

## YPG testing has cosmic reach

By Mark Schauer

Mars may be Earth's next door neighbor in cosmic terms, but it is a long trek away for humans.

Short of a warp drive from a science fiction movie, the trip will take nine months one-way.

Once humans have arrived on the red planet-- and NASA hopes they will by the end of the 2030s-- the intrepid Earthlings will have to stay about one year before conditions are right for the nine month return home. It's a long time and distance, and precision is a matter of life and death.

"We don't want to simply head off and find out half-way that we were not prepared," said Dr. Stanley Love, astronaut. "There's no way to come back early. If your life support system breaks halfway to Mars,



YPG recently completed the second of eight planned evaluation tests of the Capsule Parachute Assembly System on the Orion Space Capsule. With the capsule's first manned flight as little as two years away, NASA hopes to return to the moon, using the lunar surface as both a training and launching site for an eventual Mars mission. (US Army photo)

you'll have the rest of your life to fix it—and that may be only a short time."

It's a daunting feat, and the Orion Space Capsule is a key first step toward achieving it. With the capsule's first manned flight as little as two years away, NASA hopes to return to the moon, using the lunar surface as both a training and launching site for an eventual Mars mission.

However far from home the capsule travels, astronauts aboard the Orion capsule will count on the Capsule Parachute Assembly System (CPAS) to land them safely back on Earth. Each of the system's three main parachutes have canopies made

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## Employee helps make Yuma children's museum a reality

By Mark Schauer

A small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.

Recent local efforts to endow, open, and sustain a children's museum have proved this dictum.

"The reason I joined was because

of all the work Jim and Kevin Burge had done," said Anna Chaulk, APS community relations manager and board member for the Children's Museum of Yuma County. "If not for them, I would have been far less involved."

The way his fellow board members

speak, you might think Jim Larson, president, works full time on the volunteer effort.

In reality, the mechanical engineer's primary job is in YPG's Combat and Automotive Systems Division, where he has worked for seven years. During this time he

has tested everything from Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles to the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, along with smaller projects in between.

"I've performed just about every

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new Sea Cadet  
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# MUSEUM

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test out here on wheeled vehicles you can do," he said.

Civic-minded since his youth in the Midwest, Larson and his wife were interested in getting involved in their new community. The father of three, fledgling efforts to endow and build a children's museum in Yuma immediately attracted his attention.

"It has a lot to do with my kids" he said. "Yuma has many great things to do, but there can always be more. The thing we love about Yuma is that it is a tight-knit community that always tries to get better."

He joined the board three years ago. Now the president and serving with nine other members that include teachers and engineers, Larson and his colleagues dedicate countless hours to the cause.

"It's a lot of hard work. We consider ourselves a working board since we're so new. We're progressing toward being a traditional board of directors, but we're not there yet."

In addition to fundraising and marketing, Larson has gotten hands-on by helping to design and build exhibits, knowing they have to be educational, fun, and kid-tough. Inspired by the large tower crane

utilized to build the Yuma Regional Medical Center's new emergency room, the first exhibit was a working replica children could rotate 360 degrees and use to lift and place large foam blocks to make their very own buildings. The portable crane can be set up at heights of eight and 14 feet, and was exhibited with YRMC displays at the Yuma County Fair and the Yuma Civic Center last year. It was such a hit that the Yuma Art Center offered the group free space to serve as a temporary home last summer. The group eagerly accepted, then faced the daunting task of creating exhibits.

"From the time we found out it was available and signed the contract, we had six weeks to plan all of the exhibits, raise funds for the materials, and build them. I thought we were all nuts, and to a certain degree we probably were, but we all dug in and pulled through to get it done."

A wide variety of people in the community, prominent and obscure, pitched in with money and time. Some board members pulled all-nighters building the exhibits and creating flyers and other advertising materials. It opened on-time with three large galleries of interactive exhibits, and drew nearly 10,000 visitors during the six weeks it was open.

Larson is pleased that a similar



Inspired by the large tower crane utilized to build the Yuma Regional Medical Center's new emergency room, the museum's first exhibit was a working replica children could rotate 360 degrees and use to lift and place large foam blocks to make their very own buildings. The portable crane can be set up at heights of eight and 14 feet, and was exhibited with YRMC displays at the Yuma County Fair and the Yuma Civic Center last year. (Loaned photo)

arrangement has been made with the Yuma Art Center for this summer, albeit with some slight differences. For example, the temporary museum space will be available for birthday parties and other special events after normal visiting hours.

"Last year there was no charge for admission. This year we're charging a small \$2 admission fee to cover some of the costs for the exhibits and to get a better picture in terms of traffic flow."

Convinced of the viability of the endeavor, Larson is optimistic that a permanent home for the children's museum is coming in the near-to-midterm.

"We're hoping for two years. We've done some great work as a group and we're going to start new fundraising efforts soon. To be fiscally responsible, we want to have a certain amount of operation time paid for and in the bank prior to opening permanently: We're in this for the long haul."

The group has recently hired an executive director and has had encouraging success with various

fundraising efforts, from corporate donations to dinners and point-of-sale solicitations at local business franchises.

"This community never ceases to amaze me in their willingness to help and get involved. It's humbling to be involved."



Jim Larson, mechanical engineer in YPG's Combat and Automotive Systems Division, is currently the president of the board of the Children's Museum of Yuma County. A temporary museum, seen here, drew nearly 10,000 visitors in the six weeks it was open last summer, and will return again this year. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

## THE OUTPOST

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# Hassle-free job and benefits counseling offered to Soldiers, veterans

By Mark Schauer

All good things come to an end. Even a successful career serving one's country in the military must eventually close with retirement.

But America's debt doesn't end when veterans transition back to civilian life. A variety of government benefits and private sector programs are available to honorably discharged veterans making this major transition.

"These are benefits that veterans have earned from their service," said Rosa Dayton, transition assistance manager for YPG's Army Community Service office. "They're not something they should feel uncomfortable seeking."

Still, many veterans and soon-to-be separated Soldiers may cringe at the thought of bureaucratic hurdles and endless red tape in obtaining the benefits to which military service entitles them. Soldiers and veterans at YPG, however, have access to the helping hand of Milton "Hawk" Hawkins, disabled veterans outreach specialist for the Arizona Department of Economic Security.

"We provide a broad spectrum of services not only to active duty personnel, but primarily to veterans," he said. "Our main goal is to get veterans employed in a retainable position or career."

Hawkins says the Vow to Hire Heroes Act, signed into law in 2011, was a significant boost in the effort to place veterans and spouses of active duty service members into good jobs.

"Under those hiring authorities, there are a lot of opportunities for separating, recently separated, or veterans to gain federal employment. Many people don't



Soldiers and veterans at YPG have access to the helping hand of Milton "Hawk" Hawkins, disabled veterans outreach specialist for the Arizona Department of Economic Security, for assistance with finding civilian employment and applying for benefits. A veteran himself, Hawkins has made biweekly visits, every other Wednesday, to YPG for over six years to assist veterans and Soldiers close to retirement. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

know about that: there is so much information that it is difficult to cover everything that is available in transition classes."

Further, there are private sector programs that help veterans in their job search. For example, a program offered by the Hilton hotel chain provides complimentary hotel stays for veterans who need lodging to attend an out-of-town job interview

but have a financial barrier.

A veteran himself, Hawkins has made biweekly visits, every other Wednesday, to YPG for over six years to assist veterans and Soldiers close to retirement. Hawkins stresses that he can assist any retiring Soldier or veteran, even if they are not Arizona natives. If coming to see him during his regular visits is not possible, Soldiers and veterans can

contact him at (928) 247-8747 to schedule an appointment at another time. He will even address an entire unit of Soldiers at the proving ground if requested.

"We're seeing a lot more of our older veterans coming to our office for assistance. If they need assistance in any aspect, we can help them or refer them to a partner agency for that assistance."

Hawkins adds that the help he offers goes beyond helping retiring Soldiers and veterans find jobs. An employed veteran may need assistance enrolling in the Veterans Administration (VA) health system, for example, or obtaining education or disability benefits. For separating Soldiers in need of employment, he not only has information about job opportunities in both the public and private sector, but offers advice on creating a resume, engaging in a successful job interview, and developing marketing skills.

"Veterans have a lot more skill sets than most non-veterans do and that's what employers look for. Our resume and interview workshops help veterans sell themselves and the valuable skills they possess to a civilian employer."

Hawkins encourages YPG's veterans and Family members to inquire about services available to them, even if they have had negative experiences in years past.

"There's a lot more out there than there was 10 years ago to assist veterans transitioning into the private sector. In Arizona, different programs have been established to help veterans get employment. In the private sector, there are many major companies that have made a commitment to hire veterans."



## A View Without A Point

# Black Hawk up



By Teri Womack

I've worked at YPG for over three decades, so it's not unusual to see a tank or large vehicle on a test course or to glance up to the sky to see people jumping out of perfectly good airplanes and parachuting gracefully to the ground. I hardly even flinch any more when a loud boom shakes the windows of my office. But, even today, I still get excited to go on a field trip at work!

In mid-January, I was looking forward to being part of a group escorting visitors to the Joint Experimentation Range Complex (JERC) site. I recall in the early years of 2000, developing briefings during the initial planning and development

of the first JERC site and updating them almost daily as construction quickly proceeded. I watched and documented on my computer screen as capabilities increased and that initial site expanded with new and diverse test facilities that turned into the multi-faceted complex that stands today. But I never got to see it with my own eyes – until this year.

I arrived at YPG at an early hour that, on most mornings, would find me smacking my alarm for the second or third time. After getting in the government vehicle and driving to meet the visitors in Yuma, we immediately convoyed out to the JERC site. On the drive, while enjoying the sunrise and scenery and

trying not to let the rhythmic sounds of the road lull me to sleep, I gained a huge respect for people who travel that long route daily to spend their regular day at the office.

When we reached the site, I was the first one out of the vehicle, excited to see with my own eyes what I had previously only seen on screen in my office through the limited lens of PowerPoint. All those briefings did not give it the justice it deserved and it is definitely much more impressive in person!

When I heard and saw a helicopter approaching, I remember thinking in all caps – “IS THAT A BLACK HAWK HELICOPTER!?!” I am a HUGE fan of the movie Black Hawk Down. I've watched it countless times and love everything about it, from the acting to the action and the special effects. I needed no movie magic to feel completely thrilled that one was about to land close to me!

As folks de-helicoptered, I spotted Joyce Gordon and immediately asked about her flight. When she responded, “It was awesome!” I decided right then and there that I was

going to do everything possible to ensure my ride home would be on a “Black Hawk Up”!

When the tour concluded, Joyce and I were first in line to jump onboard. As it turns out, jumping onboard was not as easy as it sounded, and I needed a push to get on. As everyone buckled seat belts, I scrambled to locate mine and then required assistance to get strapped in properly. I was so excited, I had to make absolutely sure that I couldn't jump right out of my seat!

I watched as the pilot, that guy with my life in his hands, performed his preflight check and then looked around as the other passengers settled into their seats to check their calendars and email messages on their phones. I glanced over at Joyce, who gave me the “thumbs up” and as I enthusiastically returned the gesture, I just knew both of us were packing the biggest smiles on that aircraft! As we lifted off, for just one fleeting second, I remembered that I am desperately afraid of heights...but that thought was quickly replaced by, “Now, THIS is a good day at the office!”

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## Seen around YPG

(Left, top to bottom) Lt. Kilipaki Harris, training officer, and Sgt. Steven Houll, traffic investigator, meet with residents of YPG's travel camp as part of a safety day sponsored by YPG's Directorate of Emergency Services in early March. YPG's new Chief of Police, Don Lucas, is committed to building positive community relations with events of this type; Lt. Col. James DeBoer (left), Yuma Test Center commander, pins an award on the chest of Maj. Joseph Gross, staff judge advocate, as he gets ready to depart the proving ground for the final time in mid-March. Gross first joined the Army in 1994; Col. Randy Murray, YPG commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Prosser helped celebrate the 75th anniversary of Army Emergency Relief (AER), a nonprofit organization, with a cake-cutting ceremony. Wherever in the world Soldiers and Families are, AER stands ready to assist with things like emergency grants and loans, food aid, and college scholarships. (Above) The Sexual Harassment Assault Response and Prevention Office sponsored an early-morning yoga in the park event entitled "Exhale to Inhale" at Cox Field as part of its Healing Hearts program of quarterly events. (Photos by PAO staff)



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# YPG completes busiest public tour schedule ever

By Chuck Wullenjohn

Our nation's founding document, the U.S. Constitution, contains wording explicitly stating that the federal government maintain an Army for the purpose of defending the nation, which has been the case since our earliest days. Since the American people fund the government, they also fund the Army. This makes the Army a publically-funded institution that makes it the property of every American taxpayer.

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground knows this well and works to share its message throughout the year with members of the Yuma community, and with those even farther away. That's why YPG actively participates in so many community events – parades, exhibits at festivals, presentations to service organizations, and so much more, throughout the year.

March 15th signaled the date of the final scheduled public tour

of the 2016/2017 winter season, which counted ten in number. Each tour took place for full busloads of visitors numbering about 55 each time.

Former YPG Commander Col. Robert Filbey (ret.) volunteered to assist in escorting each of the ten tours, relating stories about YPG while riding on the bus to and from Yuma.

"The best tour of my military career was the four years I spent

at YPG," he said. "I volunteer my time because I love to talk about the proving ground."

He feels that tours help spread word about the national defense contribution of YPG. "Almost uniformly, the comment I hear most often when people depart is, 'I had no idea of the level of activity at YPG,'" he said. "They also frequently mention that they never knew how large a civilian operation it is, but they also leave understanding the military reasoning."

Filbey is a firm believer in the value of the tours. "People see the value, then they talk to others, and the more people who see what goes on here, we end up building the proving ground support base. Tour participants come from all over, so they develop support that is almost intangible."

YPG's partner in organizing and operating the tours was the Yuma Visitors Bureau, which took registrations, arranged for bus transportation, and assisted in escorting each tour, though a YPG employee took over upon reaching the proving ground.

Leslie Fain, executive assistant at the bureau, worked on many of the YPG tours and says they were among the most popular of all the tours handled by the Visitors Bureau. When tickets became available in November, she says they sold out within a week to ten days.

"We had people calling us in late summer to find out when tickets would be available," she said. "We get quite a mix, too, between outside visitors and locals, and there are always plenty of veterans. Many people don't know what goes on at YPG and are astonished by what they



YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Prosser speaks to visitors on one of YPG's 10 public tours of the 2016-17 winter season. Each tour took place for full busloads of visitors numbering about 55 each time. (Photos by Chuck Wullenjohn)



Former YPG Commander Col. Robert Filbey (right) has volunteered to assist in escorting each of the ten tours, relating stories about YPG while riding on the bus to and from Yuma. He feels that tours help spread word about the national defense contribution of YPG.

see.” About one-third of the tour participants are year-round Yuma residents.

She hasn’t heard any complaints coming from those who take part in the YPG tours, other than those coming from people who couldn’t obtain tickets.

“I’ve heard many kudos about the food quality in the Cactus Café and I think it leads to people coming back to visit the Heritage Center and eating lunch out here on their own,” she said.

Though Fain spends most of

her time at the Yuma Visitors Bureau administrative office in the downtown area, she frequently visits the visitor center location at the Quartermaster Depot State Park, where visitors can obtain a variety of information about things to do in Yuma.

“We get lots of questions about Yuma Proving Ground,” she said. “I truly appreciate the efforts of the people out there who are so welcoming to people on the tours. It really emphasizes YPG’s value to the Yuma community.”

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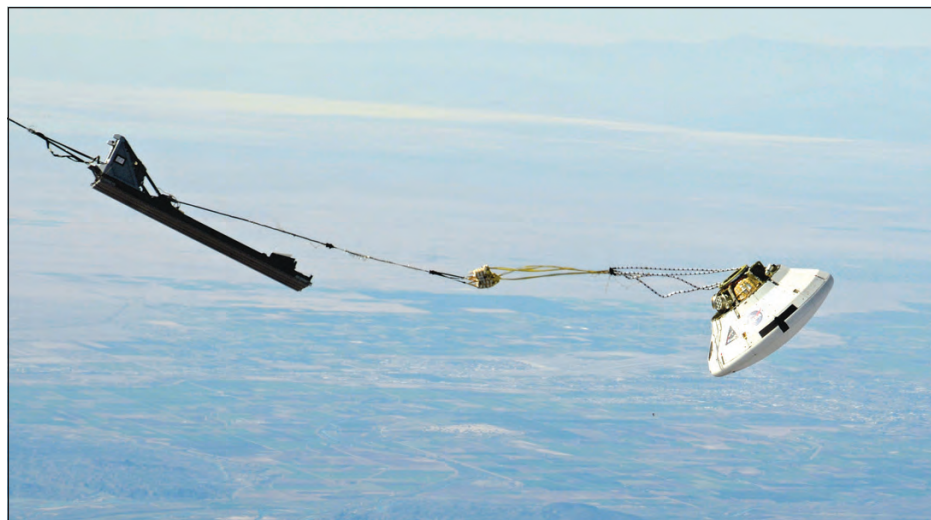
## NASA

FROM PAGE 1

with 10,000 square feet of broadcloth nylon, and the rope that makes up the parachutes' cord is made of Kevlar, the strong synthetic fiber used in body armor. The CPAS system is designed to deploy sequentially and pass through two stages prior to being fully open: after hurtling back into Earth's atmosphere, two drogue parachutes deploy to slow the 10-ton capsule prior to main parachutes decelerating the capsule from cosmic reentry speeds of 25,000 miles per hour to less than 20 miles per hour. The system is designed with redundancies meant to protect the safe landing of astronauts even if two parachutes fail.

"Parachutes are one of the absolutely critical, must-work safety parts of the spacecraft," said Dr. Stanley Love, astronaut. "The final part of our journey coming back to Earth after we've been to space depends on these parachutes, so we're going to test them very thoroughly in a lot of different ways to make sure they work properly."

The parachutes must work even in the event the capsule doesn't



Unlike the actual Orion capsule, the mock capsule used in the test has exterior panels made of easily sheered-off Styrofoam. The test item is the same width as the Orion, but several feet shorter to accommodate the clearance height of the cargo aircraft it is dropped from. (US Army photo)

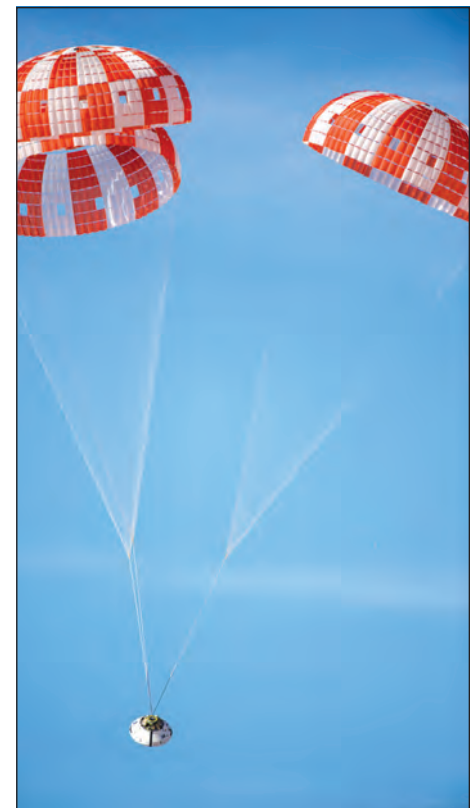
make it to space. In the most recent evaluation test at YPG, the second in a series of eight, engineers sought to verify that the CPAS could decelerate the capsule to a safe landing speed if for some reason a mission was aborted shortly after launching.

"If you abort from the pad or as you are lifting off, you can't use the drogues: you don't have enough altitude, so you go directly to the mains," said Koki Machin, chief engineer for the CPAS system. "At a certain time during the ascent, you

transition to having enough altitude that you can do the gravity turn, come back down toward the planet and go through the entire drogue phase before you get to the mains."

As the mock Orion capsule was dropped from a C-17 cargo aircraft flying at 25,000 feet, testers needed to use a parachute that is not part of the CPAS system to slow the capsule to the appropriate speed for the test.

"We're using an extra-large programmer parachute, which is how we set up getting on test point, and we're going to start the drogues off very slow," said Machin. "There is



The mock Orion capsule was dropped from a C-17 cargo aircraft flying at 25,000 feet. Testers needed to use a programmer parachute that is not part of the CPAS system to slow the capsule to the appropriate speed for the test, which sought to verify that the CPAS could decelerate the capsule to a safe landing speed if for some reason a mission was aborted shortly after launching. (US Army photo)

a pretty broad range of conditions we're asked to deploy CPAS in, and one of them is deploying the drogues at a very low velocity. This test is to



Ready for its test, the mock-up of NASA's Orion space capsule waits inside the cargo bay of a C-17 for its drop. (Photo by Mark Schauer)



The capsule's descent was observed by four ground-based Kineto Tracking Mount operators, and two chase planes and a chase helicopter flying at different altitudes with photographers on board. "It's not necessarily just for graphics, but for data we can compare and contrast," said Chris Johnson, CPAS project manager. (US Army photo)



inform our modeling of that aspect.”

Given that the Orion capsule and CPAS system have already had a successful flight in outer space, some may assume that the remainder of evaluation testing will be anticlimactic. NASA engineers, however, say this is not the case: in addition to being able to outfit the test vehicle with far more instrumentation and cameras than would be possible if it was coming from space, testing over land at YPG makes recovery and examination of the parachutes easier than when it lands in the ocean, as in a real space mission.

“They want to test it at a variety of speeds, altitudes, and other conditions so they can prove out the corners of the box, the most extreme conditions under which the parachutes might ever have to function,” said Love. “The idea is that somewhere in the center of that box is where we’ll normally be operating.”

“At the end of the day, putting these things out in the real environment, full scale, is the best way to understand their performance,” added Chris Johnson, CPAS project manager.

The drop test was captured from a variety of angles by YPG personnel.



Each of the system’s three main parachutes have canopies made with 10,000 square feet of broadcloth nylon, and risers made of Kevlar, the strong synthetic fiber used in body armor. (US Army photo)

In addition to onboard telemetry data, the capsule’s descent was observed by four ground-based Kineto Tracking Mount operators, and two chase planes and a chase helicopter flying at different altitudes with photographers on board.

“It’s not just for graphics, but for data we can compare and contrast,” said Johnson.

Once the capsule landed on one of YPG’s isolated drop zones, personnel fanned out and carefully recovered

the massive deployed parachutes and lines from the desert floor. The workers gathered the fabric slowly and methodically: testers want to evaluate any damage that may have occurred to the parachutes, and know that it was not incurred from the recovery efforts.

As the packed parachutes made the journey back to the Air Delivery Complex, where the parachutes were suspended from a high ceiling and carefully studied, workers from

YPG’s motor pool used a large crane to lift the massive test capsule onto a lowboy trailer for transport back to Yuma, utilizing a police escort and necessitating particular care through the construction zone around the Coyote Wash Bridge.

“This test is an important milestone in the steps to getting Orion flying,” said Love. “Orion is an important step toward building the systems we need to practice going to Mars, and then actually go there.”



Once the drop was completed, personnel fanned out and carefully recovered the massive deployed parachutes and lines from the desert floor, as seen here. Testers want to evaluate any damage that may have occurred to the parachutes, and know that it was not incurred from the recovery efforts. (Photos by Mark Schauer)





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# Department of Defense launches MilitaryChildCare.com at YPG

Families at Yuma Proving Ground will soon have access to a new Department of Defense (DoD) website designed to simplify and improve the child care request for care process.

MilitaryChildCare.com (MCC) provides a single online gateway for families to access military-operated or military-subsidized child care options worldwide across all Services. The site enables families to

create a household profile, conduct child care searches, submit requests for care, and manage their requests at any time and from any location.

The new DoD site – which is being introduced worldwide in phases – offers a more streamlined approach to finding and requesting care, expedites placement through a standardized request process and waitlist management tools, and provides reports that help programs

better plan for future placement needs.

Through MilitaryChildCare.com, eligible families can search and request care for full day and part day options in facility-based and home-based programs for children from birth through age 12. Families may remain on a preferred program's waitlist even after being offered care or enrolling in another program.

Families at YPG who are currently

on waitlists will be automatically transitioned to the new web-based system. These families will retain the original date of their request(s) for care, and all program enrollment processes will remain the same.

For additional information, go to MilitaryChildCare.com or contact the Help Desk by calling the toll free number, 855.696.2934 or emailing FamilySupport@MilitaryChildCare.com.

## Controlling allergies and asthma

**Submitted by Paul J. Kilanski**

Your home is a busy place.

People are always working, playing, cooking, washing, cleaning and moving things around. All that activity is perfectly normal, but it can release small particles and chemicals that build up in the air you breathe. Whether your home is large or small, old or new, the air inside may be causing breathing problems, especially for people with allergies and asthma.

There are some simple things that you can do to clean up the air inside your home so that everyone can breathe easier. If you have allergies or asthma, you are sensitive to certain 'triggers.' These 'triggers' can set off a reaction in your lungs and other parts of your body. They can be simple things like cold air, tobacco or wood smoke, perfume, paint, hair spray, or any strong odors or fumes. Allergens such as dust mites, cockroaches, pollen, molds, animal dander and saliva from pets may also trigger your asthma or



allergies. It's important to learn which triggers are a problem for you: Then you can learn to avoid them and help keep yourself healthy.

Identifying your triggers isn't always easy. You can experiment with staying away from one suspected trigger at a time. You can also ask your doctor to help.

Your doctor may suggest keeping an asthma diary or having a skin testing to test for allergies.

Sometimes the air outdoors can trigger allergies and asthma. You may have to avoid outdoor air pollution, pollen and mold spores. Any time air pollution and pollen levels are high, it's a good idea to stay indoors: The air at home is

easier for you to control.

Some people with asthma and allergies notice that their symptoms get worse at night. Trigger controls in the bedroom or wherever you sleep are the best place to start. Air conditioning can help: It lowers indoor humidity, which helps to control mold and dust mites.

There are air cleaning machines that you can buy that may remove some of the triggers in your home, but they will not remove all of them. Some air cleaners use an electrical charge that makes ozone, which manufacturers claim will purify the air, but ozone can irritate the lungs and is especially a problem for people with asthma.

Controlling the home environment is a very important part of asthma and allergy care. In addition to seeing a doctor regularly and taking prescribed medications you should also reduce or remove as many asthma and allergy triggers from your home as possible. Take control in your home environment and breathe easier.



# Fort Yuma marks first Army presence in Yuma

By Chuck Wullenjohn

Fort Yuma was established Nov. 27, 1850, to protect the strategic Yuma Crossing of the Colorado River. Located on a promontory overlooking the river, the fort itself was nothing more than a ramshackle collection of huts and tents at first. It wasn't until years later that the Army provided the funding necessary to make Fort Yuma into a proper outpost.

It was difficult to supply the post in its early years. Food supplies and construction materials were shipped by water from San Diego to the mouth of the Colorado River, but transferring the goods to wagons and moving them to Yuma was backbreaking and time consuming. As a result, life at the post was hard and the military's resolve to maintain a garrison vacillated. It was only two years later -- in August 1852 -- that temporary Camp Yuma became permanent Fort Yuma, and the Army resolved to stay for good.

Fort Yuma remained an active post until 1883 -- 33 years after its formation. During that time, Soldiers at the fort maintained peace with the local Indians and kept watch over activity on the Colorado



Fort Yuma's commanding officer's quarters used to face the fort's parade ground, which, in the years since the Army moved-out, was re-purposed by the Quechan Indian Tribe into a paved parking lot. The well-built quarters remain today, though it is no longer occupied and close inspection reveals the ravages of time. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

River.

Yuma was a significant Colorado River crossing point for wagon trains carrying settlers and prospectors to

California, particularly after large deposits of gold were discovered in 1849. The Colorado River was untamed during those pre-dam years, with miles of the wide river virtually impassible due to vast areas of mud and quicksand. The narrow rock gorge through which the river passes in Yuma made the location an excellent, safe year round crossing point.

Over 60,000 people crossed at Yuma in 1850 under the protective guns of the fort. Most of these settlers followed the Gila River across Arizona to where it joined the Colorado above Yuma. They then

moved south along the river toward the crossing.

As locals know, Yuma can be unbearably hot during the summer. In 1858, a Soldier stationed at the fort wrote home, "The houses and quarters are built of sun-dried bricks, with every effort and provision for making the summer's heat bearable. Still, the post is but seven years old and is garrisoned by only two companies. A well-filled graveyard gives mute testimony of a most unhealthy climate."

Fort Yuma was well known in Army circles as the hottest post in the country. The fort's surgeon once

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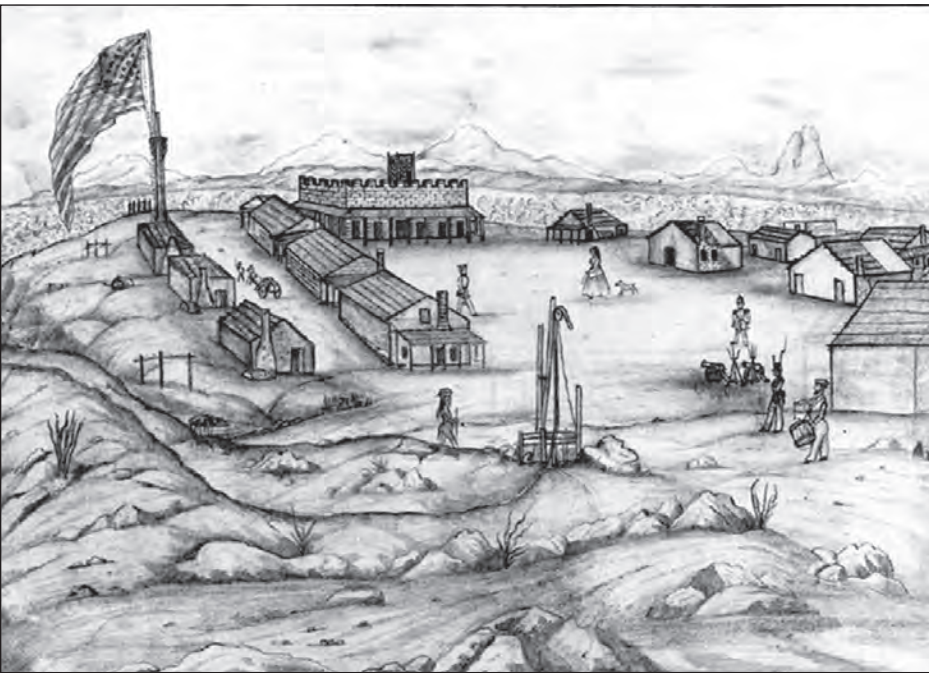


reported that his pocket watch “felt like a hot boiled egg in my pocket.”

During the American Civil War, the fort served as base for Union troops that blocked a Confederate thrust through the southwest pointed at the California goldfields and stayed on the heels of the invading Confederate army as it retreated to Texas. The most famous military action in Arizona occurred near

Tucson at Picacho Peak, where scouting parties from the opposing armies ran across each other and exchanged shots. The California Column ended Confederate designs for control of the southwest.

Fort Yuma is now part of the Quechan Indian Reservation. Numerous buildings remain from the military period and can easily be seen today.



The Army first came to Yuma in 1850 to establish Fort Yuma on the Colorado River. This fanciful drawing shows the fort during the 1860s or 1870s. One might wonder about the size of that flag... (Loaned image)



First built in 1864, Fort Yuma's adobe guardhouse continued in operation until recent years. Note the air conditioner and telephone lines. (Loaned photo)

# It's Pi Day!



Stefanie Jacobs, operations research analyst, serves pie to event-goers at YPG's first annual Pi Day celebration. An annual celebration of the mathematical constant "Pi" (3.14159...) which we all learned about in school, the day occurs each year on March 14, which is 3/14 in the month/day date format. The lunchtime guests enjoyed over 25 different forms of pie, from decadent sweets to pizza. As Yuma County's premier scientific workplace, the mathematical constant is vital to many different facets of the proving ground's mission, from weapons test planning and data reduction to weather forecasting. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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## YPG employee takes reins of local Sea Cadet Corps

Lt. j.g. John Bacon (right), weapons maintenance test team lead, assumes the command of Yuma's chapter of the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps from Lt. j.g. Tim Riley in a recent ceremony. The corps, consisting of the Sea Eagle Squadron for cadets ages 13 to 18 and the Training Ship B.W. Sandburg with cadets ages 10 to 14, has in been existence for two years. Prior to assuming command, Bacon served as operations officer, devoting at least 30 volunteer hours per week to the organization. "It's just overwhelming to see the cadets getting excited and doing well, whether they are going into the military or not," Bacon said. "They're a good group of kids that do a lot of service in the community on their own." (Loaned photo)

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