



THE OUTPOST

U.S. ARMY YUMA PROVING GROUND, YUMA, ARIZONA 85365 | VOLUME 67 NO. 9 APRIL 30, 2018

Earth Day at YPG highlights pollination concerns

By Mark Schauer

At Yuma Proving Ground, every day is Earth Day.

As a natural laboratory for testing virtually every piece of equipment in the U.S. Army's ground combat arsenal, YPG has an existential interest in responsible ecological stewardship.

Located within North America's most diverse desert, the proving ground is home to a vast diversity of wildlife, including Sonoran pronghorn, desert tortoises and one of Arizona's healthiest populations of bighorn sheep. More than a hundred unique bird species pass through or call YPG home.

To celebrate Earth Day 2018, in late April YPG school children at Price Elementary School were



Spc. Cristina Arguizoni (front right) and Staff Sgt. Christopher Black of the YPG Health Clinic show students examples of the multitude of desert-dwelling insects found at the proving ground as part of Earth Day activities at YPG's Price Elementary School. The event had support from the highest levels of the proving ground's command, who stopped by to have a look at the children's projects. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

treated to two days of visits from Soldiers who work at YPG's Health Clinic and employees of the Environmental Science Division accompanied by friends like a desert tortoise and a bearded lizard, as well as other hands-on items. The theme of this year's Earth Day was pollinators, insects like bees whose movements cause plants to flower or make fruit.

"We're trying to show the kids all about nature and the importance of pollinators," said Sergio Obregon, program manager. "There's concern that we're losing pollinators due to the use of chemicals and a variety of things, so we're teaching the kids what pollination consists of and

SEE **EARTH DAY** page 2

Caring for 45 youngsters presents unique challenges

By Chuck Wullenjohn

Caring for one young child is sometimes daunting, but what about dozens at the same time? The folks working at YPG's Child Development Center (CDC) face – and conquer – this challenge each day of the year.

Led by CDC director Tina Leslie, between 17 and 20 people work

at the center caring for children at their most tender age – six weeks to about five years old. The center averages 42 to 45 kids at any one time, operating each week day between 5:45 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. The largest percentage of children comes from YPG's civilian workforce, both government and contractor, with

about 25 percent coming from active military families.

Healthy meals and long days

Two meals per day are served to the children (breakfast and lunch), with an afternoon snack. One of the CDC's employees is a full-time cook who prepares meals in accordance

with Army and pertinent federal regulations. Because some children suffer from allergies or are unable to eat certain foods for other reasons, such as lactose or peanut intolerance, adjustments are made whenever necessary.

SEE **CHALLENGES** page 6

Ability to detect
cracks in cannons
improved

/Page 7



Hot food
comes to
YPG school

/Page 8



YPG recognizes
Child Abuse
Prevention Month

/Page 11



EARTH DAY

FROM PAGE 1

which creatures are responsible for it.”

The school children enjoyed making their own clay representations of ancient pottery artifacts and paper flowers with cotton puff buds ready for pollination courtesy of pipe-cleaner bees bearing paprika and cumin to

represent pollen. Still, the stars of the day were the desert tortoise and bearded lizard.

“The turtle and the lizard were big draws—anything that moves is popular with the kids,” said David Lewis, mission environmental officer, who has participated in the event for the past five years. “They like to pet them and enjoy the way they feel. They always have plenty of good questions.”



David Lewis, mission environmental officer, helps Price School youngsters feed kale leaves to a desert tortoise. “They like to pet them and enjoy the way they feel. The kids always have plenty of good questions,” he said. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



Students show YPG Command Col. Ross Poppenberger their flower projects, which related to this year’s Earth Day theme of ‘pollinators.’ “It’s neat to see these guys getting something a little different and understanding what’s in their environment at YPG,” he said.

The event had support from the highest levels of the proving ground’s command, who stopped by to have a look at the children’s projects.

“It’s neat to see these guys getting something a little different and understanding what’s in their environment at YPG,” said Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG commander.



Jeff Weisz (left), environmental protection specialist, drew lots of young onlookers with the bearded lizard he showed as part of this year’s Earth Day activities. “The turtle and the lizard were big draws—anything that moves is popular with kids,” said David Lewis, mission environmental officer.

THE OUTPOST

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The Editor, Outpost, Yuma Proving Ground, Yuma, AZ, 85365.
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Commander: Col. Ross Poppenberger
Public Affairs Officer: Chuck Wullenjohn
Public Affairs Specialist/Editor: Mark Schauer
Technical Editor, Cold Regions Test Center: Clara Zachgo
Marketing Specialist: Teri Womack
Visual Information Manager: Riley Williams

Dropping cargo using innovative air-delivery system

By Cpl. Carlos Jimenez

U.S. Marines with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) 152, or "Sumos," conducted air-delivery training with the Joint Precision Airdrop System (JPADS) over YPG recently as part of El Centro Horizon.

The Sumos dropped container delivery systems using JPADS from 18,000 feet for initial pilot training and to support YPG in testing new parachutes and equipment before they are released to the fleet.

"We trained some of our air delivery instructors to become proficient in JPADS, so they can bring that knowledge back and train other people as JPADS comes online further with the Marine Corps and we see more of it in the future," said Capt. Brian Kursawe, a KC-130J pilot with VMGR-152. "Some of our crewmasters received initial training as well, knowing how to rig these systems and what to look for as they prep the airplane."

JPADS utilizes a combination of an external Global Positioning System, steerable parachutes and an onboard computer to steer loads to a designated point of impact. They allow cargo to be dropped from high altitudes, maximizing distance from a ground threat.

The crewmasters rigged eight bundles and worked closely alongside personnel from YPG. Sgt. Max Massa, a crewmaster with VMGR-152, said the personnel they worked with provided valuable knowledge



YPG personnel assist Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) 152 secure cargo in a KC-130J Hercules during air-delivery training with the Joint Precision Airdrop System (JPADS). VMGR-152 dropped cargo using JPADS from 18,000 feet for initial pilot training and supported a YPG test of a new parachute system. (Photo by Cpl. Carlos Jimenez)

of the material and equipment used, and in return, they helped with their testing.

"This helps us stay current on our training, because we don't get to do this kind of stuff every day," said Massa. "It was a good refresher. I learned a lot about how to actually rig bundles and the different methods we use for dropping CDS bundles. It was a learning experience for everybody involved, espe-

cially me."

All pieces of equipment dropped from the aircraft hit their designated points of impact, resulting in a successful training run for the aircrew and pilots, as well as for YPG.

As El Centro Horizon drew to its conclusion, VMGR-152 continued to execute multiple training missions on a daily basis that were unique to the diverse training ranges available here.

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Chaplain's Corner

God's grace is more powerful than human failings

By Maj. Ronald Beltz

Danny Simpson of Ottawa, Canada made two tragic mistakes in 1990. Desperate for money, Simpson decided to rob a bank. He visited the bank every day for a week to plan his hold up and then the night before, Danny had dinner with his parents. While mom and dad were cleaning up the dishes, he slipped in to his parents' bedroom and took the .45-caliber pistol from the drawer in the nightstand beside his father's bed.

The next day, Simpson made off with two bags of cash worth over \$6,000 from the bank. When the Mounties reviewed the surveillance tapes, they quickly identified Simpson as a "frequent visitor" and made the arrest. Danny Simpson made two big mistakes. The first was robbing a bank, and the second was using his father's pistol: While Simpson stole \$6,000 from the bank, his father's pistol was a very rare 1918 .45-caliber

Colt semi-automatic made by the Ross Rifle Company valued at over \$100,000! The pistol went to a Canadian museum and Simpson went to jail.

Sometimes we do some really dumb stuff! My wife would say that I am often doing some really stupid things!

Lucky for me she continues to love, support and most importantly she forgives me!!

I am reminded of some verses from the book of the Old Testament Prophet Micah 7:18-19 which tells us: Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

We all make mistakes and none of us are perfect! Praised be to a God that continues to love and forgive us in spite of all our failings!



April is Autism Awareness Month

By Melissa Gomez

Many families world-wide are impacted by Autism. Over 23,000 military dependents have a diagnosis on the autism spectrum. During the month of April, a special emphasis is placed on autism awareness.

Autism is a complex, neurological disorder that affects a person's ability to communicate and interact socially. It typically reveals itself in the first three years of life and remains a life-long disability for those diagnosed. Raising a child with autism can be challenging for the families who provide them love and support.

Research shows that Autism now affects 1 in 68 children and particularly 1 in 42 boys. It is very important that as a community and as individuals, we know what signs to look for in our pre-school aged children. Autism is prevalent amongst society and we can do more to spread awareness. Just by acknowledging the difficulties families with autistic loved ones endure, we become more inclusive as a community and bolster trust amongst one another.

One of the most important things you can do as a parent or caregiver is to learn the early signs of a developmental disability and become familiar with these milestones. The resources listed below can help you identify these milestones. They can also provide you more information about Autism specifically.

The Army designed a program to assist families with special needs, be it medical, educational or both. The Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) is a comprehensive, coordinated, multi-agency program that provides community support, housing, medical, educational, and personnel services to military Families. Enrollment is mandatory for active duty service members and required upon identification of a medical and/or educational special need. The program works to ensure that the necessary services are always avail-

able to your loved ones.

During the month of April, help spread Autism awareness by participating in community events or by educating yourself about this disorder so you can help someone in need. Consider participating in the EFMP Parent Support Group on post or in the Yuma Autism support group held at YRMC. For more information or questions contact the Exceptional Family Member Program at (928) 328-3224.

Resources:

<https://www.operationautismonline.org/>

Operation Autism is a web-based resource specifically designed and created to support military families that have children with autism.

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/>

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Youth Corner

A digging good time at YPG Youth Services' spring break 2018

By Sommer Cloinger

YPG's Child and Youth Services' (CYS) school age care program took it to a whole new level this 2018 spring break.

Youth in kindergarten through fifth grade spent a whole week exploring different areas of archaeology such as Ancient Egypt and other long-ago civilizations, dinosaurs, and bugs.

The youngsters met with YPG archaeologist Erin Goslin, who taught them how to grind up coffee beans and corn with a rock and stone as was done in olden days. They also made an Ancient Egyptian death mask and jewelry, drew hieroglyphics, and built pyramids out of sugar cubes. They also created Grecian pottery and made delicious

honey bread, mummy hot dogs, date shakes, and bug cookies. Yum!

Youth Services is predicting that they will have one of their best summers yet based off the participation they received during spring break.

CYS hopes you will join them for their before and after school care, along with their 2018 summer camp! Youth must be registered with CYS or eligible to be registered in CYS in order to participate. Parents must be Active Duty, DOD APF/NAF or DOD contractors who work on the installation. To find out more about youth services, their free programs, activities and events please call 328-2860 or email sommer.j.cloinger.naf@mail.mil.



Youth in kindergarten through fifth grade spent a whole week exploring different areas of archaeology such as Ancient Egypt and other long-ago civilizations, dinosaurs, and bugs in YPG's Youth Age Services after school care program. (Loaned photos)



The youngsters met with YPG archaeologist Erin Goslin, who taught them how to grind up coffee beans and corn with a rock and stone as was done in olden days. They also made an Ancient Egyptian death mask and jewelry, drew hieroglyphics, and built pyramids out of sugar cubes

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CHALLENGES

FROM PAGE 1

“Some kids spend long days at the CDC, up to 11 hours,” said Leslie.

Many are dropped off early in the morning and stay until the evening. “We take care of each one of them for, in a sense, we are part of their extended families,” she said.

Parents arrive to pick-up children between 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. and if someone is late due to an emergency, which is rare, center personnel always work something out to ensure the child remains safe.

Social media and modern challenges

Smart phones and other personal electronic hardware are ubiquitous in modern society. Very young children no more than 18 months old have been seen transfixed by scenes on video monitors and sometimes even demonstrate the rudiments of scrolling on a computer screen. Some adults treat social media as an electronic babysitter and rationalize the experience, figuring kids will actually learn from it.

Not so fast, cautions Leslie.

Studies show that screen time should be minimal during the early developmental years, which translates

into the first five years of life. Young children need to be active and develop strong social habits during their early years.

“Young kids learn best when it is hands on,” said Leslie. “Many adults don’t understand this and use mobile or social media as an easy form of entertainment. People need to understand how important physical activity is in the early years.”

Strong Beginnings

YPG’s Child Development Center serves children up to the age of about five years, which is when they enter Kindergarten. Older children attend programs offered at YPG’s Youth Center.

To make the transition from early childhood to Kindergarten a smooth one, the CDC offers a program during the school year called “Strong Beginnings” that focusses on the skills children need as they grow.

“We teach numbers and letters,” said Leslie, “but we also emphasize the ability to take directions, wait in line, handle conflicts on their own, and, basically, teach them how to behave in a social setting.”

Young children are normally self-centered, exhibiting an ‘it’s all about me’ attitude. As they move from



YPG’s Child Development Center offers early childhood day care and education services to youngsters in ages six months to around five years. The center averages 42 to 45 kids at any one time, operating each week day between 5:45 a.m. and 5:30 p.m (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

the small family unit to larger and more complicated social situations that involve others, skills such as sharing and handling disagreements are important. Young children need to see their place in a community setting.

Working with children and parents

Leslie and the other members of the child development center staff are passionate about what they do. But the job isn’t limited to working with children – sometimes they work

directly with parents.

“It’s hard to be a parent nowadays and we enjoy working with them to share information and suggest tools,” said Leslie. “I like to say that we at the CDC walk right beside them.”



YPG’s Child Development Center held its annual “family fun day” April 19th to celebrate childhood around the world, an event that was fun for all who attended. (Photo by Teri Womack)



To make the transition from early childhood to Kindergarten a smooth one, the CDC offers a program during the school year called “Strong Beginnings” that focusses on the skills children need as they grow. (Photo by Teri Womack)



April is the Army’s annual celebration of the Month of the Military Child, and students at YPG’s Child Development Center were treated to all sorts of fun surprises, including the delightful cut-out seen here. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

Ability to detect microscopic cracks in cannons dramatically improved

By Mark Schauer

At U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground, non-destructive testing of everything from artillery to mortars to vehicle seats is an important, but sometimes overlooked part of the mission -- as far as the public is concerned.

In the test and evaluation world, however, YPG's Physical Test Facility is regarded as second-to-none, and David Le, mechanical engineer, and his team are among the most experienced professionals in the field.

In the area of cannon laser bore mapping, for instance, YPG has developed a variety of apparatus to map even the most microscopic crack or abnormal wear inside a barrel.

"YPG has the largest cannon laser bore mapping capability in the world," said Le. "We have long fulfilled above the requirement the customer asks for."

The proving ground's state-of-the-art laser bore mapping system, which previously had two data channels that rendered measurements accurate within one thousandth of an inch, now has four data channels and is accurate to within one half of one thousandth of an inch. The lab's most ultra-precise stationary machine can measure an object accurately within 50 millionths of one inch.

With the sheer volume of YPG's artillery test workload and size of its test range, however, being able to take measurements in the field is vitally important. The lab boasts a new portable laser bore mapper that is accurate to within two-tenths of one thousandth of an inch, a significant improvement over the previous one's seven-tenths of one thousandth of an inch accuracy. It has also been



Mechanical engineer David Le prepares to inspect a M777 gun tube using YPG's latest miniaturized, portable laser bore mapper. The quick and reliable range of capabilities in this lightweight package has a dramatic real-life impact on the speed of test and the readiness of equipment that the Warfighter needs. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

substantially miniaturized for easy transport, and rugged enough to take bouncing around on an unimproved road or in the cargo hold of an aircraft

"The improvements we made between 2012 and 2017 compacted

three hardware systems into one unit," Le explained. "The old system weighed 52 pounds altogether: this one weighs 26 pounds. "The system is ready to go out and support a test for a customer, not only here but anywhere throughout the United

States."

In addition to its compact size, it significantly increases bore mapping capabilities in all ways.

"The new sensor improves the accuracy, speed, and reliability of the system. Our range is three times larger now. This way, we can inspect not only the bore, but all the way into the powder chamber with one scan."

This quick and reliable range of capabilities has a dramatic real-life impact on the speed of test and the readiness of equipment that the Warfighter needs. An operator can watch the 3D image with photo-like clarity on a screen as the scan is in progress.

"Out in the field, the quick turnaround in detailed laser bore mapping of the cannon means the decision on whether the gun is serviceable or unserviceable can be done in less than an hour. Years ago, you were lucky if you could assess one barrel in two days. "

Le remembers early in his career that making this determination was measured in a matter of days, not minutes.

"Back then, we had to build a replica casting of the tube. The preparation for a casting took at least half a day, then eight to 12 hours for the mixture to cure inside the barrel."

Le expects that the future holds even more significant advances in nondestructive measuring technology, with YPG continuing to lead the way in innovation.

"We continue to work on laser technology to increase portability and accuracy. Better laser bore mapping equipment gives us better test data. We extend the life of the weapon and the Warfighter has a safer weapon to use in the field."

Hot food temporarily comes to YPG school

By Mark Schauer

When dealing with inherently dangerous weapons of war, it is vital that the Army have a test facility far from any populated areas while conducting developmental testing.

On the other hand, folks who live on post are many miles from establishments many of us take for granted, such as schools.

With about 600 people calling the proving ground home, the post is fortunate to have a kindergarten through fifth grade public school that most years boasts between 80 and 90 students.

Though it has offered generations of YPG youngsters a rigorous academic program, Price School lacks a kitchen facility capable of preparing hot meals. This reality has been a source of comment for many years from community residents.

In late April, the school district began a two week pilot program to gauge interest in daily hot meals among the student body. The first hot entrée served was a bean and cheese burrito that cost \$1.50.

"I think it's a good example of how supportive our local community is," said Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG Commander. "We sat with the school board and they offered to do this pilot program to measure the level of support."

For the moment, the school district is transporting relatively-easy to



If the program proves popular, school officials hope to offer hot lunches on a permanent basis by the second half of next school year. The pilot program ends on May 4, so parents of students interested in having a permanent hot lunch program should participate now.

prepare prepackaged fare to YPG's Cactus Café, where the food is heated. If the presence of hot meals proves popular, in the future more elaborate dishes could be prepared at a school in the Yuma Foothills, then transported on post.

"We are trying to make sure that all students in Yuma School District #1 are offered a hot meal," said Lisa Thrower, Child Nutrition Director. "There are some logistics that need to be squared away before we offer this on a regular basis. We thought it would be best to start with a pilot program to see how it worked out and how much participation we got."

If the program proves popular, school officials hope to offer hot lunches on a permanent basis by the second half of next school year. For now, the lunches cost \$1.50 per student, but if the school is part of the National School Lunch Program next school year, some students may be eligible for a reduced-price lunch that

costs 40 cents, or even a free lunch.

The pilot program ends on May 4, so parents of students interested in having a permanent hot lunch program should participate now.

"It is a lot of work for the school district to do this, so it is kind of a use it or lose it proposition," said Poppenberger.



In late April, Yuma Elementary School District #1 began a two week pilot program to gauge interest in daily hot meals among the student body at Price School. "I think it's a good example of how supportive our local community is," said Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG Commander. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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Visit ClassifiedsInYuma.com

YPG recognizes Child Abuse Prevention Month



April is Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month, and mid-month YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger was joined by YPG Garrison Manager Gordon Rogers in signing a proclamation decreeing the importance of a safe and nurturing environment for all children. Following the signing and remarks from Poppenberger (left), children from YPG's Child Development Center planted a pinwheel garden (right). The ceremony was also attended by dozens of YPG Soldiers, police officers, and child care workers as a show of support. (Photos by Teri Womack)

Scream-free Marriage Workshop

10 MAY 2018
1700-1830 | ACS, BLDG 309
(Upstairs)

Whether you are newlyweds, just starting a family, in the teenage years, or empty nesters - all couples need to know how to make their marriage thrive and not just strive.

Your marriage deserves to be fun, fulfilling and fortified for the rest of your life.

This thought-provoking workshop will teach participants how to "calm down, grow up, and get closer" to their mate.

HOURLY CHILDCARE IS AVAILABLE WHILE YOU ATTEND THIS WORKSHOP.
Child must be eligible, registered, and up to date with CYSS.
Call Parent Central Services at (928) 328-3119 for details.

Workshop Registration Required
DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS 3 MAY 2018
Register early -- space is limited.

REGISTRATION
Call (928) 328-3224



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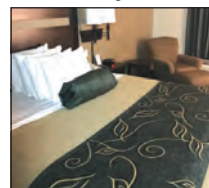


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10AM - 4PM

EXCLUSIVELY FOR PATRIOT CARD MEMBERS!

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from 10AM - 4PM to pick up your **FREE T-Shirt**.

Limit 1 free T-Shirt per guest. While supplies last. See Rewards Club for details.



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