

YPG Commander, senior leaders address workforce in all-hands meeting

By Mark Schauer

Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG commander, addressed personnel across the command in late March.

More than 200 members of the YPG team were present in the Post Theater to hear his vision for the command and ask questions as personnel at Cold Regions Test

Center listened in by tele link.

Also speaking at the event were YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson, Technical Director Larry Bracamonte, Garrison Manager Gordon Rogers, Chief of Staff Minerva Peters, Director of Emergency Operations Ron Rodriguez, and YPG Police Chief

Don Lucas.

A major part of Poppenberger's comments concerned recent efforts to reduce overtime. Poppenberger said that given YPG's status as the busiest of the Army's six test centers for the past nine years,

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Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG commander, addresses personnel at the post theater during an all hands meeting in late March. Poppenberger emphasized the proving ground's intense support of six of the Army Futures Command' cross functional teams, which will drive new testing here for years to come. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Extraordinary valor at YPG



March 25 was Medal of Honor Day, and YPG's venerable history includes at least two stories regarding the highest honor a Soldier can receive. For details, please turn to page 6. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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Shootin' the Breeze

Life's too short for boring sheet metal

By David J. Horn

My coworkers often ask me what it was like to grow up in the olden days of the '60s and '70s, before the internet and cell phones. Especially for young adults at the time, those "pre-leash" days in the 100% actual world were really a different era. Your ticket to new experiences was not staring into a little plastic box. Your ticket to enjoying good times with your friends, to doing fun things in fun places...was parked in your driveway.

Growing up, my family was a "Chevy" family. Our neighbors wouldn't drive anything but a Ford. Several of my friends drove Mopars. One of the biggest events in the life of a kid, was getting their first car. My first car was a blue 1968 Chevelle. We kept our cars immaculate, constantly washing them, vacuuming the interior, and tuning the engine. No matter what kind of car we drove, they were our worlds, and we made them to be the best that they could be.

As a little kid, my real interest in cars started with my Uncle Mike. My Uncle Mike was just out of the

Navy, and just like James Dean, he was the definition of "cool." He had a cool job working as a mechanic in the big city of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and he drove a totally cool car...a 1958 Corvette. While the streets were full of fast cars in those days, with the cool styling of their fiberglass bodies and their big engines, Corvettes were just different in a special and exciting way. One of our favorite TV shows was Route 66, with its '61 Corvette. For a kid growing up on a farm out in the sticks, it was the stuff that dreams were made of.

In the 1960s, Corvettes evolved into the Stingrays that included the 1963 Split-Window Coupe, and later, the Mako Shark body style. Around that time, my Uncle Mike traded in the '59 for a 1969 Corvette that sported the big-block engine and a 4-speed



The proud original owner of a 1979 Corvette, David Horn gives the vehicle exercise at events such as the Silver Spur Rodeo Parade. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

transmission. Wherever that car went, it totally owned the road.

As the years went by, my Uncle Mike left the area, moving to Denver. I left too, taking an engineering job in Minneapolis. Driving a Chevy Nova SS by then, I lived in an apartment building that had an underground parking garage. One day I got a new neighbor, who in the parking stall next to my Nova, parked his 1976 Corvette. All those memories of my Uncle Mike's Corvette started coming back.

Now, by 1976, Corvettes had changed a lot from 1969. And even though it didn't have the horsepower that the '69 Vette had, back in the day, it was still one cool car.

It was in March 1979, that I finally had enough money saved up for a down payment on what was then the new '79 Corvette. And so began a 40-year odyssey of parking my daily driver out on the driveway in the rain and snow (and now, blazing sun), so I could keep the Corvette in the garage. Next to the wife's car, of course.

There were the incredibly fun years of driving that car as a young single guy. There were the years driving around as I dated my future wife.

There were the cross-country trips where every cubic inch of the storage space behind those two seats was stuffed with camping gear. There were the years with a child's car seat in the only passenger seat, as I struggled to keep the car while the kids were growing up. There were the years using the car in local parades either to carry dignitaries, or pull Boy Scout Floats. There was teaching my kids to drive in the Corvette, so they would always remember that particular car as the first car that they ever drove. There was my son, after growing up in the car, borrowing it to take his date to their senior prom.

So, here it is, 2019. And while I have a lot more life in the rear view mirror than out the windshield, the old '79 Vette and I are still together. Every Saturday morning, I drive it over to a local coffee shop on 4th Avenue and 24th Street to talk about cars with several other Corvette owners, including several folks that also work out here at YPG. In addition to road trips and cruising around town, we also enjoy taking part in the Yuma parades.

And to all you folks out there driving today's Mustangs, Camaros, Challengers, 300s, and any other car foreign or domestic that you're proud of, I just want to let you know that the same little coffee shop where our Vette club meets on Saturdays, also hosts a meeting for all car folks every Sunday. Whether your car is stock, has headers or a juice-can muffler, or you drive a new electric car that doesn't even have a muffler, you'll find a whole bunch of folks out there that share your enthusiasm for your ride.

Yep, life's too short for boring sheet metal. By the way, back to my Uncle Mike. He just turned 80 years old. He's still living in Denver, where both he and his son Wade, are still cruising around town in their Corvettes.

THE OUTPOST

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News may be submitted to:
The Editor, Outpost, Yuma Proving Ground, Yuma, AZ, 85365.
Phone: (928) 328-6149 or DSN 899.
Visit our website at: www.yuma.army.mil
or email to: mark.a.schauer.civ@mail.mil

Commander: Col. Ross Poppenberger
Public Affairs Officer/Outpost Editor: Mark Schauer
Public Affairs Specialist: Casey Garcia
Technical Editor, Cold Regions Test Center: Clara Zachgo
Visual Information Manager: Riley Williams



There's more to Pi than meets the eye



YPG's third annual Pi Day celebration took place on March 14, with lunchtime event-goers enjoying more than 20 different kinds of pie. As Yuma County's premier scientific workplace, Pi is vital to many different facets of the proving ground's mission, from weapons test planning and data reduction to weather forecasting. (Photo by Casey Garcia)

By Casey Garcia

Pi Day is celebrated on March 14th (3/14) around the world. Pi (Greek letter " π ") is the symbol used in mathematics to represent a constant — the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter — which is approximately 3.14159.

YPG had its 3rd annual celebration of Pi with a generous showing of over 25 different kinds of pies from savory to sweet to pizza pies. While pi has a wide variety of uses in the real world, a real life application problem that uses this problem would be a farmer that needs to know the amount of corn he would be able to put in his silo or when NASA uses it in its calculations for firing rockets into space.

As Yuma County's premier scientific workplace, Pi is vital to many different facets of the proving ground's mission, from weapons test planning and data reduction to weather forecasting. Here at YPG our electrical engineers use pi to solve problems for electrical applications, statisticians use pi to track population dynamics, aircraft designers use it to calculate areas of the skin of the aircraft, signal

processing and spectrum analysis (finding out what frequencies are in the wave you are using) uses pi since the fundamental period of a sine wave is 2π , and finally navigation, such as the global positioning system (GPS).

Chaplain's Corner

Cruel falsehoods can spread far and wide

By Maj. Ronald Beltz

Once upon a time, an old man spread rumors that his neighbor was a thief. As a result, the young man was arrested. Days later the young man was proven innocent. After being released, the man felt humiliated as he walked to his home. He sued the old man for wrongly accusing him.

In court, the old man told the judge, "They were just comments, didn't harm anyone." The judge, before passing sentence on the case, told the old man, "Write all the things you said about him on a piece of paper. Cut them up and on the way home, throw the pieces of paper out. Tomorrow, come back to hear the sentence".

The next day, the judge told the old man, "Before receiving the sentence, you will have to go out and gather all the pieces of paper that you threw out yesterday". The old man said, "I can't do that! The wind must have spread them and I won't know where to find them".

The judge then replied, "The same way that simple comments may destroy the honor of a man to such an extent that one is not able to fix it." The old man realized his mistake and asked for forgiveness.

Moral: Your words may ruin someone's reputation without any fault of theirs.

The Bible reminds us that we shall not bear false witness against our neighbor. Exodus 20:16.



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ALL-HANDS

FROM PAGE 1

both he and ATEC Commanding General Maj. Gen. Joel Tyler want to ensure that the workforce does not become burned out from overwork. Poppenberger discussed how some divisions have already flexed the work week of some employees, and encouraged supervisors to prioritize tasks to avoid excessive overtime demands on the workforce. Like Bracamonte, Poppenberger also emphasized the proving ground's intense support of six of the Army Futures Command's cross functional teams, which will drive new testing here for years to come.

Nelson's remarks concerned the proving ground's ICE system, pledging that he personally reads every one and follows up with the appropriate individuals to ensure both compliments and complaints are handled fairly and effectively.

Rodriguez discussed YPG's most recent full scale disaster exercise and how important maximum participation is.

"Since the attack on Khobar Towers in 1996, the Department of Defense has after virtually every terrorist attack determined that full scale exercises were the best prevention method for all attacks," said Rodriguez. "That is why we train."

Rodriguez emphasized that all of the scenarios chosen for these

exercises are plausible given YPG's mission and geographic location: none have ever imagined YPG being closed down by a snow blizzard, for example. However, Rodriguez noted how many in the audience experienced flash flooding that closed down the installation in 2010 and 2018, and credited full scale exercise training with facilitating the successful responses to each of these disasters.

Rogers discussed YPG's participation in a recent Army-wide inspection of housing and barracks to ensure YPG is not suffering from the significant backlog in repairs and maintenance that have become newsworthy at major installations elsewhere in the Army. In addition to inspections, the garrison management team held two town halls with residents to discuss possible concerns.

"I'm not saying we're perfect, but inspectors found we are doing what we have to do to ensure you have a safe and healthy place to live," said Rogers.

Rogers also reiterated Nelson's assertion that all ICE comments are read by both himself and Acting Deputy Garrison Manager Michael Kreilein. Rogers stressed that this includes anonymous comments, but encouraged commenters to give their name to facilitate dialogue about whatever issue they are having and make getting information necessary for a solution easier to obtain. Commenters have no need to fear



YPG Technical Director Larry Bracamonte speaks at the recent all hands meeting to YPG personnel. His comments emphasized the phenomenal efforts of YPG's workforce in supporting six of the Army Futures Command's cross-functional teams building the Army's future force. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

giving their names, no matter the nature of their kudos or complaint, he said.

"I promise you that you will not be retaliated against," said Rogers. "Not only is it illegal, it is just the wrong thing to do."

Meanwhile, there are a multitude of construction projects either underway or imminent at YPG. Barranca Road is currently closed due to a \$1.1 million project to replace three inches of road bed and install a running path, a project slated to be completed in the next three months. In his remarks, Lucas noted the increased traffic on Imperial Dam Road due to the closure, a consequence that has resulted in YPG Police directing traffic into and out of Walker Cantonment Area during times of peak traffic density. Their presence will continue in this capacity until the Barranca Road construction is complete, Lucas said.

He added that hours of operation at the Laguna Airfield gate are also being expanded as a mitigation for the construction.

Simultaneously, a long-awaited project to install fencing around the runways and operations building at Laguna Army Airfield has been underway for several weeks now. Though construction crews have been visible, the work has not closed down traffic between the Walker Cantonment Area and the airfield.

In late April, the Coyote Lanes bowling alley will close for 90 to 120 days to make upgrades and repairs to the kitchen, plumbing, and HVAC system. Howard Cantonment Area lunchgoers need not fear, however: in addition to a food trailer being available outside Palm Garden Conference Center for the duration of the remodeling, pizza will be sold in the old Sgt. Pepperoni's location inside.

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A golden honor for a master mechanic



Aircraft Maintenance Manager Larry Stewart was presented the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award in a ceremony at the proving ground in mid-March. The award, the highest conferred by the Federal Aviation Administration, is exclusive to individuals with at least 50 years of experience in the field. Stewart, a helicopter crew chief awarded 12 Combat Air Medals during his service in Vietnam, served two stints at the proving ground in uniform prior to his current civilian service that began upon his retirement from active duty in 1989. "Be proud of what you do and how you do it," he said. "If you love what you are doing, you will get good at it." (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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National Medal of Honor Day

YPG employee remembers grandfather

By Mark Schauer

America was built by the service of generations of ordinary people who did extraordinary things, and no day exemplifies this like Medal of Honor Day, celebrated every March 25.

Keith A. Ware, contracting officer representative at YPG, has lived this more than most. Representing the third consecutive generation of his family to serve in uniform, Ware is the grandson of Maj. Gen. Keith Lincoln Ware, one of the most distinguished Army officers of the last century.

Born at the proving ground while his father served here as an air traffic controller, Ware grew up in Yuma, graduated from Kofa High School

and worked on the range for a summer as a teenager prior to joining the Air Force in the early 1990s. “I loved it,” Ware said. “I planned on making it a career.”

Though he took to the military, at first Ware knew only the sketchiest details of his famous forebear’s service.

“I didn’t know much about my grandfather until after I joined the military. I knew he was a general and that he was important, but not much else.”

He quickly found there was a lot to learn: his grandfather was arguably the most accomplished Soldier of his kind to ever put on a uniform. Drafted six months before Pearl Harbor from a job working for the



The elder Ware saw over 600 days of combat during World War II, and during the Battle of the Bulge led 11 men and a tank on a daring assault against an entrenched German position. The heroics earned him the Medal of Honor, which was presented to him in a ceremony in Nuremberg weeks before The Third Reich surrendered. (US Army photo)



March 25 is Medal of Honor Day, and YPG’s Keith Ware, the third generation of his family to serve in uniform, is the grandson of Maj. Gen. Keith Lincoln Ware, one of the most distinguished Army officers of the last century. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

city of Glendale, Ca., by early 1942 Keith L. Ware was a student in the newly-created Officer Candidate School (OCS), where he quickly distinguished himself. Decades later, he was a major general, reputedly the first OCS graduate to become a general officer. But there was plenty of distinguished service in between.

“I find the fact that he was a drafted enlisted who rose all the way up to two-star general an amazing feat,” said Ware. “He was a lieutenant colonel by the time he was 29 years old.”

Ware saw over 600 days of combat during World War II. As Allied forces advanced across France toward Germany in the bitter cold of December 1944, the

German Army made a last desperate offensive. Known as the Battle of the Bulge, it was the bloodiest fighting experienced by American forces in the entire war. Ware had seen an enormous amount of dangerous combat that nearly killed him, but over several grueling hours the day after Christmas, he led 11 men and a tank on a daring and ultimately successful assault against an entrenched German position. The heroics earned him a Purple Heart and the Congressional Medal of Honor, which was presented to him in a ceremony in Nuremberg weeks before Germany surrendered, as well as a great deal of media attention when he returned to the States.

As most American troops



Ware went on to become the first OCS graduate to become a general officer, served as the Army's Chief of Information, organized the successful defense of Saigon during the Tet Offensive, and, while commanding the 1st Infantry Division, became the first Army general killed in action during the Vietnam War. (US Army photo)

demobilized after the war, Ware stayed in the Army, quietly building an even more distinguished career through the 1950s and 1960s.

"He worked long hours," said his grandson. "To have that combat experience and attain the rank he did shows he lived his work."

By 1967, Maj. Gen. Ware was the Army's Chief of Information. It was an important job in the Pentagon, but far away from the increasingly unstable situation in Vietnam, where nearly 500,000 American troops were serving. Ware requested a command in country, and got it.

"He volunteered to go to Vietnam. That's in essence who he was."

Unsurprisingly, Ware's service in

Vietnam was distinguished. When American forces were stunned by the Tet Offensive in early 1968, it was the newly-arrived Ware who quickly organized a successful defense of Saigon. For this success he was given command of the Army's 1st Infantry Division, known as the Big Red One. By September of that year, the division was engaged in fierce fighting close to the Cambodian border. Never one to lead from the rear, Ware and several subordinates flew in a Huey helicopter to reconnoiter the scene of the running battle, and were apparently shot down by a rocket-propelled grenade. Ware's grim final superlative was as the first Army general killed in action

in Vietnam. He was 52 years old.

Though he has been gone for more than half a century, Maj. Gen. Ware's legacy lives on. Numerous buildings, a school and a parade ground at Army posts across the nation have been named in his honor, as have the Army's prestigious award for journalism and other public affairs activities. In his time at Yuma Proving Ground, Ware has encountered people with distinct memories of his famous grandfather.

"The military is a small world," he said. "At YPG I've run into two people who either knew my grandfather or served with him."

One told Ware that his grandfather had been his childhood hero.

"That just struck me," he stated.

"Of course I see my grandfather as a hero, but I also see him as my grandfather. When this man put it that way, it gave me a new perspective on him."

Ware and his family seem at peace with the fact that a part of their grandfather's memory belongs to the nation. Aside from some photos and the well-preserved ribbon his Medal of Honor was attached to, he has little in the way of official mementos of his grandfather.

"His Medal of Honor, uniforms, and memorabilia are on loan to the Army. I don't think the family will ever take possession of them: they have their place in museums for others to view. I think that's where they belong."

Medal of Honor recipient visited YPG in 2015



ABOVE: Medal of Honor recipient Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie Adkins visited YPG in 2015, where, among other things, he met with board members of the Yuma 50 military support group. From what I've seen of the personnel here and people from the community, they are quality folks, highly patriotic Americans," he said. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

LEDF: During his second tour in Vietnam in 1966, Adkins was posted in the A Shau Valley, a significant entry point for men and materiel travelling along the so-called Ho Chi Minh trail. In early March, the camp was attacked by waves of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces. It is reckoned that Adkins killed in excess of 100 adversary troops through the grueling four-day ordeal, and saved at least a dozen of his own men. He sustained 18 different wounds, from shrapnel to gunshots. (US Army photo)

Program for collaborative, autonomous unmanned aircraft tested at YPG

By Tabatha Thompson

On a brisk February morning in the Yuma desert, a swarm of unmanned aerial vehicles equipped with DARPA's Collaborative Operations in Denied Environment system, or CODE, successfully carried out mission objectives, even when communications were offline and GPS was unavailable.

One-by-one, six RQ-23 Tigersharks lifted off, fitted with an array of sensors onboard. Next to the runway at the U.S. Army's Yuma Proving Ground, the mission team inside a small operations center tracked the aircraft and as many as 14 additional virtual planes on an aerial map. The capstone demonstration paired program performer Raytheon's software and autonomy algorithms and Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory's White Force Network to create a realistic, live/virtual/constructive test environment. During four demonstration runs, the team activated a variety of virtual targets, threats, and countermeasures to see how well the Tigersharks could complete their objectives in suboptimal conditions.

"Exactly how the aircraft continue to work together in degraded conditions is the most challenging aspect of this program," said Scott Wierzbanski, the DARPA program manager for CODE in the Tactical Technology Office. "Current procedures require at least one operator



In recent tests at YPG, unmanned aerial vehicles equipped with DARPA's Collaborative Operations in Denied Environment (CODE) system successfully carried out mission objectives, even when communications were offline and GPS was unavailable. The Tigersharks unmanned aircraft employed in the demonstration are surrogate assets for CODE. Each has about one-tenth the speed and performance of the aircraft planned for integration, but shows traceability to larger platforms. (US Army photo)

per UAV in the field. Equipped with CODE, one operator can command multiple aircraft; and in a denied environment, the aircraft continue toward mission objectives, collaborating and adapting for deficiencies."

Before, if operators lost communications with a UAV, the system would revert to its last programmed mission. Now, under the CODE paradigm, teams of systems can autonomously share information and collaborate to adapt and respond to different targets or threats as they pop up.

"CODE can port into existing UAV systems and conduct collaborative operations," said Wierzbanski. "CODE is a government-owned system, and we are working closely with our partners at the Air Force Research Laboratory and Naval Air Systems Command to keep

each other informed of successes and challenges, and making sure we don't replicate work. In the end, our service partners will leverage what we've done and add on what they need."

The Tigersharks employed in the demonstration are surrogate assets for CODE. Each has about one-tenth the speed and performance of the aircraft planned for integration, but shows traceability to larger platforms. Constructive and virtual threats and effects presented by the White Force Network are appropriately scaled to the Tigersharks' capabilities.

"It's easy to take the CODE software and move it from platform to platform, both from a computer and vehicle perspective. It could be a manned aircraft, unmanned aircraft, or a ground vehicle," said J.C. Ledé, technical advisor for autonomy with

the Air Force Research Laboratory. "The concept for CODE is play-based tactics, so you can create new tactics relatively easily to go from mission to mission."

The Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) will take ownership of CODE after DARPA closes out the agency's role in the program this year. It already has built a repository of algorithms tested throughout the development process.

"What we're doing with the laboratory we set up is not just for the Navy or NAVAIR. We're trying to make our capabilities available throughout the entire DoD community," said Stephen Kracinovich, director of autonomy strategy for the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD). "If the Army wanted to leverage the DARPA prototype, we'd provide them not just with the software, but an open development environment with all the security protocols already taken care of."

Kracinovich says NAWCAD has a cadre of people with hands-on knowledge of the system, and is ready to help port the capability to any other DoD entity. That ease of transition puts CODE technologies on a clear path to assist deployed service members by enabling collaborative autonomous systems teams to operate in contested and denied environments with minimal human supervision.

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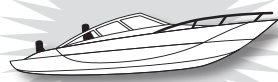


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No frontiers are too far for women: Some thoughts on the conclusion of Women's History Month

By Casey Garcia

Women were the backbone of the nation during World War II, taking on the jobs left vacant by millions of men serving in the Army. At the end of a long day, each woman would punch out and remind us: Anything a man could do, she could do.

Fast forward decades later and women still show us it's no longer a man's world. Since 2013, women have done the hard work of breaking through the previous barriers in a series of remarkable firsts: the first women to graduate from the Army's Ranger School, the first woman to graduate from the Marine Corps' infantry officer basic course, the first women to integrate into Army infantry units, the first woman to become an Airborne Ranger, and, just this year, the first woman graduated from the Marine Corps' highly challenging Winter Mountain Leaders Course.

This list will continue to grow until a woman has occupied every job previously closed to them, up to the very top of the chain of command.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a federal law that protects individuals from discrimination based

upon sex. This law makes it illegal for an employer to discriminate against individuals in hiring, firing, and other terms and conditions of employment, such as promotions, raises, and other job opportunities because of their sex.

There are now hundreds of women serving in positions that had previously been closed to them, both in and out of the military, and tens of thousands of others who are aspiring to do the same. The United States is strong because everyone deserves a chance to serve our country. To fight for our nation is not a privilege for a few, it is a right and responsibility for all Americans in the 21st century.

Women have left their mark on every industry and career path, and at YPG are breaking the mold for other females to follow through programs like science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers. Women in STEM are often the minority in their professions, as well as in college courses, a reality that can be discouraging. However, we must encourage all of our youth to pursue their dreams. So here is to strong women: may we know them, may we raise them, may we be them.



Yuma Proving Ground actively recruits female engineers to serve the nation in the Army's busiest test center and Yuma's premier high technology workplace. Here, Paula Rickleff (right), program analyst, discusses STEM opportunities at the proving ground with a recent college graduate. (US Army photo)

YPG Travel Camp visitors get a glimpse behind the curtain



Due to popular demand, about 40 winter residents of YPG's Travel Camp took a tour of YPG's weapons operation and meteorology shops in late March. After seeing systems like the M109A6 Paladin and the M1A2 Abrams Main Battle Tank and seeing a weather balloon launch, the group got a special briefing from YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger. "I truly thank you for coming and spending your time here with us," he said. "I'm glad to have you here, and to have a place for you." (Photos by Mark Schauer)

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