

# THE OUTPOST

U.S. ARMY YUMA PROVING GROUND, YUMA, ARIZONA 85365 | VOLUME 67 NO. 22 NOVEMBER 12, 2018

## Deputy Secretary of Defense visits YPG



Escorted by YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger (left), Deputy Secretary of Defense Patrick M. Shanahan (right) visited U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground on November 5. "This was a very insightful visit," he said. "The Yuma Proving Ground is critical to our national defense. I witnessed first-hand the critical development and testing the Yuma team undertakes every day. Their efforts ensure vital lethality is fielded rapidly." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

## All hail the King: YPG tests newest Marine Corps helicopter

By Mark Schauer

What has three 7500 horsepower engines and will ultimately be able to externally carry a 27,000 pound load for 110 nautical miles?

It's the CH-53K King Stallion, the newest iteration of the Marine Corps' heavy lift helicopter, which recently underwent testing at YPG.

"It looks very similar to the old CH-53s, but this one is completely new," said Hi-Sing Silen, YPG test officer. "There is such major improvement that it is basically a new aircraft."

The CH-53 type helicopter has been a potent member of the Marine Corps aviation community's fleet for over 40 years, and the newest version takes the platform to a whole new level.

"It's meant to be faster, stronger, lighter, and perform all the duties of the previous iteration with nearly triple the payload capability," said Silen.

For the men and women who fly the aircraft, however, the most exciting new feature is probably the replacement of hydraulic flight

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# Mesa Defense Alliance impressed by YPG visit

By Mark Schauer

Arizona boasts a large military presence, and is home to numerous defense contractors.

Though YPG has been part of the landscape for 75 years, some of the latter group may not realize that the proving ground, the busiest of the Army's six test centers, conducts private industry tests in addition to tests for Department of Defense

projects.

To help spread the word, YPG hosted a tour of proving ground and its capabilities for the Mesa Defense Alliance in late October. Among the visitors were representatives of several Mesa-based defense contractors.

"On every one of these tours we do, people come back and say, 'I had no idea that you could do this,'" said Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG com-



Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG commander, addresses visitors from the Mesa Defense Alliance. "I think it's important to showcase the capability and capacity we have now to support immediate needs individual companies have for independent tests on research and development projects," he said. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



Steve Flores, Artillery and Mine Branch chief, explains the proving ground's artillery testing capabilities. "It can reduce cycle time on developmental items if a customer comes here and does a private industry test," said Poppenberger. "If we do the independent analysis assessment on a component item, that item doesn't need to be re-tested. The end game is putting items in Soldiers' hands quicker."

mander. "This was apparent to me early on. My commander's guidance is to 'educate and inform,' and this is one way I meet that guidance."

Poppenberger also said that the efficiency of being able to test at YPG, located within the same state, will reap dividends for the armed forces in the future.

"It can reduce cycle time on developmental items if a customer comes here and does a private industry test," said Poppenberger. "If we do the independent analysis assessment on a component item, that item doesn't need to be re-tested. The end game is putting items in Soldiers' hands quicker."

Local business leaders agree that raising awareness about the proving ground is a vital priority.

"Awareness is absolutely critical for both YPG and the community," said Julie Engel, President and CEO of the Greater Yuma Economic Development Corporation and current chair of the Yuma 50 military support group. "The more often we get them out to both, the more they will remember the capabilities that are out here that will save them money, save them travel time, and allow them to test in their own backyard rather than states away."

All of these visitors, she added, stay in local hotels, eat at local restaurants, and otherwise patronize local businesses.

Members of the group also toured YPG in January of this year, but this visit consisted of mostly new faces.

"Only one company that was here

## THE OUTPOST

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Michael Schwitzing, Metrology and Simulation Branch chief, takes visitors through YPG's non-destructive test facilities. "Only one company that was here on this trip came to the last visit," said Julie Engel, President and CEO of the Greater Yuma Economic Development Corporation and current chair of the Yuma 50 military support group. "I really think this is going to eventually lead to long-term relationships with all of these companies."

on this trip came to the last visit," said Engel. "I really think this is going to eventually lead to long-term relationships with all of these companies."

This visit also drew the attention of a member of Congress, who made his first visit to YPG.

"It's an important facility in our state," explained Rep. Andrew Biggs of Arizona's 5th Congressional District. "I've been working with the Mesa Defense Alliance and needed to come out and see the facility and what's going on. It needs an advocate in the U.S. Congress and I needed to know more about it."

Like the other visitors, Biggs felt

the trip was an eye-opener.

"It's been awesome," said Biggs. "The range of what happens here has blown me away. It is broad and deep. Everyone here has been very gracious and has answered all of my questions as we went along."

Poppenberger believes that hosting tours such as this is vital for YPG and the military, both now and in the future.

"I think it's important to showcase the capability and capacity we have now to support immediate needs individual companies have for independent tests on research and development projects," said Pop-



Col. Ross Poppenberger talks with Rep. Andrew Biggs of Arizona's 5th Congressional District. "It's been awesome," Biggs said of his visit. "The range of what happens here has blown me away. It is broad and deep."

penberger. "I also think that if they don't have something coming down

the pike now, it plants the seed for future opportunities."

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## Chaplain's Corner

# A leap of faith is better than jumping to conclusions

By Maj. Ronald Beltz

The wedding ceremony came to the point where the minister asked if anyone had anything to say concerning the union of the bride and groom. The moment of utter silence was broken when a beautiful young woman carrying a child stood up. She started walking slowly towards the minister.

The congregation was aghast - you could almost hear a pin drop. The groom's jaw dropped as he stared in disbelief at the approaching young woman and child. Chaos ensued.

The bride threw the bouquet into the air and burst out crying. Then the groom's mother fainted.

The best men started giving each other looks and wondering how to save the situation.

The minister asked the woman, "Can you tell us why you came forward? What do you have to say?"

There was absolute silence in the church.

The woman replied, "We can't hear you in the back."

Are you familiar with the term, 'jumping to conclusions?' There is actually a psychological term for this: inference observation confusion, to use a pretty fancy fifty-cent word!

So what does it mean to jump to conclusions? The story above certainly illustrates it. Jumping to conclusions is when we judge or decide on something without all of the facts. Often times our conclusion is a negative one!

Now, if you think about it, how often do we jump to conclusions about people and events in our lives and world?

The Bible reminds us from Matthew 7:1-2: "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measure to you."

Have a wonderful, Blessed Day!

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# Second annual YPG Organization Day a hit

By Mark Schauer

The serious business of YPG's test mission normally precludes a carnival atmosphere on post.

Yet maintaining morale requires at least one day of relaxation for the workforce.

The second annual Organization Day brought together workers from across the proving ground to participate in a variety of fun activities designed to build unit cohesion, foster camaraderie, and encourage friendly competition.

"We've been the busiest Army test center for nine straight years because of the work that everyone here does," said Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG commander. "This is our way at the leadership level of saying 'thank you' and let you unplug and have some fun."

"YPG is filled with incredibly talented, intelligent, and driven individuals who do their best every day to accomplish the mission," said Pat Franklin, pilot. "It takes a toll on us mentally, physically, and emotionally. The more stressful the duties, the more the need for the simplicity of play."

The day had something for everyone, from bowling and poker to three-leg races and corn hole.

Other popular events included the

two-on-two volleyball tournament and a closest-to-the-pin golf competition. The three-on-three basketball tournament was just as thrilling as last year's, and the whiffle ball tournament was enjoyed by all. Though strictly for bragging rights, impromptu tug-of-war matches near the end of the day drew out the competitive spirit of many.

At the end of the day, Poppenberger presented the Commander's Cup to the Commo Cowboys, which won a nail-biter against Team Air Delivery, the reigning champions.

Whether playing or watching, all who attended had fun, reacquainted with people in different divisions, and ate delicious food prepared by Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation.



The Combat Automotive Systems Division continued their unbeatable dominance in the tug of war matches that ended the day.



The sand bag buddy obstacle course was a challenging-- and competitive-- relay event. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



The Commo Cowboys unseated Team Air Delivery as Org Day champions. Congratulations, Commo Cowboys!

"Everybody across the Army sees the immense work we do here day in and day out," said Poppenberger. "YPG is a strong organization with a relatively small workforce on a

large installation and we are making a major splash across the entire nation. It's absolutely an honor to serve day in and day out with everyone here."



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# KING

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controls with fly-by-wire technology that computerizes the function.

“The benefits of using a computer are that you have less hydraulic fluid and lighter components,” said Silen. “You can eliminate pilot errors by enhancing the pilot’s ability to operate in different profiles. It’s not auto pilot, but a pilot assistance.”

“The beauty of fly-by-wire is that when a brownout occurs and the view of the ground goes away, you can put it into a stable hover mode where there is zero drift on the aircraft,” added John Rucci, test pilot.

The degraded visual environment course at YPG is highly coveted by helicopter testers seeking to protect flight crews from the potentially catastrophic consequences of brownouts. Caused by rapidly blowing sand and dirt thrown into a vortex by the rotor blades of a helicopter, a brownout’s swirling dust gives pilots the illusion they are moving even if they are hovering stationary. Hazardous in any situation, it is particularly risky when landing in a combat zone with multiple other aircraft.

The CH-53K testers reported good results as a result of their evaluations at the proving ground.

“We maintained stability in a hover with very little pilot intervention,” said Rucci. “We were able to perform

tasks in the hover and do pretty much anything the Marine Corps would want to do with the aircraft in a degraded visual environment.”

Silen says that factors such as degraded visual environments underscore the necessity of testing military equipment in the natural environment.

“You have a design on paper and think as an engineer that you accounted for everything, but you have to put it together and use it in the natural environment to verify what you have designed,” said Silen. “There is a difference between the notional and the actual.”

The ‘moon dust’ on YPG’s DVE course, tilted for maximum diffusion when a helicopter hovers overhead, was adequately harsh for the testers’ purposes.

“The view from inside the cockpit in the degraded visual environment here in Yuma was extremely poor,” said Rucci. “It was about as bad as any of us have seen in any part of the world.”

YPG’s contributions to this testing were significantly greater than many other previous helicopter tests here.

“We developed a very elaborate test methodology that is different from the typical test in brownout conditions,” said Silen. “We produced an independent link-to-link network from the airfield to the test site for their data acquisition instrumentation to operate from the airfield but talk to



The CH-53 type helicopter has been a potent member of the Marine Corps aviation community’s fleet for over 40 years, and the ‘K’ version takes the platform to a whole new level. “It’s meant to be faster, stronger, lighter, and perform all the duties of the previous iteration with nearly triple the payload capability,” said Hi-Sing Silen, YPG test officer.

the aircraft at the test site. Our range communications personnel gave the customer an independent digital highway that monitored in real time the performance of all aspects of the aircraft.”

The experimental nature of the aircraft, which had never before flown in this specific environment prior to its time at YPG, required additional safety measures.

“We had standby crash and rescue personnel on site and at the airfield,” said Silen. “It is a new aircraft that had never flown in those conditions, so we took all precautions to rapidly

execute emergency procedures if necessary.”

Thanks to a carefully executed plan, the test reaped enormous dividends.

“It’s a win for the customer based on the amount of data we were able to collect,” said Silen.

Overall, the pilots who flew the craft had rave reviews about it and its state-of-the-art capabilities.

“From approach to landing to hover to take-off, the aircraft was incredibly stable,” said Rucci. “This technology will allow the Marine Corps to get in, deliver, and get out of any place in the world they choose to go.”



The degraded visual environment course at YPG is highly coveted by helicopter testers seeking to protect flight crews from the potentially catastrophic consequences of brownouts.



Caused by rapidly blowing sand and dirt thrown into a vortex by the rotor blades of a helicopter, a brownout’s swirling dust gives pilots the illusion they are moving even if they are hovering stationary.



Hazardous in any situation, it is particularly risky when landing in a combat zone with multiple other aircraft. (US Army photos)



# Team Air Delivery engineers dramatic comeback over Ground Combat

By Mark Schauer

Team Air Delivery took gold in last year's three-on-three basketball tournament, and were widely considered to be favorites for a repeat, even without the aggressive play of Lt. Col. Timothy Matthews, YTC Commander.

Knee surgery might have kept him on the sidelines this year, but Matthews made his presence felt from the sidelines, where he showed himself every bit as accomplished a coach as a player.

It was only the first round, and Air Delivery was playing Ground Combat, their fiercest opposition from last year. Jonny Clark, the gentle giant, was absent this time around, but under the crafty captainship of Eddy Patchet the Ground Combat squad had taken a 13-4 lead in a game where the first team to 40 points takes the win. Staff Sgt. Joshua Martinez sank a swishing trey to make it 13-7, but Matthews was far from content. He called time and impatiently waved his team over.

"You need to go back to fundamentals," he began, and motioned them into a tight huddle.

The team looked more alive back on the court, but the experienced Ground Combat team put two more on the board as soon as they were back between the paint, and ran the score to 21-11 at halftime.

But failure is not an option with Matthews.

In the first minutes of the second half Air Delivery scored 12 points to Ground Combat's four. Matthews' voice shot across the floor on every play, every assist, every shot.

"Set it up, set it up!"

"You're on the same team!"

"The backboard is your friend! Use the backboard!"

The momentum had turned, it seemed, and Air Delivery would keep their run going, until Patchet scored a beautiful three-pointer.

"He's a lefthander! Let's see some defense!"

Ground Combat had a five point lead, but not for long. The next three field goals were all by Air Delivery, including two three pointers, making it 31-28 Air Delivery. The Soldiers scored again before Ground Combat called for a time out, but it was no use. Air Delivery won round one



Team Air Delivery, back-to-back Org Day three-on-three basketball tournament champions!

40-31.

The two teams met again in the finals, and Air Delivery won 40-28, without having to engineer a dramatic comeback.

"This is Coach John Salley right here," said a huffing, but ebullient Staff Sgt. Brandon Hunter.

"Get 'er done," Matthews said with a smile.



Lt. Col. Timothy Matthews, YTC commander, had knee surgery since dazzling spectators at last year's Org Day tournament with his virtuoso game. He proved just as exuberant as a coach, though, leading Air Delivery to 40-31 and 40-28 victories over the crafty Ground Combat squad. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

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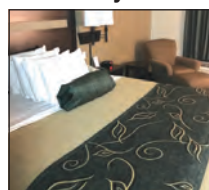


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# On target: petroleum lab worker a national shooting champion

By Mark Schauer

Precision fires are common at Yuma Proving Ground, the Army's busiest test center, but are usually seen on the vast ranges, not the petroleum lab.

For physical scientist Larry Nelson, however, being right-on-target has been a nearly lifelong pursuit.

Nelson, you see, is a competition shooter, proficient in all manner of firearms.

Nelson last showed his excellence at the 90-team 2018 Sportsman's Team Challenge national championship near Branson, Missouri, earlier this year, when his team placed second in their division at the three day competition.

"To be good at this event, you have to have a team of three that are all well-rounded shooters," Nelson explained.

Nelson probably felt more confident in his teammates than the average competitor given that they were his brothers, Kevin and C.J.

The match's first event tested proficiency with .22 caliber rifles. With three ten-round magazines to start and unlimited ammunition on a table, each team had one minute and forty-five seconds to knock down 40 star-centered targets of varying sizes and

shapes at distances out to 90 yards.

Nelson's team dominated the event.

"In the rifle event, we left one diamond at 90 yards. Everything else we dropped down."

The second event involved pistol marksmanship, and the third event was a combination challenge, where teams fired at 60 two to four inch plates from 25 to 75 yards away with one .22 caliber rifle and two .22 caliber pistols.

Following this, there were three shotgun challenges that used aerial clay pigeons. Nelson and his brothers did well in the flurry and flush portions, shooting 44 out of 50 clay pigeons in just under a minute with no more than two rounds in their shotguns at any given time. Yet he felt the most fun was the final 'mixed bag' event, where the shooter doesn't know from which trap machines a pair of clay targets will be released from upon their call.

"It's call 'pull' and then look, look, look around, and everyone is trying to tell you where the birds are coming from. It's a very, very fun match to shoot."

This year's challenge had over \$100,000 worth of merchandise and cash prizes available, but Nelson says



Physical scientist Larry Nelson, a competitive shooter since age 13, shows his form at the 2018 Sportsman's Team Challenge national championship earlier this year. "I do it for fun," he said. "The money is nice because it pays for entry fees if you win. If not, you've wasted a little money and had a good time." (Loaned photos)

material goods are not what drive him to compete.

"I do it for fun. The money is nice because it pays for entry fees if you win. If not, you've wasted a little money and had a good time."

Nelson's success is no surprise given the years of experience he brought to the match.

"I've been shooting competitively since I was 13 years old," he explained.

In high school, he worked at the Boy Scouts' Camp Geronimo in Payson, Ariz. during summer breaks, running one of their rifle ranges. Among other competition victories, he holds a national junior championship record for black powder shooting.

"It'll never be broken," he said with a smile. "They no longer hold that match."

He was good enough to receive a NCAA shooting scholarship at Jacksonville State University, where he pursued degrees in molecular biology and biochemistry. His demanding studies were punctuated by almost constant practicing and competitions.

"In college you practice about four days a week for three hours a day, then two matches every weekend."

In 2005, his team were runners up to the Army Academy in one of the

two NCAA Championships he participated in. He also competed in the Junior Olympic Championships twice, placing in the top 15 both times, along with four appearances in the USA Shooting National Championships.

Nelson says he has never been much of a hunter. He practices at Yuma's Adair Range, but not with the same frequency he did in his college days.

"You have to do it every day if you want to be at the tip-tip top. If you want to be competitive, once you attain a certain level of proficiency you need to polish off the rust and refresh the skill, not keep developing it."

Nelson's skills shouldn't be deteriorating any time soon: he is already looking forward to next year's competition, and also considering entering the Steel Challenge World Speed Shooting Championship held by the United States Practical Shooting Association.

As for advice for other shooters interested in improving their marksmanship, Nelson offers this:

"The biggest thing that everyone forgets to do is natural point of aim. The rifle wants to naturally point somewhere: if you adjust your body so that the rifle points where you want it, you don't fight your body as much to make accurate shots."



Nelson (right) and his brothers Kevin and C.J. dominated the match, placing second out of 90 teams from around the world. Nelson is already looking forward to next year's competition, and also considering entering the Steel Challenge World Speed Shooting Championship.



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Applicants must be able to write news and features proficiently, edit copy and handle related efforts such as photography, video, and audio presentations.

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We are located in southwestern Arizona, only hours away from large cities like Phoenix, Palm Springs and San Diego. Yuma is a growing desert community with outdoor recreation, including water recreation on nearby rivers and lakes. The mountains and ocean are not far away.

To apply for the education reporter position, send a cover letter, resume (which must include at least three references), and writing samples to: Roxanne Molenaar, Editor, Yuma Sun, 2055 Arizona Avenue, Yuma, AZ 85364, or email them to rmmolenaar@yumasun.com. For more information call 928-539-6862.

Yuma Sun is a drug-free workplace and EOE.



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Share your event with the Yuma Sun's online calendar!  
Submissions are free and must follow the same guidelines as "What's Going On".  
Go to  
[www.yumasun.com/calendar](http://www.yumasun.com/calendar)



## An autumn tradition for Gowan Science Academy



For the sixth straight year, YPG hosted an autumn visit for youngsters from the Gowan Science Academy today. After learning about weather in class, the third grade students came to YPG to see practical applications of weather information in other areas of science and engineering utilized here every day, from launching weather balloons that gather weather data to calculating how wind speed affects projectiles in flight. (US Army photos)

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