

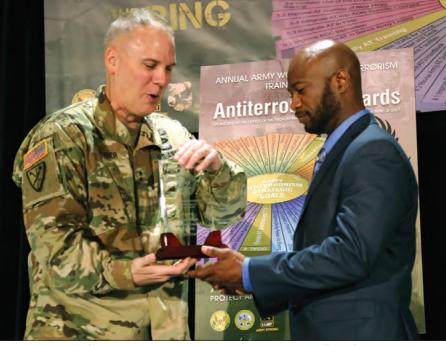
YPG recognized again for excellence in antiterrorism awareness efforts

By Mark Schauer

A common theme in successful counterterrorism operations is people reporting and following up on suspicious activity.

This is the primary message of the Army's annual anti-terrorism month, held every August, and for the past three years YPG mission and garrison personnel, with an assist from the Military Freefall School (MFFS), have gone the extra mile to raise awareness as creatively as possible.

From utilizing the MFFS to jump in a YPG-designed anti-terrorism flag sporting the griffin-in-a-shield logo of the Army's antiterrorism effort with the four tenets of antiterrorism awareness to one of YPG's drop zones as members of the workforce and local media watched to hosting a variety of awareness-increasing information campaigns, YPG's ef-



Maj. Gen. David Glaser (left), Army Provost Marshal General, presents YPG Operations Officer Alfonzo Brown, who represented YPG, with the 2017 award for best small installation at the Army's annual Antiterrorism Award ceremony. "The antiterrorism program is doing well," said Brown. "We're always making it better." (US Army photo)

forts continue to raise the bar for excellence in this critical field. Having received the 2016 best unit nod in the Army's annual Antiterrorism Awards, the post was recently given the 2017 award for best small installation.

"The antiterrorism program is doing well," said Alfonzo Brown, operations officer, who received the award on behalf of the post from the Provost Marshall General's Office at the Army's annual antiterrorism conference. "We're always making it better."

New to this past year's program were a day of seminars where speakers from the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center and the Federal Bureau of Investigation gave presentations concerning antiterror-

SEE ANTITERRORISM page 5

YPG Commander has high level talks with state officials

By Mark Schauer

YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger held a variety of discussions with high-level state officials in a single action-packed day on February 15th.

After attending Arizona Governor Doug Ducey's State of the State Address at Arizona Western College, Poppenberger hosted members of the Arizona State Transportation Board (ASTB) and executives from the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization

for a brief range tour and discussions concerning YPG's mission and the importance of Highway 95 in

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YPG's display at Yuma Air Show coming soon /Page 3



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achieving it. The members of the ASTB and ADOT were in Yuma to unveil a tentative five-year plan for highway expenditures in a meeting open to the public the next day.

"It really was enlightening," said Kristine Ward, ADOT chief financial officer, of the tour and briefings. "It really drives home how much we have to be thankful for and the people we have to be thankful for."

The two-lane stretch of Highway 95 between YPG and the Yuma Foothills averages 50,000 cars per week. YPG handles over 20,000 freight shipments per year over this same stretch of highway, and the General Motors test track trucks in about 1,700 vehicles per year for testing. The rush hour traffic along this stretch around the beginning and end of YPG's duty day has long been known locally as the "YPG 500."

A major sticking point in highway expansion is the dependence on gasoline taxes to fund roadways. Arizona's state gasoline tax—18 cents per gallon—has remained the same for over 25 years, despite inflation eroding the value of the revenue raised by better than 40%



Munitions and Weapons Branch Chief Kermit Okamura (left) briefs members of the Arizona State Transportation Board (ASTB) and executives from the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization on YPG's mission and the importance of Highway 95 in achieving it. The members of the ASTB and ADOT were in Yuma to unveil a tentative five-year plan for highway expenditures in a meeting open to the public the next day. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

THEOUTPOST

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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 over that period of time. As such, most of ADOT's budget goes to maintaining existing roadways.

"There has been a major focus on preserving the assets we currently have," said Ward. "We have over \$20 billion of assets to preserve, more than 21,000 lane miles. The further it degrades, the more expensive it is to bring it back to appropriate standards."

Yuma Deputy Mayor Gary Knight, who also attended the briefings, has

told The Outpost in a prior interview that expanding Highway 95 to four lanes to Interstate 10 and beyond would not only make the road safer for YPG personnel, but deliver other economic benefits to the region as a



Prior to hosting the tour for highway officials later in the day, YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger (right) spoke with Arizona Governor Doug Ducey (left) following the State of the State Address held in Yuma. (Loaned photo)

commercial travel corridor similar to Highway 85 to the east.

"If we can get it done, I envision it like Highway 85 between Gila Bend and Buckeye: divided most of the way with turnouts," Knight said.



YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger (right) discusses YPG's mission with Arizona Department of Transportation Chief Financial Officer Kristine Ward during the visit. "It really was enlightening," she said of the tour and briefings. "It really drives home how much we have to be thankful for and the people we have to be thankful for." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Difficult times an opportunity to practice resilience skills

By Melissa Gomez

Ever have a bad day?

We all have...those days can be tiresome, draining and really knock us off our feet.

However, it's these trying times that also present us opportunities to build our personal skillset or our 'defenses.' Difficult times present an opportunity for us to work on our resilience skills.

Resilience can best be understood as a type of response to intense stress. Resilience is more commonly referred to as the ability to "bounce back". Think of that yellow tennis ball; no matter how much pressure is applied during a hit, it always bounces and maintains its shape. Those who cope with stress well

YPG's annual display at Yuma Air Show coming soon

By Mark Schauer

If you missed the massive display of military equipment on display at YPG's 75th Anniversary celebration last month, you can see a variety of equipment YPG tests at our annual static display at the Yuma Air Show on Saturday, March 17th.

In addition to the opportunity for kids of all ages to try on

gear used by the Soldiers of our Airborne Test Force, the exhibit will also include a M-ATV, a M119 105mm howitzer, a M1A2 Main Battle Tank, and a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, as well as other hands-on table displays.

The M1 and Bradley represent the first time in six years that tracked vehicles will be part of YPG's lineup at the Air Show. We hope to see you there!



Kids of all ages trying on gear used by YPG's Airborne Test Force Soldiers is popular at all YPG public events, including the Yuma Air Show. This year's YPG display will also include a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and M1A2 Abrams tank, the first time in six years tracked vehicles will make an appearance at the event. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

are proven to live longer, more meaningful lives. They not only feel better in many aspects, science proves they sleep better, eat better, and get more enjoyment out of life! Next time a stressor comes your way, take the time to actively think of and employ one (or more) of the coping techniques below. Try these alone or with your loved ones- this is a great way to grow together.

Here are some suggestions for developing and maintaining resilience in each of these areas:

Positive Outlook

• Use people who are great at dealing with stress as role models.

• Find an opportunity for growth in every stressful situation.

• Calm and comfort yourself.

• Try to recharge before facing the next challenge.

• Find something to laugh about. *Active Coping*

• Don't give up trying to solve problems.

• Find a way to get help when it is needed.

• Look at a problem in a number of ways.

• Look for creative solutions to the problem.

Self-Confidence

• Expect that you can handle the problem.

• Utilize positive self-talk. *Learning and Making Meaning*

• Look for meaning in the experience.

• Find strength in the meaning.

• Learn important and useful life lessons from an event.

• Understand that stressful things can—and do--happen to anyone.

Acceptance of Limits and Circumstances

• Put things in perspective and realize you will have times of joy and times of sadness.

• Be good at determining what situations are changeable and what situations are not.

• Accept things you cannot change while working towards positive change of the things you can affect.

• Know you have limits.

Resilience is a skill that can be learned by anyone. It is never too late to begin. If you start by practicing at least one of the factors above you will be on your way to self-improvement and a more positive life!

For questions or more information feel free to contact the Yuma Proving Ground Family Advocacy Program Office at (928) 328-3224. The phone number for the 24 Hour Domestic/ Child Abuse Reporting Hotline is (928) 287-3361.



Phoenix recruiting leadership visits Military Freefall School

By Alun H. Thomas

Leadership from the Phoenix Recruiting Battalion visited the Military Freefall School, Feb. 13, Yuma Proving Ground, as part of leadership development for company commanders and first sergeants.

The company leadership was originally scheduled to participate in tandem jumps with instructors from the school, but due to cloudy conditions the jumps were cancelled.

Personnel were able to tour the school and gain an understanding of its functions and purpose, which is to train selected Special Operations Forces, Department of Defense and allied personnel, as Military Freefall Parachutists.

The school is four weeks in duration and conducts 14 courses a year, with 58 students per class, said Master Sgt. Phillip McCumbee, instructor, MFFS.

During the school, students learn combat military freefall skills, which take place at both day and night, utilizing High Altitude-Low Openings (HALO) and High Altitude-High Opening (HAHO) settings, McCumbee said.

Phoenix leadership viewed instructors making freefall jumps from 13,000 feet and observed students practicing parachute techniques in the Master Sgt. George Bannar Vertical Wind Tunnel.

The trip was a valuable experience for the command teams, said Lt. Col. Dave Clukey, commander, Phoenix. Rec. Bn.

"The visit broadened awareness of Army Special Operations Forces capabilities by our leaders, to assist recruiting efforts and leverage relationships and close collaboration with the Special Warfare Center and the Special Operations Recruiting Battalion," Clukey said.

Clukey, also Special Forces trained and qualified, said the trip was also designed to reward alternative recognition to leadership teams and top performers.

"Being able to provide unique experiences and opportunities to our leaders and top performers shows how much we appreciate them," he said. "Unfortunately they didn't get the opportunity to jump, but they now have a greater understanding of the capabilities of special operations at another level."

RIGHT: Capt. Denard Honeysuckle (left), commander, Phoenix North Recruiting Company, is assisted with his skydiving equipment by an instructor from the Military Freefall School, while preparing for a tandem jump. Leadership from the Army's Phoenix Recruiting Battalion visited the school as part of leadership development for company commanders and first sergeants. (U.S. Army Photo by Alun Thomas)



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ism efforts, as did Ricky Rounds, the chief of operations of the Department of Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security at Fort Hood, Tx. during the mass shooting that occurred there in 2009. Rounds shared his experiences as the initial scene commander, offering insights such as topographical features distorting sound, which led ear witnesses to believe simultaneous gunfire was occurring in a different location on post: their unwittingly erroneous reports caused first responders to be diverted from where they were needed most. He also counselled keeping an open mind about threat indicators.

"It was a unique thing we hadn't done before that paid a lot of dividends in terms of awareness," said Ronald Rodriguez, director of operations.

Later, YPG personnel attended the post's first-ever antiterrorism expo at the post fitness center, boasting multiple vendors and agencies disseminating valuable information. YPG also held a 5K walk-run with an antiterrorism theme where uniformed and civilian personnel participated.

The emphasis on antiterrorism wasn't confined to a single month, though. Random antiterrorism measures were exercised post-wide throughout the year. Members of the YPG workforce have been occasionally surprised to find post commander Col. Ross Poppenberger, Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Timothy Matthews, and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Prosser manning the installation's access gates along with members of the YPG Police Department and Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, who handed out anti-terrorism awareness refrigerator magnets

and pens as they scanned worker's ID cards.

"We want people to be thinking about it because training and awareness can mitigate or prevent bad things from happening," said Poppenberger. "There is a threat out there, and we need to respond accordingly."

"The workforce will take more seriously anything that the chain of command emphasizes," added Rodriguez.

FBI reports indicate more than 50 terrorist plots have been successfully prevented in the past 15 years, often because ordinary people who observed suspicious activity promptly reported it to law enforcement authorities. Brown has served at larger installations earlier in his career, and feels YPG's antiterrorism program is more broadly known among personnel.

"I hear more about the antiterrorism program here than I did while at other installations," said Brown.

"Here it is easier for everyone to know who you are and people are more receptive to listen to your message since it is such a warm and friendly installation to be on."



Members of the YPG workforce have been surprised to occasionally find post commander Col. Ross Poppenberger (above), Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Timothy Matthews, and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Prosser manning the installation's access gates to scan ID cards and emphasize antiterrorism measures. "We want people to be thinking about it because training and awareness can mitigate or prevent bad things from happening," said Poppenberger. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



Among the many antiterrorism awareness activities YPG conducted throughout the year was a 5K walk-run. "I hear more about the antiterrorism program here that I did while at other installations," said Alfonzo Brown. "Here it is easier for everyone to know who you are and people are more receptive to listen to your message since it is such a warm and friendly installation to be on.'

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Red Hat veteran remembers the '80s at YPG

By Mark Schauer

When then-Lt. James Corcoran arrived at YPG in May 1982,the biggest test he worked on involved bed sheets.

Bed sheet material being studied for possible use in cargo parachute canopies, that is.

"The idea behind this was the parachute material they were using was expensive and difficult to get," he explained. "They were looking at alternatives to have air drop parachutes be less expensive and made out of more common material."

The project was large enough that the Air Movements and Special Projects Branch, which had 12 civilian engineers, four parachute riggers who were all commissioned officers, an Air Force Master Sgt. who coordinated air assets like the C-130s they used for drops, and an administrative assistant, needed to bring in additional support.

"We brought in riggers from different bases around the country to support this for 30 day TDYs. I had a couple of guys from Fort Devins and other places."

It might have seemed unlikely in that era for the working class kid from Philadelphia to end up a Red Hat in Yuma, but Corcoran grew up surrounded by men with first-hand military experience.

"I always had an interest in the military. My father and all but one of his five brothers were World War II combat vets. On my mother's side, her father fought in World War I and her brother was in during the Korean War. I felt I had an obligation to serve."

He served in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) while pursuing an accounting degree at Pennsylvania State University, then received his requested billet with the Army's famed 82nd Airborne upon receiving his commission. He was



When this photo was taken in 1983, then-Lt. James Corcoran (right) was serving as project engineer on a cargo parachute canopy fabric test that included a cotton/polyester blend ordinarily used in bed sheets. Now a retired Lt. Col., Corcoran has fond memories of this time at YPG. "It was a fantastic opportunity, and they were a great group of people. It was a great life and a great place to be." (US Army photo)

21 years old, with quartermaster basic training and parachute rigger school under his belt. When he arrived at Fort Bragg as a 2nd Lt., he immediately found himself executive officer for a 320-man company.

"I had to sign for millions of dollars worth of equipment. I had a mess hall that fed 600 people on a daily basis, I had a motor pool and a company supply that I was responsible for. It was: this is your job, and you'd better make everything work."

The position was demanding and taxing, but he excelled. With six months left to go in his three year tour, his commanding officer offered to recommend him for a billet at YPG that ordinarily went to a Captain. He readily accepted the offer, based on a longstanding desire to experience a climate that was warm all year and a glowing report about the obscure post that he had once heard in a chance encounter with another officer while in basic training.

"When I was in officer basic, one of the officers who was in the advanced course had a little gettogether for us newly commissioned officers, and he had just come from Yuma Proving Ground. I remember him sitting down with a group of us and saying, 'You wouldn't believe this place-- you work from 7:00 to 3:30, and by 4:00 I was out on the Colorado River water skiing. It's warm all year long, it was the best three years of my life!'''

As expected, the pace of life at YPG was much more relaxed than at Fort Bragg, but there was still plenty of activity around him, much of which would soon have dramatic impact on both the military and daily life for civilians.

"At the time I was here, there was a lot of exciting stuff going on: GPS; a new vehicle that was going to replace the Jeep; the dust filters on the Abrams tank; the Apache attack helicopter. A lot of this stuff was

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classified, so you wouldn't see it in *The Outpost*."

Those items, of course, were the receivers for the Global Positioning Satellite system, which had just recently been miniaturized into manportable backpacks that weighed nearly 30 pounds, and the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV). He had no direct part in any of the tests, but heard intriguing talk from fellow officers who had.

One thing in particular struck Corcoran during his time in Yuma: the overt displays of respect local civilians gave military personnel, something he had yet to encounter while in uniform. Though the United States had withdrawn from the Vietnam War almost a decade earlier, the damage from that painful fault line in American history remained, and Soldiers—even those who joined after the end of the conflict-- bore the brunt of it.

"I remember one time wearing a uniform while I was in ROTC and having people give me dirty looks and say things to me. When I would go home on leave, I wouldn't wear my uniform. There was a cultural bias against the military that stemmed from Vietnam—people disliked the military and made it clear they did if they saw you in uniform."

In most places in the country, Corcoran observed, this attitude persisted until after Desert Storm, the dramatically successful 96 hour-long ground war against Iraq in 1991. In Yuma, however, a palpable and stated appreciation for the military still existed in the early 1980s.

"The supportive environment was present not just at the proving ground, but also in town. They were happy that the military was here and appreciated that you would spend money in their businesses."

Despite this, the fact remained that YPG and Yuma, which then had a year-round population of about 45,000, was far less exciting than the young man from Philadelphia was accustomed to.

"The post was very small. As far as anything to do on the weekend or after duty hours, I don't remember there being anything. For a young guy in his 20s with some money to spend, there wasn't a tremendous amount to do."



These cargo loads were dropped under a canopy made of a cotton/polyester blend used in bed sheets. Follow-on studies tested canopies made from more-traditional nylon taffeta. (US Army photo)



Now-retired Lt. Col. James Corcoran visits the YPG Heritage Center during his first time back at the post in 35 years, with memories flooding back. "At the time I was here, there was a lot of exciting stuff going on: GPS; a new vehicle that was going to replace the Jeep; the dust filters on the Abrams tank; the Apache attack helicopter. A lot of this stuff was classified, so you wouldn't see it in *The Outpost.*" (Photo by Mark Schauer)

He shared a rented condominium off-post with a fellow officer and pursued a graduate degree from Webster University, which then held classes at for uniformed personnel at MCAS-Yuma. He also made weekend trips out of town as much as possible.

"I probably could drive to San Diego blindfolded," he laughed. "I went there all the time. I went to Phoenix a fair amount, too, but it was relatively small back then."

He left active duty after his tour in Yuma was through, moving to the National Guard for two years and then the Army Reserve for 18 more. He volunteered to return to active duty in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, by which time he was a Lt. Col. The kind of warfare the nation was now involved in was much different from what the Army was preparing for during his time in Yuma decades earlier. "We were training for a large scale, tank-heavy operation, and they were probably going to come into West Germany with three times the number of tanks and personnel we had. I never had any expectation in the early 1980s that we would end up somewhere like Iraq or Afghanistan."

He retired from the Army Reserve in 2003. His career out of uniform was as a certified public accountant in the Office of the Inspector General for the General Service Administration, and Corcoran credits in part his exposure to civilian civil servants at YPG with inspiring him to initially pursue the position.

He remains grateful for the chance to serve at the Army's hottest airfield.

"It was a fantastic opportunity, and they were a great group of people. It was a great life and a great place to be."



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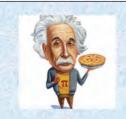
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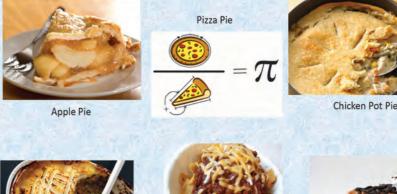
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