

Parachutists highlight awareness of devastating problem

By Chuck Wullenjohn

No group is safe – no race, no religion, no economic group. Age plays no role. And it has been a societal problem since the dawn of civilization.

We're talking about sexual assault, which is being highlighted nationally throughout April. Sexual assault is different from nearly every other type of crime, for only one of every three such incidents are reported to law enforcement. There has long been a stigma associated with sexual assault that has prevented victims from speaking out.

The Army is sponsoring "Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month" at installations around the world, with multiple awareness events occurring throughout April. At YPG, these events include 60 motorcycle riders who will parade from YPG to other locations throughout the Yuma community to raise public awareness and a panel presentation "speak-out" where individuals will be able to ask questions of first responders, medical



Jose Reyes, a Military Freefall School instructor with thousands of jumps under his belt, did the honors in carrying the newly designed Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention (SHARP) month flag from high up in the sky to the ground, safely landing just yards away from an awestruck audience of about 50. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

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Sibling of deceased YPG Soldier returns to honor his memory

By Mark Schauer

Stephen Mason was quintessentially American.

The son of a World War II veteran, he was born in Peoria, Illinois, in 1946 and had a typical upbringing. An avid churchgoer with his parents and younger sister, Mindy, he graduated college with high honors, began his dream job as a school teacher, and intended to eventually attend graduate school.

It was 1969, and nearly 500,000 of Mason's countrymen were fighting half a world away in Vietnam. Unlike his father's war, Vietnam was already a

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PROBLEM

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experts and victim advocates.

At YPG's kick-off ceremony held the first Monday of April, parachutists from YPG's Military Freefall School presented a one-of-a-kind Sexual Assault Awareness flag after carrying it to the ground from high above. The flag was the winning entry in a flag designing contest that had been open to everyone in the YPG community. It was designed by Mireya Balcazar, range scheduler.

A crowd of about 50 looked up in awe as parachutists descended to a grassy field from thousands of feet above to a pin-point landing just a few feet in front.

"Our message today is that we want to eradicate sexual violence throughout the nation," said Dina Mabry, sexual assault response coordinator. "There is simply no place for sexual harassment, sexual assault or retaliation in our Army."

She believes the problem can be conquered if we come together, but that starts with each individual. The more we educate ourselves, she says, the better we understand.

Mabry has headed YPG's Sexual Assault Awareness Program for the two years she has been at YPG and feels good progress has been made.



A flag designing contest was held in the YPG community to select a unique flag honoring Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention Month. A panel of judges reviewed a number of entries before settling on one -- the flag seen here. At the conclusion of SHARP month, it will be framed and hung on a wall in the Equal Employment Opportunity Office.

"Whether it results from a specific incident or something that happened a long time ago, I feel people are more comfortable than ever before in coming to us to talk about it."

Sexual assault harms victims both physically and emotionally,

and its lingering effects can haunt a victim much the same way as wounds received in battle. The problem is further complicated by the fear of a stigma or retaliation for reporting.

In the military, these debilitating consequences not only affect the individual, but directly impact mission readiness by compromising unit cohesion, trust and discipline.

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Gordon Rogers, garrison manager, and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Prosser wield a sword to cut the first slice of the SHARP month cake. The cake featured the design of the YPG SHARP month flag that had been designed by Range Scheduler Mireya Balcazar. (Photos by Chuck Wullenjohn)

Safety corner

The fatal vehicle accident that wasn't...

**Submitted By: Ryan Whitehouse,
Dugway Proving Ground**

A recent, non-work related vehicle accident while commuting to work serves as a reminder of for us all that life is precious and can be taken in an instant.

It is a typical morning in the van pool. Fresh hot cup of coffee, meet at the pick-up location, last minute pre-work checks...lunch...badge...and we are off. Darkness for the duration of the hour plus drive, headlights are on, a couple of coworkers are in the back asleep, others are playing on their phones or have that dazed look on their faces trying to think how the weekend snuck away so quickly.

The driver, alert and focused, is doing his job. Keeping the vehicle near speed limit requirements, continuously scanning for wildlife on the sides of the road and just waiting in anticipation for the appearance of glowing green eyes of a mule deer standing in the middle of the road. The driver is in complete control of the situation and every passenger has relinquished their ability and control of the vehicle and trust that the driver will do his job.

Everyone one who operates a motor vehicle expects other drivers to abide by the same rules. For the most part, we as a society and as motor vehicle operators meet this

expectation.

The car in the oncoming lane appears to drift outside their lane of travel into the path of the driver.

This rapidly changing situation is about to turn ugly in a hurry. It is no longer a typical morning commute.

Fortunately the van pool operator recognizes that the rapidly evolving situation needs intervention and makes a split second decision to turn into the ditch on the right side of the road to avoid a head-on collision with the oncoming car.

Did the van pool operator think: will we roll; will we survive? What was the last thing he said to his spouse and kids before he left the house? Will this be the day he doesn't return home?

As the van operator swerves, the oncoming car makes contact. The front left sides of both cars collide - nearly a head-on collision. Airbags deploy within the van and leave a smoky haze. The front airbag curtain completely blocks the van operator's view as he tries to maintain what little vehicle control remains after damage caused by contacting the oncoming vehicle. The vehicle

comes to rest in the brush along the side of the road.

The van operator is successful in avoiding a fatal situation for himself and his coworkers



because he managed the risk: 1) he did his job, 2) his speed was manageable, 3) he made sure all occupants of the vehicle were wearing seat belts, 4) he was alert, 5) he was paying attention to the task at hand, 6) he recognized the abnormal situation of the oncoming car drifting into his lane, and 7) his critical, split-second life or death decision to face

the lesser of two evils, he chose the ditch over a head-on collision.

The situation described above is real. It happened to a group of employees on Mar. 29, 2017 while commuting to U.S. Army Dugway Proving Ground. Dugway employee Roger Owen was the van pool driver. I would like to personally thank Roger for doing his job that day. I have no doubt in my mind I would be telling you a different story, a story about loss of life, if it were not Roger's rapid response to the situation. Because of Rogers's attentiveness and quick reaction, he avoided adding to the statistics for the national average of 3,287 deaths that occur on Americas roadways each and every day.

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Electro Optical Maintenance Lab has wide impact at YPG

By Mark Schauer

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground tests virtually every piece of equipment in the ground combat arsenal in some of the world's most extreme environments.

Likewise, the equipment YPG needs to conduct its test mission is subject to the same extreme natural elements as the items under test.

Giving sensitive test equipment extra protection from heat and dust are major concerns of test crews across the proving ground, as ensuring they are as rugged and portable as possible for treks far downrange, which usually means modifications become necessary. Further, some highly specialized items are not commercially available at all, and would be cost prohibitive to attempt to have built outside the proving ground.

YPG's electro optical maintenance (EOM) lab is responsible for the maintenance, repair, and even design of a variety of equipment, from cameras and lenses to bomb-defusing robots. It also designs and fabricates custom items to support the testing work force.

"We fix and repair electronics and

optical objects you find downrange," explained Steve Taylor, EOM lead. "We also build new equipment for those who want a new item to help with a test."

The lab includes a machine shop that can refurbish venerable equipment by manufacturing replacement parts that are no longer available on the open market, separate trailers to splice and repair fiber optic cable, and a specially filtered cleanroom to accommodate the repair of electronic equipment sensitive to dust. It's hard to imagine a piece of test support equipment that the EOM lab's technicians haven't repaired or enhanced.

"Most of them have their own specialty, from optics and high speed cameras to small surface mount circuit boards and small capacitors and resistors," said Taylor.

One of the most fascinating pieces of equipment in the lab is a three dimensional (3D) printer, which uses computer aided design (CAD) to make virtual designs of products that are then printed in three-dimensions with an automated, additive process. The machine melts plastic in various thicknesses the user chooses to



EOM lead Steve Taylor waits for a three dimensional printer to finish a part. The machine, which prints out computer aided design products with an automated, additive process, melts plastic in various thicknesses to produce a part. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

produce the part.

"If it has a lot of small parts that would take a lot of time to machine, they can be printed a great deal faster, especially something small like a lens cap," said Taylor. "Plus, you're saving money by printing what you want instead of wasting material. In

most cases, the part is so small we can have it in about 30 minutes."

For those who fear plastic-printed items would fare poorly over time in the extreme Yuma heat, Taylor reports that items already out on the range have fared well thus far. Further, replacing a broken plastic part is less



Robert Bieser fabricates and machines metal items in support of the test mission, including items where replacement parts are no longer available on the open market.

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Engineering technician Saul Millan works on a crew leader box in YPG's EOM lab. Portability and ruggedness are vital for a wide variety of specialized equipment that support's YPG's test mission.

labor and material-intensive than re-fabricating it out of metal.

"If the item does break, I don't have to expend labor drawing it," said Taylor. "I just go into the CAD program to find the file, and re-print it. It's like having an extra worker in the shop."

The 3D printer, however, is merely a tool to help human technicians make a wide variety of equipment, from a gun-bore inspection tool that can illuminate the interior of a gun barrel with either light-emitting diode (LED) or ultraviolet light to replacement capacitors and safety upgrades for decades-old high-intensity lighting equipment.

YPG has a longstanding reputation of making short-fuse tests possible, and overcoming the obstacles that inevitably occur in testing in an expedited manner.

"If something breaks, we try to fix it as quickly as we can," said Taylor.

"Sometimes in 24 hours if a test in progress has a critical need for it."

Sometimes a solution goes beyond mere repair and requires intuition. When boxes carrying GoPro cameras dropped out of aircraft during tests were difficult to recover from the desert dun, the EOM lab began fabricating the boxes in fluorescent colors that more readily stand out. Taylor recalls a vehicle test that wanted to obtain footage of an engine belt that was expected to break under test, and their under-hood camera images were too dark for adequate study. The EOM lab replaced the halogen light under the hood with an LED one to much better effect.

"They were super happy with us," said Taylor with a smile. "In fact, the customer wanted to buy it."

Rob Turner

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MASON

FROM PAGE 1

lengthier conflict waged in more nebulous circumstances, all while a polarized civilian population at home watched on television. Nonetheless, Mason enlisted.

"His draft number was seven," recalled Mindy Mason. "He felt like he had to enlist to do what he wanted to do."

What he wanted to do was study meteorology, and in May 1970 now Spc. Mason arrived at Yuma Proving Ground. Though civilian workers outnumbered uniformed personnel at that time, they did not do so at the same dramatic rate as today. In those days, the majority of the test officers were company-grade officers and the crew chiefs were non-commissioned officers. Since military conscription

didn't cease until 1973, many of the troops at the proving ground during Mason's tour were draftees.

As such, the post closely resembled a typical Army garrison, albeit on a smaller scale. At that time, YPG had a 15 bed hospital staffed with four uniformed physicians, including cardiac and internal medicine specialists, as well as a surgeon. The post dentist held the rank of lieutenant colonel, and the post meteorology team comprised dozens of uniformed personnel using mechanical or analog equipment.

Even then, YPG's primary mission was to test and evaluate artillery. However, the proving ground was just beginning another major activity, testing and integrating weapon systems into helicopters. The AH-56 Cheyenne was the Army's first attempt to build a dedicated attack helicopter, a need that was ultimately

filled by the iconic Apache. Though the Cheyenne was never fielded, testing at YPG resulted in a significant influx of aviation testers from Maryland's Aberdeen Proving Ground and the construction of expensive and sophisticated infrastructure like runways, and laser and optical tracking sites that in upgraded form continue to support manned and unmanned aviation testing to this day. The Cheyenne test drew a number of high profile visitors, including astronaut Neil Armstrong in 1971.

It was in this environment that Mason worked, and he quickly made a mark. After duty hours he was a Sunday school teacher at the post chapel and taught part-time at James D. Price Elementary School.

"He liked being outside and enjoyed being a teacher, passing on whatever knowledge he had," recalled Mindy Mason. "He was ethical and always interested in the community and civic-minded things."

With his buddy Paul Stone he also served as an assistant Boy Scout troop leader.

"He and my brother were good



The son of a World War II veteran, Spc. Stephen Mason grew up in central Illinois and was stationed at YPG from 1970 to 1971, when he lost his life in a work-related accident while on temporary duty in California. In his spare time at YPG he taught students at James D. Price Elementary School and in Sunday School at the post chapel, while also serving as an assistant Boy Scout master. (Loaned photo)

friends who met here," said Mason. "They took some boys from the scout troop here to the High Sierras outside Bishop, Calif."



Spc. Stephen F. Mason (right) learns to fill a weather balloon while serving on YPG's meteorology team in 1970. Run by a small team of civilians today, in past decades the team was staffed by dozens of Soldiers collecting weather data. (Loaned photo)



On August 10, 1972, Spc. Mason's parents, Marjorie (left) and Fred (right) unveil a bronze plaque dedicated to him at a park built on post primarily by Boy and Girl Scouts who looked up to him. The inscription reads: "In memory of Sp.4 Stephen F. Mason, who served our community as an individual as well as a soldier." (Loaned photo)



Nearly 45 years later, YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Prosser (foreground) joined Spc. Mason's sister Mindy in the same spot. Mason's memories of the summer day it was dedicated were fresh: "It was broiling. It was an honor to get a tour and meet the commander, but it was difficult, particularly for my parents." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

That was in the summer of 1971. By fall, scientists from several California colleges and universities involved in Operation Foggy Cloud, an effort that tested fog-dispersing measures to help aircraft land safely, were conducting experiments at an airport near



Mason also took a tour of the YPG Meteorology Team's headquarters, located in the same building her brother Spc. Stephen Mason worked in during his tour at YPG in the early 1970s. Here, meteorologist Gabe Langbauer shows her a barometer and weather data log book from that time period. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Humboldt State University. Soliciting meteorology team help from YPG, Mason accepted the challenge and spent several weeks on temporary duty there.

On November 1st, Mason and another test worker were holding a tethered weather balloon when an unexpected gust carried the balloon a mile downwind into a high voltage power line. Mason's metallic tether electrocuted him. He was 24 years old.

Mason was so highly regarded by the youth of the post that the following summer YPG's command allowed the local Boy and Girl Scouts to build a park and name it in Mason's memory. YPG commander Col. Norman Robertson and other local dignitaries joined the youngsters in hosting the Mason family for a dedication on August 10, 1972. Mason's parents, sisters, and aunts were in attendance.

"It was a really nice dedication," recalled Mason. "The Scouts were here and the commander spoke. It was

an honor to get a tour and meet the commander."

Mindy Mason was 16 years old and hadn't returned to YPG since until a recent visit. Escorted by YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Prosser, Mason paid a reflective visit to the park on Howard Cantonment Area named for her late brother so many years ago. She also toured YPG's Heritage Center and the offices of YPG's Meteorology Team, which have been located in the same

building since the 1950s. While there, YPG meteorologist Gabe Langbauer showed her vintage meteorological equipment from Spc. Mason's era, along with a weather data log book from 1971.

"I was glad to see my brother's memorial still here," she said. "Really, I learned quite a bit more about the mission of Yuma Proving Ground: I knew that they tested artillery and tanks, but that's all I knew. I had a great time."

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YPG a crowd-pleaser at Yuma County Fair

Well over 100,000 people attended the six day 2017 Yuma County Fair, with many stopping by YPG's exhibit in the Commercial Building. From left photo, Marketing Specialist Teri Womack discusses YPG's economic impact on Yuma County with booth visitors. Next photo, Visual Information Manager Riley Williams lets a pair of young visitors get hands-on with the three primary Army helmets of the 20th century. Last photo, Sal Camacho of the electronics branch was surprised to see a photo of himself at work on one of YPG's display boards, proudly showing the image to members of his family. "These guys always wonder what I do out there, but there is only so much I can say," he commented. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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Protecting children from sexual abuse

**Submitted by Paul J. Kilanski,
Sexual Assault Response
Coordinator**

We all have a role to play in protecting children from sexual abuse. Sadly, child sexual abuse is common. Thousands of cases of sexual abuse are reported every year in the United States. Many more are thought to go unreported.

Child sexual abuse is a community problem. Abused children may suffer not only from the abuse but also from long-term effects, such as mental health disorders, drug and alcohol abuse or trouble with the law. These problems can affect everyone in the community.

Fortunately, sexual abuse can be prevented. Parents, teachers, caregivers and other community members can all take an active role in helping protect children. Stopping abuse today can also help prevent it for future generations.

Take an active role in children's lives. Know what activities children are involved in and who they spend time with. Know about sexual predators and youth with sexual behavior problems- and how they work. Pay close attention to people who display these behaviors. Teach children important skills to protect themselves. Make sure they know they can talk to you about anything that's bothering them or if they feel mixed-up or confused. Be alert for signs of sexual abuse. If you suspect or are told about abuse, report it right away. Remember, reporting abuse can be the first step in getting the child the help he or she needs.

Help protect children by taking an active interest in their lives. Find out about the activities children are involved in. Ask about group activities they participate in such as sports or clubs, their favorite things,

places they like to go, what happens at activities or events they go to. Talking to children regularly about what they're doing can help you stay alert for possible problems. Pay special attention to adults and older children in their lives including coaches, teachers, baby sitters and family friends. Also, listen carefully to how children talk about these people. If a child seems scared of a certain person it may be a sign of a problem.

There are dangers on the Internet. Make sure children know they should never send personal information (such as their name, address, photo or the name of their school) to strangers over the Internet, post personal information on Web sites that can be seen by strangers, agree to a face-to-face meeting with someone they met on the Internet or respond to sexual e-mails or other online messages. Encourage children to tell you if someone sends them messages that make them uncomfortable. Keep computers in a common area and monitor their use.

Talk about what children should do if they get separated from their family in a public place. For example, tell them to go to a courtesy desk and ask for help. Remind children not to go into someone's home or yard without permission from a parent. Teach children not to say anything to another person online that they would not say in person.

Know what to do if a sex offender lives in your neighborhood. If you find out about a registered sex offender in your area get the facts. Take the time to find out whether the person you've been told is an offender has actually been convicted (mistaken identity can happen), the type of crime that was committed

and whether the person is thought to be at high risk for offending again. Don't take matters into your own hands. Don't harass your neighbor. If you see something suspicious or think a child may be in danger, call local law enforcement.

Ultimately, it's about adults and setting limits. If there is a sexual offender of any age in your area, make sure children never play with this person. Parents should make sure they know where their children are at all times.



YPG Celebration Thursday, April 20, 2017

Meet in front of the post library at 8:30 a.m.

In celebration of Earth Day the Environmental Sciences Division of the Directorate of Public Works will be hosting hands-on and informative sessions for elementary age students about native species, wildlife, plants and cultural resources.

Environmental staff and a volunteer guest will have live reptiles for the children to learn about first hand. The students will learn about local plants, wildlife and Native American use of this area's natural resources.

Native trees will be planted on a site recently cleared of an invasive species and we will showcase ongoing restoration efforts in the wash.

Participants should wear footwear suitable for rough terrain, and clothing suitable for hiking and planting.

All are welcome. The program is aimed at school aged children. For children not enrolled at Price School, please email Daniel Steward with ages and numbers of children.

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