mission long after they had been eclipsed on the battlefield.

Eventually, however, a system that no longer has an Army-wide parts system or support structure must be phased out. It happened to the O-2 aircraft in 2010, and now the UH-1 Iroquois helicopter, better known as the Huey, will soon join the list: The venerable airframe is being replaced in YPG's fleet by four UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters.

The move is bittersweet to YPG pilots. The Huey was an iconic airframe of the Vietnam War, and has served as workhorse of the proving ground's air fleet for decades. The same airframe

that supported testing of the Global Positioning System at YPG in the late 1970s is still used for state-of-the-art testing today, and each of the four Hueys currently in the proving ground's fleet has been remarkably well maintained.

"We like the Huey because it is a simple, analog aircraft," said Ralph Arnold, chief pilot. "There's not a lot of things that can go wrong with it: It is very reliable and has performed its mission for almost 50 years. It's easy to fly."

The purpose of YPG's helicopters-supporting tests- means modifications to the standard airframe are necessary to meet the mission. Each modification requires airworthiness evaluation and releases to ensure the aircraft functions safely, a time-consuming process. From specialized equipment racks inside the airframe to camera and sensor mounts on the exterior, YPG airfield personnel over the years have made more than 50 different modifications to various Hueys in the fleet. Now, they are currently

undertaking the same process to modify the recently acquired Blackhawks.

"We plan to have all the basic modifications we need to do our basic mission," said Arnold. "Of course, whenever a new test comes, we'll modify as necessary for that test, and when the test is over we'll de-modify it."

Toward this end, one of the four Blackhawks meant to join YPG's fleet travelled to Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama, to get a modification on its electrical system, and various equipment racks and camera mounts installed as two YPG mechanics observed the process. These mechanics then returned to YPG to modify the remaining three as they arrive.

Though they regret losing the Hueys, the airfield's pilots are excited about the capabilities the newer Blackhawk brings to the mission.

"It is much faster than a Huey and will carry a lot more," said Arnold, who flew several thousand hours in the UH-60 during his military career. "It climbs

faster, descends faster, returns faster."

Sporting two engines and four blades on its main rotor, the Blackhawk can seat more personnel than the single-engine, twin-bladed Huey, and has a maximum load weight of 22,000 pounds compared to the smaller Huey's 9,500 pound limit. It also has more-modern digital controls that didn't exist when the Huey entered service.

"The Huey may as well be a backhoe: it's all levers," said Doug Bradford, pilot. "The Blackhawk has automated flight control that will hold an attitude. It's like hitting cruise control in your car: you still have to steer, but you don't have to adjust your speed."

The first Blackhawk to arrive at YPG was manufactured in 1988, and thus already has a good start on becoming the next venerable aircraft to enjoy a lengthy working retirement at the Army's premier testing facility.

"We don't treat them bad or misuse

BLACKHAWK

FROM PAGE 6

them or abuse them while we're flying our tests," observed Arnold of the Huey. "They last a long time. It's a testament to our mechanics who keep them in good shape."

It is likely the same will be true of the Blackhawk.



It was an overcast, but humid day when the UH-60 took its first flight at YPG. Here, pilot Doug Bradford drains the sweat from his flight helmet.



YPG pilots Doug Bradford (left) and Ralph Arnold were the first to fly the UH-60 that has joined YPG's air fleet. While in uniform, Arnold flew several thousand hours in the UH-60. "I loved them," he said. "They were quite the aircraft, and have gotten even better over the years."



Following the first flight, chief pilot Ralph Arnold fills out post-flight data into the UH-60's log book.



The UH-60 carries more and flies faster than the UH-1 it replaces, and consequently uses more fuel. Here, the aircraft is refueled after its first flight at the proving ground.



YPG pilots conduct rigorous pre-flight checks on all aircraft prior to a flight. Here, pilot Doug Bradford inspects the tail rotor of the proving ground's recently acquired UH-60 helicopter prior to its first flight at YPG.

From the ATEC G1/7 Director's Office

This is an advanced notice of an upcoming change in the Federal health benefits program.

Currently, enrollees in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program may choose

between 'self-only' and 'self and family' coverage. Family coverage rates are substantially more expensive and don't vary by how many additional family members are insured.

In 2013 a law was passed that added a new type of enrollment, "Self Plus One." **Beginning with the 2015 FEHB Open Season (November – December 2015),** employees can now select one of the following three types of enrollment:

- (1) Self-only
- (2) Self and Family
- (3) Self Plus One

Self Plus One allows two people to be covered by the FEHB Program, the employee and one eligible family member designated by that employee. For a complete list of eligible family members, go to: www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/reference-materials/reference/family-members.

The enrollment period begins during the 2015 Federal Benefits Open Season. The dates for the Open Season are 9 Nov - 14 Dec 2015 and coverage becomes effective on 10 Jan 2016. Rates for each enrollment category will become available in

early October.

Changes to health benefits can be made during Open Season through the Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS)

Additional information can be found at:

<https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/special-initiatives/self-plus-one/>

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(Mexican pastries/Refreshments at both services)

16 Sep: FREE Salsa Tasting Contest,
ROC Atrium: 11:30 - 12:30

16 Sep: Price School poster contest display at Salsa Contest

ATEC commander on Antiterrorism Month

Working together, we can thwart terrorists attacks

After the orchestrated attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., the United States learned, firsthand, the serious threats it faced from terrorists groups and from the countries supporting them.

After the attacks September 11, terrorism for most American citizens shifted from being a distant and occasional threat to an awareness of the real and imminent danger to ourselves, our families, and our way of life. These attacks not only changed the course of American history and the meaning of national security for the American people, it also left many concerned about the possibility and impact of future terror incidents executed on American soil.

That's why it remains imperative that Army Professionals at home and abroad remain vigilant as we take time during the month of August to focus on antiterrorism practices. Although the U.S. continues to put relentless pressure on terrorist groups by disrupting terrorist plots, reducing the financial support available to these groups and inflicting significant

leadership losses, the threat of potential terrorist attacks against America remains very real.

As a consequence of the heightened and significant threats to our homeland, countering terrorism has become the top national security priority for the United States and the Army. It is critical that we keep pace with and confront new and emerging threats as we cultivate a culture of preparedness and resilience that will allow the Army to prevent and/or respond to and recover successfully from any potential act of terror directed at our nation.

While threats persist, our nation is, without a doubt, stronger today than it was on September 11. We are better prepared to confront evolving threats and more resilient in the face of continued challenges.

As we observe Antiterrorism Month, it's important to remain aware of both homegrown and foreign threats, whether they come from a conventional attack using bombs and bullets or an unconventional attack using CAC cards and computers.

The best way to protect the United States from terrorism is to ensure strong and capable domestic Antiterrorism Program, executed globally, that proactively takes steps

to increase the American public's understanding of the very real nature of the terrorist threats we face as a country.

Protecting our nation is a shared responsibility. As a nation of active citizens, we must all take responsibility for ourselves, our families and our neighborhoods so we stay informed and aware of potential threats.

We know there is no guarantee that there will never be another terrorist attack. However, we do know informed, alert communities are our best defense against future terrorist attacks and play critical roles in keeping our nation safe. We can all help keep our communities safe by paying closer attention

to our surroundings and immediately reporting suspicious activity to local law enforcement agencies.

If you see something suspicious or just out of the ordinary, report it.

Your report could interrupt the terrorism planning cycle and potentially stop a terrorist attack.

Our 'See Something – Say Something' and 'iWATCH' campaigns encourages community awareness and understanding on how to remain vigilant against terrorist threats. Reporting anything suspicious as soon as possible may just help save a life.

Know the threat. Know the plan. Protect our mission and our Army Families.

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Coyote capture at YPG



Living and working at YPG, personnel have watched coyotes roaming around parking lots and, in some cases, front lawns. For our safety and theirs, it is important to remember that these are wild animals. This little guy in the photos was recently captured and relocated because he and his litter mates caused considerable damage at one of YPG's facilities. Relocation for these animals was the last resort because relocated animals often don't survive, or they become a problem elsewhere. YPG tries to discourage wildlife from becoming too friendly by not providing food or water to them. Coyotes, however, are smart, hardy, and well adapted to the desert environment. They will find ample food and water without human intervention. Please help us keep wildlife wild -- the alternative is harmful to both the animals and the Army's mission. (Photo by Daniel Steward)

Rob Turner

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State officials visit YPG



Arizona House of Representatives Majority Leader Steve Montenegro (left) and Yuma County Supervisor Russ Clark (right) visited U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground for an in-depth briefing about proving ground activities and a ride on a M1A2 Abrams Main Battle Tank. Donning helmets, face masks, and visors, the pair experienced one of the proving ground's more than 200 miles of punishing road courses in the extreme desert heat. "It was an amazing experience," said Montenegro. "It is really neat to know this type of operation is right here in Yuma. It's not only a strong economic driver for our community, but something that is having a global impact." (Photo by Mark Schauer)



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