

## ★ *Supporting the Warfighter for 75 Years* ★

### SREHD test going strong at YPG

By Mark Schauer

YPG conducts rapid and thorough testing of equipment in extreme natural environments.

It's often said, and a particular case in point concerns the remarkable Standoff Robotic Explosive Hazard Detection System (SREHD), an explosive detecting semi-autonomous system that not only detects things like land mines and improvised explosive devices, but also neutralizes them.

"The way it is able to traverse the range and follow the contour of the ground is very good," said Jesus Estrada, test officer. "It is the most advanced system I have worked with."

Land mines and other buried explosive devices are a major threat

SEE **SREHD** page 6



YPG test officer Robert Archibale prepares for a test run of the Standoff Robotic Explosive Hazard Detection System (SREHD), an explosive detecting semi-autonomous system that not only detects things like land mines and improvised explosive devices, but also neutralizes them. Over 400 updates were incorporated into the system after its last test at YPG earlier this year. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

## Public invited to tour World War II's Camp Laguna at YPG for first time

By Chuck Wullenjohn

World War II's Camp Laguna is an unseen and unknown entity to most people, including employees at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground. Once hosting tens of thousands of Soldiers

for six month periods of rigorous training before going into combat, the remains of the once bustling facility have slumbered in the desert for nearly 75 years.

To most, Camp Laguna and its

military contributions in achieving World War II victory have been forgotten.

Camp Laguna was the first of the Arizona-based divisional camps in the Desert Training Center formed

in the early months of World War II. The original idea for the center was to provide a realistic training area prior to the impending

SEE **CAMP LAGUNA** page 2

Shoot'in the Breeze: What did you bring?

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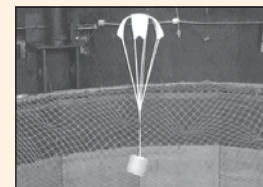
Honor the sacrifice of those who have served

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Artillery projectile parachutes to be tested at YPG

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# CAMP LAGUNA

FROM PAGE 1

invasion of North Africa, though the center's purpose soon broadened. It eventually covered 85,000 square miles in Southern California and Arizona.

Maj. Gen. George Patton, the first commander of the training center, said, "The training area is the best I have ever seen. It is desolate and remote." Men who trained at the test center had different things to say, as you can imagine. Some called it the "Land that God Forgot." Others

were even less complimentary. One described his camp as, "18 square miles of nothing in a desert designed for Hell".

Camp Laguna, one of the camps within the Desert Training Center, roughly paralleled highway 95 and has never been open to the public. The southern portion of the camp includes well-preserved remains of a World War II camp and YPG is the only Army installation to have a portion of the old test center within its geographical footprint. Many of the rock-lined streets, walkways and troop areas remain. Today, it is still possible to "walk in the footsteps"



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: Many rock-lined streets and walkways remain, as well as a great deal of residue such as bottles and glass, bullet casings, rusting cans, twisted metal, nails, and deteriorating lumber. In commemoration of YPG's 75th anniversary, three tours of the camp will take place this winter. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)



of those Soldiers who once called Camp Laguna home.

Living in primitive conditions in the midst of the unforgiving Arizona desert, Camp Laguna's Soldiers resided in canvas tents and trudged many miles in marches and maneuvers under the hot sun. The

purpose of the challenging training was to prepare them for the demands of front line combat.

Typically arriving in Yuma aboard passenger trains operated by the Southern Pacific Railroad, the mostly-drafted Soldiers were loaded aboard trucks for the bumpy 25

## THE OUTPOST

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Though thousands of troops trained at the camp at any one time, all lived in tents without electricity or air conditioning. (Loaned photo)



World War II's Camp Laguna, located at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground, is unknown and forgotten to most. Part of the Desert Training Center used to train tens of thousands of troops for active combat, Camp Laguna has been off-limits to the general public for the last 75 years. (Loaned photo)

mile drive from downtown Yuma to the desert camp. Many were to experience the rigors of the desert for the first time.

Since public access to what remains of old Camp Laguna has been off-limits for most of the past 75 years, many of the rocks that lined company streets and the outside of tents are intact. Residue still sits on the ground – bullet casings, bottles and glass, rusting cans, twisted pieces of metal, nails, and slowly deteriorating lumber.

YPG is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2018 and, in

commemoration of that, three public tours of Camp Laguna are being offered – Dec. 19, Jan. 30 and March 6. Tickets must be purchased through the Yuma Visitors Bureau, with sales beginning Nov. 6. Attendees are limited to one busload (about 50 people) each time.

According to YPG Archeologist Erin Goslin, speaking while exploring the camp, visitors will be advised to take photos but leave artifacts undisturbed.

“We have very low rainfall here which makes for great preservation of certain materials,” she said. “If you remove an artifact from its original location and move it elsewhere, it loses its in-place historic context.”

Goslin has spotted a wide variety of human artifacts in her visits to the Camp Laguna area, some of which she can research to uncover a surprising amount of information. With beer bottles, for instance, she

can locate the manufacturer, the city in which it was manufactured, the date.

“I’ve seen Olympia beer labels on some of the bottles, brewed in Tumwater, Washington, which seems to have been popular out here,” she said.

Camp Laguna was built to accommodate up to 15,000 Soldiers at a time, so it once sprawled over a large area. As he walked between two straight alignments of rocks designating a sidewalk, Heritage Center Director Bill Heidner entered an area where numerous tents were once set-up.

“This tent city contained about 30 GP medium tents erected in this one area,” he said, “with more nearby. Each tent was occupied by 30 Soldiers who slept on cots.” A short distance away were once situated headquarters, supply and logistics areas. He also identified what once was a motor pool area.

The six month training rotations at Camp Laguna were primitive and tough, but for a definite purpose. Once the Soldiers completed their training and left, they were deployed to combat areas overseas, where the realistic, rugged training held them in good stead.

One Camp Laguna veteran stated, “This desert training didn’t necessarily teach us all about combat, but it sure made us tough. Soldiers who couldn’t take the punishment dropped out and were sent someplace else. Those who made it were transformed from boys into men -- men ready for active combat.”

For the first time since World War II, members of the public are invited to tour the remains of Camp Laguna this winter by taking part in three tours of the camp. To register for the tours, visit the Visit Yuma (formerly known as the Yuma Visitors Bureau) website at [www.visityuma.com](http://www.visityuma.com)



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# Shoot'in the Breeze

## What did you bring?

By David J. Horn

One of my old YPG instructors told me once, "Rule No. 1. Safety." "Rule No. 2. Don't get separated from your lunch."

We have several fine dining establishments here at YPG, including the ROC Garden, the Cactus Café, Coyote Lanes, and the Road Runner Café. But for the workforce that spends their days out on the remote parts of our test range, having something to eat during the day is all about what you bring, and what you bring it in.

When I first started working, there weren't too many choices in types of lunch boxes out there, but now there's quite a variety. A lot of our younger workers bring in those soft-side "lunch bags." They're pretty cool, with all their compartments for water bottles and snacks and such. Then, there are

the folks who bring in backpacks, stuffed with lunch and a whole lot more. If you forgot your sunscreen or you need hand-wipes or an extra pen, those folks are your friend.

The really big, hefty folks, especially the ones that spend all day in their trucks, seem to migrate toward those big, boxy, hard-side coolers. There's room for lots of ice, and second and third and fourth helpings. Then, there's my lunch box. It's an old-school rectangular black lunch box with a stainless steel coffee thermos that fits into the top half. My old lunch box is pretty beat-up after over 30 years on the job, where I've had to repair it several times. I only have a couple more years to go before I retire, and I have a personal goal that my old lunch box and I, even if we're both covered with band aides and baling wire, are going to cross that finish line

into retirement together.

What people bring in to eat usually depends on whether they'll have access to conveniences like refrigerators or microwaves during their workday. For the folks near civilization, they tend to bring in those packaged meals where you just zap them for 60 seconds and you're done. For others, they bring in a myriad of leftovers from home, from the remnants of last night's steak dinner, to plastic tub one of four from that big batch of spaghetti that they made on the previous weekend.

For those that know they'll be eating somewhere out on the test range, I notice differences between what the men bring in, versus the ladies. The ladies tend to bring in meals that are ready to eat, like a salad, a bag of fruit or carrots, etc. For the guys however (and yes, some of the ladies), it's guaranteed, that their lunch box is full of meat. Thick, no-nonsense slabs of beef or chicken that has to be prepared in some way before it's ready

to eat. First, folks lay out a cutting board and maybe a tablecloth, over the top of whatever they're using as a table

(because you don't want to know what may have been laying on that make-shift table). Then, they take out this mean-looking knife to cut up that slab of meat (you don't want to know what that knife was used for earlier in the day). Then, they wrap up the meat and any added fixings in a thick four tortilla (you just know that those tortillas were made with real lard). Finally, it's all wrapped up in aluminum foil and placed on top of a hot vehicle engine or on the dash at the base of their truck windshield to heat up. When ready, it's always accompanied by a favorite salsa. Delicious!

Whatever a person brings in, there's just something special about how good everything tastes when it's enjoyed outdoors on the range.

There. Pardon me, but its lunch time!





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## Chaplain's Corner

# Honor the sacrifice of those who have served

By Maj. Ronald Beltz

An old man and his wife are sitting in the parking lot of a supermarket. The hood is up on their car. Evidently they are having engine problems.

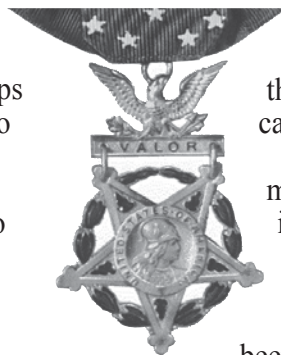
A young man in his early twenties with a grocery bag in his arm walks in the direction of the elderly couple. The old gentleman emerges from the car and takes a few steps in the young man's direction. He points to the open hood and asks the young man for assistance. The young man puts his grocery bag into his expensive SUV, turns back to the old man and yells at him:

"You shouldn't even be allowed to drive a car at your age!"

And then with a wave of his hand, he gets into his car and speeds out

of the parking lot. The old gentleman pulls out his handkerchief, mops his brow and goes back to his car. Again he looks at the engine. He then goes to his wife and appears to reassure her that things will be okay.

A stranger approaches the old man. "Looks like you're having a problem," he says. The old man smiles sheepishly, and quietly nods his head. The stranger looks under the hood of the car, but he has no more expertise with automobile engines than the old man. He assures the elderly gentleman he will return and heads to a nearby service station. He explains the situation to a mechanic



and says he will pay him if he would help the elderly couple with their car.

Returning with the mechanic, the stranger gets into a conversation with the old gentleman. The stranger is wearing a ring signifying that he had been a Marine. Coincidentally, so had the old man. He confides that he had served in some of the harshest battles in our nation's history, including Guadalcanal and Okinawa. He had retired from the Marine Corps after the war.

After the car was repaired and running, the old gentleman handed a card to the stranger and they shook hands and parted. A little while later

the stranger happened to look at the card. The name of the old gentleman was on the card in golden leaf and under his name was written: Congressional Medal of Honor Society. It was only then that the former Marine realized that he had come to the aid of one of America's heroes.

Just a reminder that there are men and women who have served their country and received very little in return. It is only right that we recognize their sacrifice and honor their service.

Joshua 1:9 tells us: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."



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# SREHD

FROM PAGE 1

to Soldiers. More than 30 countries have refused to sign a global treaty to cease manufacture and use of the weapons. Additionally, many places in the world where American Soldiers deploy to are contaminated by literally millions of decades-old mines. Detecting these threats with a handheld device is slow, dangerous, and fatiguing work with possibly deadly consequences in the event of a mistake.

Enter the SREHD. Whereas previous mine-detecting robots only sported a single camera and a five-jointed mechanical arm for interrogating threats, the SREHD boasts stereoscopic cameras that provide a Soldier a three dimensional representation of the terrain being scanned on a handheld computer device and sophisticated sensors

that help them discriminate between threatening devices and innocuous pieces of debris. A microphone mounted to the robot enables an operator to hear sounds in the vicinity of the system, too.

The SREHD methodically scans an area and marks a cleared trail with blue dye. If a threat is detected, the robot sprays an X on the ground to mark the spot: the Soldier operating the device can choose to retreat the vehicle and remotely detonate the discovered threat, or continue scanning before retreating and detonate multiple threats at once.

During a Reliability Availability Maintainability (RAM) test at YPG earlier this year, Soldiers from the 92nd Engineering Battalion at Fort Stewart, Ga. put the SREHD through its paces as they would in a route clearance convoy in combat areas, running the platforms across sandy trails and rugged washes and steep wahdis filled with stones and rocks,



Joel Holsinger, countermine range manager, takes a measurement as project engineer Jesus Estrada looks on. "YPG is a great test facility," said Roger Nasci, program manager for Carnegie Robotic Laboratories. "The terrain represents the environment that we're working in and the YPG team has been really good helping us develop our technology and learning what we can improve."



SREHD is a semi-autonomous system, but human beings still control its use. "There is a big misperception about the word 'autonomous': people think it is a self-governing vehicle that does whatever it wants to do," said Maj. Lendrick James, deputy product manager. "In fact, an operator always has control of the next step in where it will go."

dead wood, thick brush, and other naturally-occurring debris. The recommendations of the Soldiers and test officers were rapidly incorporated into the system, which is currently undergoing additional testing in the same punishing environment.

"Over 400 updates were made

to the system since our last RAM period," said Maj. Lendrick James, deputy product manager. "For this RAM period we will run the new units for 40 additional hours to improve our reliability. This will increase our stakeholders' confidence in the system."



X marks the spot. If a threat is detected, the SREHD can spray an X on the ground to mark the spot. The marking is even visible at night with night vision goggles. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



SREHD can detonate a threat without the need for excavation or additional interrogation of the suspected explosive device. A Soldier instead uses the robot to carefully place a shaped explosive charge over the threat, then remotely detonates it after having the SREHD retreat to a safe distance.

“When we came out of testing last time, we were seeing issues with intermittent sweeping, communication issues, and our carriage system not arming correctly,” added Phillip Lawson, project lead. “Based on the testing we looked at the problems and prioritized what was critical to increase our reliability.”

All involved cited YPG’s intense terrain as a major factor in testing the system here.

“Nothing can emulate what Soldiers experience in theater, but this is a very difficult course to get through,” said Lawson. “YPG is relevant to our scenario. It has a lot of washes and rough terrain that we’re looking for, as well as the ability to bury targets.”

Likewise, they had high praise for YPG’s personnel, institutional knowledge, and test infrastructure.

“YPG is a great test facility,” said Roger Nasci, program manager for Carnegie Robotic Laboratories. “The terrain represents the environment that we’re working in and the YPG team has been really good helping us develop our technology and learning what we can improve.”

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**ICE**

# Cutting edge artillery projectile parachutes to be tested at YPG

By Jane Benson

NATICK, Mass. -- Two research, development and engineering centers have come together to collaborate on making unique parachutes from high-strength para-aramid materials, which are sometimes used in ballistic vests and body armor.

The Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center (NSRDEC) is working with the Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center (ARDEC) on special purpose parachutes for use with artillery projectiles.

Richard Benney, director of NSRDEC's Aerial Delivery Directorate, praised the collaborative work on the para-aramid versions of the tri-lobed and cross parachutes.

"NSRDEC's Aerial Delivery Directorate and ARDEC continue to work closely together in many areas, and the collaborative work on the tri-lobed and cross parachute projects is a great recent example of our close partnership," said Benney.

Walt Koenig, an aerospace engineer in the Aeroballistics Division at ARDEC, is working with NSRDEC on a particular cross parachute design. This version of the cross parachute is used to stabilize an artillery projectile submunition and optimize its performance.

"My role in this program is to develop a system to orient and stabilize a munition contained in a 155mm projectile," said Koenig. "NSRDEC has provided invaluable assistance in reaching that goal."

ARDEC engineers are working with NSRDEC's Parachute Prototype Shop on several next generation munition programs requiring decelerators. Koenig explained that

one of the programs "uses a small cross chute to orient and stabilize a munition with a high reliability fuze."

"Working with the prototype shop has proven to be a cost-effective way to get small quantities of high-quality parachutes made for testing," said Koenig. "They do a great job on the chutes and are very easy to work with."

In addition to the para-aramid version of the cross parachute, NSRDEC and ARDEC are working on a tri-lobed design parachute. This type of parachute will likely be used at a test facility, such as Yuma Proving Ground, to collect various data.

Travis Heithoff is a mechanical engineer in ARDEC's Engineering

Analysis and Evaluation Division working with NSRDEC on the tri-lobed project. He is working to develop a design for a reliable test asset for recovering projectile components.

Heithoff explained, "for the past number of years, ARDEC has been endeavoring to reconstitute a capability to soft-recover components from a gun-launched projectile for engineering tests."

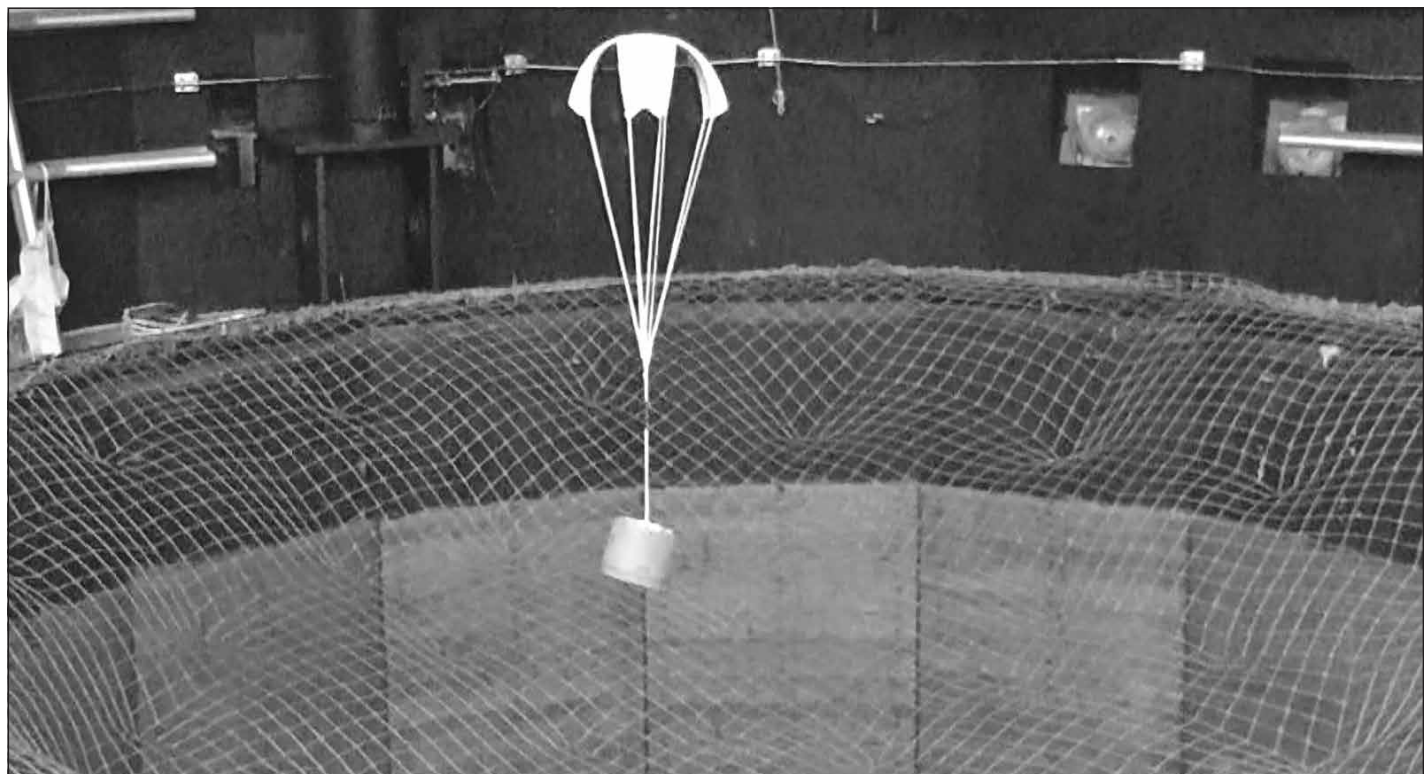
"These soft-recovery systems allow ARDEC engineers to recover gun-fired hardware, assess design performance and make improvements, ultimately shortening the time needed to get systems into the field," said Heithoff.

"The tri-lobed project is the next phase of this effort, allowing for the

safe recovery of a precision fuze fired vertically on the nose of a 155mm artillery projectile. Throughout this stage of the effort, the prototype shop has helped improve the design and identify the materials needed to allow these parachutes to survive our unique and harsh environment."

Heithoff emphasized the importance of ARDEC and NSRDEC working together.

"The Parachute Prototype Shop at NSRDEC has been an instrumental partner in this effort," said Heithoff. "NSRDEC has provided high-quality parachutes at a reasonable price, quick turn-around, and they have been exceptionally valuable regarding feedback throughout the process to help improve the design and performance."



The Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center is working with the Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center on special purpose parachutes for use with artillery projectiles to be tested at YPG. Here a version of a cross parachute featuring high-strength para-aramid materials that resulted from the collaboration is tested in a vertical wind tunnel. (Photo by Walt Koenig)

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ClassifiedsInYuma.com is open 24-7 so you don't have to worry about reaching us during office hours.

Simply go online to place your advertisement.



Looking for a new ride? Check out [www.RevUpSouthwest.com](http://www.RevUpSouthwest.com)

## Home Services Directory

### Plumbing

**Rodeo Rooter PLUMBING**

Complete Drain Service and Plumbing Repairs  
**DRAIN CLEANING \$69.00**

Friendly Service, Affordable Pricing  
**FREE Estimates**

Arizona • Tim Burke  
**(928) 988-2908**  
(NOT A LICENSED CONTRACTOR)

### Your Wife Is Hot!

Better get the air conditioner fixed!

Call an air conditioning professional from the Yuma Sun Classifieds Services Directory.

## Pool Service



Pool Service & Repairs  
Drain & Refills  
Low Prices!  
**928-941-2831**  
AZ ROC #251521  
Licensed, Bonded & Insured  
\*Service Contract Required

## Roofers

**ROOFING & INSULATION, INC.**

Tile, flat, foam or shingle roofs.  
Small repairs to complete new roof systems. All 100% guaranteed.

[linesandlundgreen.com](http://linesandlundgreen.com)  
ROC#069354C42. 070448L42.

**928-783-9084**

[www.RevUpSouthwest.com](http://www.RevUpSouthwest.com)

## Hair Salon

*Ultimate Nails & Hair*  
*Joi Howell*

11242 S. Foothills Blvd, Suite #16  
(Next to Bernardo's)  
**928-247-4411**  
928-342-0098

Share your event with the Yuma Sun's online calendar!



Submissions are free and must follow the same guidelines as "What's Going On".  
Go to [www.yumasun.com/calendar](http://www.yumasun.com/calendar)



## Local News. Anytime. Anywhere.

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# DROP \$ ZONE

**WIN UP TO \$5,000 CASH!**

**FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS • NOVEMBER 3RD- 25TH**

**5PM - 9PM**

Earn entries beginning Wednesday, November 1st.

2 Winners each hour from 5PM - 8PM play for their chance to take home up to \$1,000 REWARDS PLAY. 2 Winners at 9PM play to win up to \$500 CASH and draw to multiply their prize up to 10X their original prize!

Qualify by playing Slots or Table Games with your Rewards Club card.

# Gift Card *Extravaganza*

**EARN UP TO \$100 IN GIFT CARDS!**

**TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS • NOVEMBER 7TH - 29TH  
MIDNIGHT - 11:59PM**

EARN 250 REWARD POINTS ON TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS IN NOVEMBER AND QUALIFY FOR ONE FREE \$10 WALMART® GIFT CARD.

Pick up your gifts cards from Noon - 8PM on Tuesday, December 12th and Wednesday, December 13th. Limit ten \$10 gift cards during the promotion period.

Points will be automatically accumulated on your card. Gift cards may only be picked up on December 12th and 13th from Noon - 8PM. See Rewards Club for details.

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