

# THEOUTPOST

U.S. ARMY YUMA PROVING GROUND, YUMA, ARIZONA 85365 | VOLUME 67 NO. 12 JUNE 11, 2018

## A reverent remembrance for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice



For more than 70 years, Yuma has commemorated Memorial Day with a moving ceremony that involves the dropping of a wreath of flowers into the waters of the Colorado River from the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway Bridge. Multiple color guards from local organizations participate by standing in formation along the banks of the river in Gateway Park as over 200 solemn spectators watch the flowers fall to the water and float away. As the sole active duty color guard, YPG represented all U.S. military services that day. It was quite an honor and the members of the color guard, spit-shined and well-practiced, did the proving ground and Army proud. See page 5 for additional photos. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

# Range control specialist honored by Arizona Game and Fish Department

#### By Mark Schauer

Darrell Williams knows YPG's vast ranges better than most.

From his earliest days here as a test vehicle operator and test officer to his current position as lead range control specialist, the 28-year proving ground veteran has seen enormous changes.

"It's kind of neat to see how everything progresses," he said. "You get a proof of concept test system that will show up in a huge van, and then five years later it comes back as a small box."

The sheer size of the mission has expanded, but the basic concept of testing equipment Soldiers need to ensure it works exactly as it should is unchanged. Just as importantly, YPG's culture demands that

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YPG personnel lend a hand /Page 5



G/ATORs lurk on YPG /Page 6



Stingers rocket across range /Page 7



## HONORED

testing what is often inherently dangerous weaponry be done not only safely, but simultaneous with scores of other tests in progress on land and in the air in a geographic footprint larger than the state of Rhode Island.

"Working at range control you kind of see the whole picture—we are concerned with the land space and air space."

The job demands accountability for all of YPG's personnel who use the range, too, no matter what. When a storm of the century inundated the Yuma area with rain for more than 24 straight hours in January 2010, more than 400 YPG employees were stranded behind normally dry desert washes turned into raging rivers. As the Department of Public Works utilizied graders and bulldozers to keep a normally disused secondary road passable long enough for fourwheel drive vehicles to traverse a running wash, Williams and his colleagues in range control monitored the exodus, and stood by ready to scramble helciopters if necessary to evacuate a handful of employees in extremely remote parts of the range.

"We had to stay here and account

for every individual on the range. That turned into a long day."

In addition to helping keep YPG's personnel safe, Williams, an avid hunter, is also a member of the proving ground's hunting committee, which defines access requirements and regulations to allow safe hunting inside YPG's boundaries. YPG is an impeccably preserved natural habitat for a variety of species, from Sonoran Desert Tortoises to bighorn sheep. The Mojave Fringe-toed Lizard, imperiled in much of the Western United States, thrives in dunes here. The Sonoran Pronghorn was brought back from the verge of extinction in the past 15 years by state officials in part due to utilizing YPG as a protected habitat for it to regenerate.

Enabling wildlife officials to monitor these creatures on a regular and continuing basis in a safe way that doesn't interfere with testing is another aspect of Williams' job.

"It's facilitating working around our schedule so both parties can meet their goals and missions. You need to ensure they aren't encroaching on YPG test activities or danger zones. Our test schedule is very robust and dynamic and does not always allow entities to easily gain range access in either the airspace or land space during a



Darrell Williams, lead range control specialist, is recognized by Arizona Game and Fish Department Chairman James Ammons for "ongoing efforts and contributions to conserve Arizona's wildlife for current and future generations." YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger was on hand for the ceremony. (Loaned photo)

standard work week."

Williams' contributions in this area were recently recognized by the Arizona Game and Fish Department, which conferred upon him a commendation of achievement for "ongoing efforts and contributions to conserve Arizona's wildlife for current and future generations." YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger was on hand for the ceremony led by Arizona Game and Fish Commission Chairman James Ammons.

"We've always had a very good

working relationship with them," Williams said. "If we have any issues with animals, we call them and they come out to help."

Williams is proud of all aspects of his work during his long tenure here, but has a particular appreciation for this aspect of it.

"I've always been a sportsman. Nowadays I enjoy being out with my kids and friends more than the actual hunting. I enjoy wildlife and being outdoors and want to make sure that is there for future generations."

## THE OUTPOST

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#### A View Without A Point

# Picture this—my unexpected saga with a high-end camera (and its lens cap)

#### By Teri Womack

Years ago when purchasing my first smart phone, I took along my very own personal IT Specialist--my adult son.

Like most of his generation, he is lot more tech-savvy than I am.

As we were walking to the car, I voiced my apprehension about learning the functions of my new little hand-held computer. His response was, "Don't worry Mom, you can call me for help anytime. You'll probably only use one percent of your phone anyway."

Right there in the parking lot, in broad daylight, he threw down the gauntlet in the form of a challenge! He gave me no choice but to, well, rise to the challenge. For the next few months, every time I discovered a new trick, I would make sure he knew that my percentage rate was climbing-- 10 percent, then 20 percent...

until I finally found a feature that even he hadn't yet discovered and he begged me to stop.

A short time later, my position as marketing specialist was reassigned to YPG's Public Affairs Office. Fearing I might be asked to take photos, conduct interviews, or write stories, I focused

on staying in my lane, continuing to develop briefings, brochures, and marketing materials for the proving ground. I was told there might be a time when I would be needed to fill in, but in my mind, I was the last resort. With three other people in the office at the time, I fig-

ured there was zero chance of that ever happening.

I figured wrong. The day came when there was a last minute photo request and everyone else in the office was

unavailable-- either out on jobs or working on a short suspense project.

I was handed a Nikon camera with a whole bunch of buttons, knobs, and switches. Since I had just triumphed over my smartphone photo skills, which now only rarely included part of my hand or one of my fingers, I was terrified of standing in the front of an award ceremony snapping photos with no clue as to what I was doing.

But it was happening and I had to go now. So, I was given a quick 30 second tutorial and assured that the camera was set to automatic and I just had to basically point and click. I was offered a few words of encouragement such as "It's not hard –really, anyone can do it -- you can't mess it up," and I was on my way.

Since then, I have been given more instruction and have become better-acquainted with my camera, mostly learning from my mistakes using the tried and failed method

But in that first 30 second training class, one thing still sticks out. I was specifically and repeatedly cautioned about the lens cap: Do not take the lens cap off of and set it down because you might forget it. Make sure you keep track of the lens cap. Do not lose the lens cap. If memory serves me right, I was even given visual demonstration of the lens cap being removed and placed in his pocket.

So when I take photos, it goes straight into my back pocket and I don't leave an event without double checking to make sure it is there. I have never left a lens cap behind.

Recently, I returned to my office and removed that cherished lens cap from my pocket only to realize that I had forgotten my camera.

Like most things in life, although it is important to focus on the details, you just can't lose sight of the big picture.



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## 101 ways to have fun with kids this summer

#### By Melissa Gomez

Summer may be a time to enjoy quiet days and relax for some, but tell that to kids who are bouncing off the walls or shouting "I'm bored." As parents, babysitters, caregivers and friends, we want each summer to be more memorable than the last and with that comes the need for a few new ideas...

Families who spend time together create unbreakable bonds that withstand even life's toughest situations. Family time has been shown to improve a child's academic performance and sharpens their social skills. Spending time with your children will help improve not only your parenting skills, but theirs as well. Kids often learn by example and will utilize learned skills later in life with their own children.

More family time results in youth with less behavioral health problems. Increased quality time and communication are key to a child's development. Additionally, increased family time has been shown to decrease the potential for family violence and negative coping behaviors later in life. Teenagers who spend more time with family are more confident and are less likely to engage in drug abuse or violence.

Consider giving this list a valiant effort this summer and make the most of out the precious time we get to spend



with our families! For more information or for questions contact the Yuma Proving Ground Family Advocacy Program at (928) 328-3224.

Hey families, want help making your way through this list? Print it out and give it to your sitters/caregivers to do with your kids as well. And if you don't have child care lined up for the summer yet, consider calling Parent Central Services at (928) 328-3119 for information on installation summer childcare options.

- 1. Bake cookies for ice cream sandwiches.
- 2. Make a puzzle with your family.
- 3. Make a photo journal or a family yearbook.
- 4. Have a luau in the backyard.
- 5. Visit the beach/river and swim or collect sand rocks or shells.
- 6. Make a fort out of cardboard boxes.

- 7. Visit a farmer's market.
- 8. Stage an A to Z scavenger hunt, where you have to find something that starts with every letter.
- 9. Pick berries or veggies at a local farm.
- 10. Have a picnic at a state park.
- 11. Make ice cream.
- 12. Go canoeing at a local lake.
- 13. Build a sandcastle in a sandbox or in a sandy area like the beach or lake.
- 14. Write and illustrate your own book and have it published into an actual hardcover book using a book publishing service online.
- 15. Have breakfast for dinner.
- 16. Clean up trash in your local area.
- 17. Have a backyard campfire...or just use the grill! Roast hot dogs on sticks, pop popcorn and finish off with s'mores.
- 18. Make homemade pizza.
- 19. Go for a walk and then make a collage from nature objects you find along the way.
- 20. Take your pets for a walk or join another friend when they walk their pet.
- 21. Set up a lemonade stand.
- 22. Have a water balloon fight.
- 23. Practice your origami skills and make objects to hang from the ceiling.
- 24. Go biking on a trail or safely ride in your neighborhood as a family.
- 25. Interview an older relative about what life was like when they were young.
- 26. Make your own rain. Douse everyone with the hose or sprinkler.

- 27. Print out a list of children's books that have won Caldecott Medals. Visit the local library throughout the summer and try to read as many as you can.
- 28. Create salad spinner art: Place circles of paper inside a cheap salad spinner, dab tempera paints on top, cover and spin away.
- 29. Practice making interesting shadow puppets and then put on a show with your characters.
- 30. Plant a garden of herbs and veggies.
- 31. Make a sidewalk chalk mural.
- 32. Make "s'mores." Chocolate + marshmallow + graham cracker = summer.
- 33. Have an outdoor painting party using huge canvases or cardboard.
- 34. Visit a local art studio for kid's activities.
- 35. Stargaze. Invite friends and make a party of it. Identify as many constellations as possible -- see if there are any local astronomy groups for kids.
- 36. Pretend to be pirates for a day -- dress up in costumes, plan a treasure hunt and talk like a pirate.
- 37. Make an indoor sandbox using colored rice: mix 4 cups of rice with 3 tablespoons of rubbing alcohol and a few drops of food coloring and let dry overnight.
- 38. Turn the backyard into a carnival -- set up a face painting area and games like ring toss.
- 39. Make totem poles out of paper towel rolls and decorate them.
- 40. Visit a museum you've never been to.
- 41. Make a giant hopscotch or Twister game on the lawn (with spray paint) or driveway (with chalk).
- 42. String beads into jewelry.
- 43. Make a bird house out of Popsicle sticks.
- 44. Invite friends over for a game night. Have a kids' games table and an adult one too
- 45. Create homemade leis with wildflowers
- 46. Take a hike. Choose a route near your house or take a drive to a more distant park.

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## YPG Soldiers honor the fallen, impress local youngsters





In the world of formal military colors guards, installations with large populations of Soldiers often have designated personnel specifically assigned to perform this duty on a full time basis to handle the large volume of requests that come in each year. YPG does not have this luxury, however, for all active duty personnel are fully employed executing the proving ground's demanding test workload. As such, Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Engelman, Staff Sgt. Cliff Warner, Staff Sgt. Avram Collins, and Sgt. Steven Lehoux of YPG's Airborne Test Force practiced on their own time to ensure the crisp precision expected of a military color guard prior to participating in this year's Memorial Day Ceremony at Yuma's Ocean to Ocean Bridge. In addition to remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our nation's liberty, their presence also inspired a few eager youngsters-- after the ceremony, the men stayed to answer their questions about the life of a Soldier. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



# YPG personnel lend a hand to Yuma children's museum

A group of thoughtful, committed Yumanites have worked for several years to endow, open, and sustain a permanent children's museum in the community, and among their ranks are YPG personnel like test officer Kevin Irr (above), shown here putting some final touches on an exhibit. Though establishing a permanent home for the operation is still a work in progress, the Children's Museum of Yuma County has returned to the Yuma Art Center for the summer, open to youngsters and their adult loved ones from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday until July 28. This year's theme is space exploration, and includes graphics of past and present NASA testing conducted at YPG lent by Heritage Center curator Bill Heidner. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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## Radar with state-of-the-art semiconductor tested at YPG

#### By Mark Schauer

The element of surprise can be a critical weapon, and nothing removes it from the playbook of enemy forces quite like radar.

Radar units send out pulses of highfrequency electromagnetic waves that reflect off objects, and modern radar systems are sophisticated enough to track even small, rapidly moving objects like rockets and mortar and artillery shells.

YPG has long experience testing these systems. Currently, the proving ground is hosting an operational test of the Marine Corps' AN/TPS-80 Ground/Air Task Oriented Radar (G/ATOR). Specifically under evaluation is the Block 2 version of the system, which searches for ground-based weapons fire. The version of the G/ATOR under test now uses Gallium Arsenide (GaAs) for its semiconductor in the transmit/receive modules: a system coming for test at YPG later this year uses more efficient Gallium Nitride (GaN).

"This operational assessment is set up to make a fielding decision on four GaAs systems," said Maj. Peter Young, operational test project officer. "We have these initial four systems that will be delivered to the Marines this fall, and this test is to evaluate their operational readiness."

The portable unit's upright rectangular face weighs in at a relatively light 3,000 pounds, significantly less than that of comparably sized radars. Much of the weight savings comes from the system being cooled by ambient air, even in torrid desert heat.

"This is an expeditionary radar—it will go anywhere the Marines go," said John Karlovich, program manager. "It is a pretty capable system that has legs to pace the threat for decades to come."

About 40 Marines from various installations across the country participate in the testing, broken down into two radar teams and a target processing center that feeds information from the radar into a fire direction center to coordinate counter-fire against the location from which the 'hostile' round or rocket originated.

"They're emplacing and displac-



The operational test was originally slated to be part of a large operational exercise at a Marine Corps installation. The testers appreciated YPG's flexibility, vast range space, and expertise and capability in firing every kind of threat the radars are expected to guard against in a combat situation.

ing the radar based on tactical scenarios," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Abraxas Patton, G/ATOR Block II project officer. "We're using YPG as our 'enemy,' having them fire on a pretend friendly force. The radars are set up to detect these incoming rockets, artillery, and mortars so we can counter-fire on them to protect friendly forces."



YPG is hosting an operational test of the Marine Corps' AN/TPS-80 Ground/Air Task Oriented Radar (G/ATOR). The portable unit's upright rectangular face weighs in at a relatively light 3,000 pounds, significantly less than that of comparably sized radars. (Photos by Summer Romero)



Two YPG weapons operation crews supporting the test move frequently throughout a typical day to test the radar's ability to track fires from different locations, requiring careful coordination. The diverse expertise of YPG's weapons operators mean the G/ATOR can be readily put through its paces against all types of indirect fire, from mortars and rockets to artillery shells.

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About 40 Marines participate in the testing, broken down into two radar teams and a target processing center that feeds information from the radar into a fire direction center to coordinate counter-fire against the location on YPG's range from which the 'hostile' round or rocket originated.

Two YPG weapons operation crews supporting the test move frequently throughout a typical day to test the radar's ability to track fires from different locations, requiring careful coordination. The diverse expertise of YPG's weapons operators mean the G/ATOR can be readily put through its paces against all types of indirect fire, from mortars and rockets to artillery shells. In some test scenarios, the system was exposed to all of these simultaneously, or in close succession from multiple locations over the course of the day. Hundreds of rounds were fired.

"YPG can shoot everything I want to shoot," said Young.

The operational test was originally slated to be part of a large operational exercise at a Marine Corps installa-

tion. When the exercise was significantly scaled back in scope, the testers chose YPG, which had been home to developmental testing of the system for nearly a year, as a backup location. The testers appreciated YPG's flexibility, vast range space, and expertise and capability in firing every kind of threat the radars are expected to guard against in a combat situation.

"We've been to several other test centers, and YPG is by far the best," said Patton. "The professionalism and responsiveness of the personnel supporting us are phenomenal."

"This is a culmination of a long, challenging development program," added Karlovich. "It really is a quantum leap in capability for any radar that isn't an active array. It's pretty exciting."

### **That Stings!**







YPG's Training Exercise Management Office (TEMO) hosted Marines with the 3rd Low Altitude Air Defense Battalion in late May conducting FM-92 Stinger missile training, firing at realistic targets. Though the 35 lb. Stinger missile is equipped with modern electronics that seek heat emitting aerial targets, the operator must still carefully track and engage targets in order for the system to work properly. The Stinger has little recoil when fired, for the system is equipped with two engines — one to kick the missile out of the launch tube and, once at a safe distance, another which engages to enable it to soar toward a target. YPG's vast ranges and careful coordination by TEMO enabled the training activity to take place without any impact on the proving ground's primary test mission. (Photos by Lance Cpl. Hanna L. Powell)

## In appreciation of Army spouses



YPG celebrated the contributions and sacrifices of military spouses with an evening social at the Cactus Café in late May. After numerous spouses were recognized for their often-unheralded impact on Army readiness, attendees were treated to live music from Celia Lopez and Risque Band. (Photo by Teri Womack)

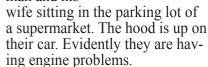


### Chaplain's Corner —

## The righteous honor those who served

#### By Maj. Ronald Beltz

An anonymous e-mail tells a story we need to hear on this Memorial Day weekend. It's about an old man and his



A young man in his early 20s

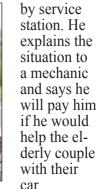
with a grocery bag in his arm walks in the direction of the elderly couple. The old gentleman emerges from the car and takes a few steps in the young man's direction. He points to the open hood and asks the young man for assistance. The young man puts his grocery bag into his expensive SUV, turns back to the old man and yells at him: "You shouldn't even be allowed to drive a car at your age." And then with a wave of his hand, he gets into his car and speeds out of the parking lot. The old gentleman pulls out his handkerchief, mops his brow and goes back to his car. Again he

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

looks at the engine. He then goes

her that things will be okay.

to his wife and appears to reassure



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

After the car was repaired and running, the old gentleman handed a card to the stranger and they shook hands and parted. A little while later the stranger happened to look at the card. The name of the old gentleman was on the card in golden leaf and under his name was written: Congressional Medal of Honor Society. It was only then that the former Marine realized that he had come to the aid of one of America's heroes.

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

Proverbs 14: 34 Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people.



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FUN FROM PAGE S

47. Break out your baseball gloves and start a game, sandlot style.

48. Make paper boats and race them in a kiddie pool using straws to propel them. 49. Play mini-golf -- or set up a course in your driveway by laying different size

containers on their sides.

50. Make your own colored sand and create sand art.

51. Get a map of the United States and mark off all the exciting places you want to visit -- create the ultimate road trip.

52. Set up a net and play badminton and volleyball.

53. Visit an amusement park or water park.

54. Go to a matinee.

55. Watch family movies. Kids can't get enough of themselves on the big screen.

56. Have a tricycle race at the park.

57. Blow bubbles. Make your own!

58. Visit a fire station.

59. Collect rocks and paint them to use as paperweights or pet rocks.

60. Go roller skating.

61. Visit a zoo or aquarium to learn about animals.

62. Build a Lego castle. Clear off a table and make it a family project.

63. Blend your own smoothie.

64. Set up a bike wash and raise money for a local charity.

65. Batter up at a batting cage.

66. Teach the grandparents to use Skype. And show off your new skill.

67. Bake cupcakes in ice cream cones and then decorate them.

68. Assemble a family cookbook with all your favorite recipes.

69. Fly a kite.

70. Make popsicles in Dixie cups using fruit juices.

71. Catch fireflies in a jar (and let them go at the end of the night).

72. Stage your own Summer Olympics with races, hurdles and relays.

73. Have breakfast in bed. Take turns being the server and the served.

74. Decorate bikes and have a neighborhood Fourth of July parade.

75. Take a sewing/crochet/knitting class. 76. Write in a journal. At the end of the summer share selections with each other about the highlights of the season.

77. Go to a flea market.

78. Volunteer at an animal adoption organization.

79. Visit a retirement home and read stories to residents.

80. Attend an outdoor festival or concert.

81. Pick a nearby town to visit for the day.

82. Visit a cave nearby.

83. Get a map of your area, mark off all the local parks -- then visit them, take pictures and vote for your favorite.

84. Take in a fireworks exhibit.

85. Make crafts with recyclable items like stickers using old photos, magazines and repositionable glue.

86. Have a garage sale. Kids can earn spending money by selling their old stuff. 87. Paint canvas sneakers with fabric paint pens or acrylic paint.

88. Create three dimensional buildings using toothpicks and mini marshmallows. 89. Make bird feeders by covering pine cones with peanut butter and rolling in birdseed.

90. Let the kids cook dinner. In fact, make a tradition of it.

91. Create unusual s'mores by experimenting with ingredients like cookies, bananas, flavored marshmallows and white chocolate.

92. Have a fancy tea party.

93. Make a giant slip-n-slide with a painter's tarp and shaving cream.

94. Go camping in the backyard or at a campsite. Follow these tips for camping with kids.

95. Let kids paint each other with washable tempera paint, then wash it off in the sprinklers.

96. Go swimming at your local pool! 97. Host a toy swap and exchange toys

with friends.

98. Set up a tent in the backyard to use

as a summer playhouse. 99. Take a free kid's workshop at stores

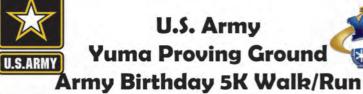
like Lowe's or Home Depot.

100. Get started on back to school shopping early by looking in catalogs and stores for the best sales

101. Spend a day reflecting back on all the cool things you did this summer with your family!!



Join us as the Army Celebrates its 243<sup>rd</sup> Birthday! 14 June 2018



0600 - 0625: On-site Registration at Heritage Center

(Competitive Category and Fun/Fitness

Categories by age)

0625 - 0630: Commander's Comments, Safety Brief

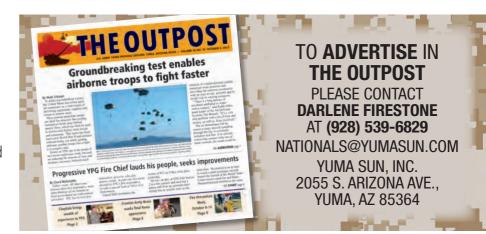
and Course Description

0630: Race Start

0720: Age Group Awards

0730 - 0800: Army Birthday Cake Ceremony at the Heritage Center

POC: Bill Heidner, ext 3394





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