

A day of remembrance: YPG honors two Israeli soldiers who perished in 1989 test accident

By Mark Schauer

Tests involving artillery are inherently dangerous.

Even when conducted using the most rigorous safety procedures

devised from decades of experience, the possibility of severe injury or even death exists.

Though an explosive projectile itself is encased in steel, propelling charges that power shells through the air are lined

in a powdery and combustible nitrocellulose case that burns extremely hot, and incredibly fast.

In November 1989, a test accident in an early incarnation of the Paladin self-propelled howitzer claimed the lives of two Israeli Soldiers and wounded two others, a tragedy that is commemorated by a somber memorial plaque attached to a large rock at Yuma Test Center.

> "I was living in Staten Island, New York and woke up at 6 a.m. to go to work and turned on the news," recalls Isaac Golan in a somber tone. "I heard there was an accident in Yuma and that two Israeli soldiers were killed. That's where

my son was--- I woke up my wife and daughter and tried to call my son and couldn't reach him."

His son was Staff Sgt. Nachum

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YPG commemorated the 1989 loss of Staff Sgt. Mark Eilon and Staff Sgt. Nachum Golan, soldiers of the Israeli Defense Forces who perished in a test accident of a variant of the M109 Paladin self-propelled howitzer at the proving ground. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Equipment pool drivers save elderly motorists on Highway 95

By Mark Schauer

Tanks, fighting vehicles and howitzers.

YPG tests them all in realistic military environments, and testers

count on the proving ground's contractor, The Logistics Company (TLC) Equipment Pool, to safely deliver scores of test items to points all across the vast test ranges and

beyond.

"It could be anything from moving tanks and equipment for air delivery to moving weapons, setting generators and recovering GSA vehicles," said Edward Pierson, Equipment Pool supervisor. "There is never a dull moment. We try and stay prepared for pretty much anything."

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"I heard there was an

accident in Yuma and that

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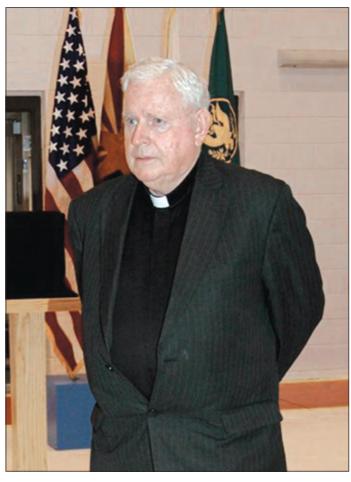


Command Group
Bowling Victory
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Rest in Peace Monsignor Richard O'Keeffe

YPG mourns the early May passing of Monsignor Richard O'Keeffe, who served as the post's Catholic chaplain for more than 30 years. A longtime friend of the proving ground, in a 2008 interview he reflected on how rewarding being an Army chaplain was: "It gives you the opportunity to directly serve people who are putting their lives on the line for their country. It's great to have parades, but people don't always fully appreciate the effect war has on military personnel and their families. A good chaplain gives people a great sense of hope." (YPG File Photo)



THEOUTPOST

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Days of Remembrance



Heritage Center Curator Bill Heidner offers insight on what led to the Holocaust during a public presentation to commemorate the Days of Remembrance. Local media interviewed Heidner about the presentation. (Photo by Ana Henderson)



YPG's Heritage Center Curator Bill Heidner and the Equal Employment Opportunity Office created three displays at YPG. The largest display of the three was a portion the Heritage Center's Holocaust Exhibit, which was transported to the Range Operations Center (ROC) Atrium. The "One Soul: When Humanity Fails" exhibition is an introduction to the events that led to the creation and eventual liberation of the concentration camps of World War II. (Photo by Bill Heidner)

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DRIVERS

The Equipment Pool operates anywhere testing or training occurs, contending with dusty gravel roads, scrub-strewn desert pavement and deep washes. Pierson reckons they drive about 175,000 miles annually in support of the YPG mission, making their job inherently hazardous even before they perform the hard labor of loading and unloading multi-ton pieces of equipment.

"Just driving to a site can be tricky," he said. "We go up and down hills on unimproved roads for long distances on a regular basis."

Worse, they must safely contend with Highway 95, the two-lane arterial highway that bisects the proving ground and has the highest traffic density of any two-lane road in the State of Arizona. Aside from being a cramped two lane road, Highway 95 has poor lighting, multiple blind curves, and wild horses and burros that pose hazards to motorists despite the best efforts of wildlife officials to keep them away from the road. The morning and evening commutes to and from the proving ground have long been dubbed the 'YPG 500,' an amusing sobriquet if not for the grim list of lives the road has claimed over the years.

"When we travel back and forth it is non-stop traffic, especially in the wintertime" said Pierson. "Even in the summer it is pretty busy. You always have to have your head on a swivel."

Aside from being a major thoroughfare for winter visitors traveling from points north and an important road for a variety of farm equipment that tills and harvests nearby farmland, Highway 95 is the main artery into YPG, the busiest of the Army's six test centers for the past nine years. Aside from the majority of YPG's 2,400 personnel commuting to and from work on the highway, in excess of 21,000 cargo shipments bound for YPG also rely on the highway each year, as do the post's 35,000 annual visitors.

In mid-April, TLC drivers Jorge Barrera and Daniel Baldwin were returning a test item from an early-morning aviation test in the northern reaches of YPG's Cibola Range. As they proceeded southbound, they saw a vehicle coming from the opposite direction leave the roadway and flip multiple times after a tight turn.

"We saw the truck coming and then start rolling with a lot of dirt everywhere," said Barrera. "Right away we pulled over and called it in to the YPG dispatcher. We were the first people on the scene."

As YPG is larger in land area than



YPG drivers Daniel Baldwin and Jorge Barrera were returning a test item from an early-morning aviation test in the northern reaches of YPG's Cibola Range when they saw a truck roll several times on Highway 95. They immediately took action, extracting two elderly passengers from the wreckage. (Loaned photos)



The stretch of Highway 95 that bisects the Cibola and Kofa ranges of YPG is used by over 25,000 vehicles per week and has had well over 100 vehicle accidents in the last three years. Highway 95 has poor lighting, multiple blind curves, and wild horses and burros that pose hazards to motorists despite the best efforts of wildlife officials to keep them away from the road.

the state of Rhode Island, Barrera and Baldwin knew that first responders could be 30 or more miles away from the accident site. Fearing that the overturned pickup truck could catch fire, they rushed to free the occupants from the badly-crumpled vehicle.

"It was just instinct," said Baldwin.
"You never know how long it will take for someone to respond, and you don't know what might happen to the vehicle. The first thing to come to mind is to go help."

The extraction wasn't simple. When the two men came upon the vehicle, they found an elderly couple, strapped into their seats and hanging upside down. A frightened dog was barking from somewhere in the cab. The ground was strewn with shattered glass and luggage with clothes spilling out in heaps.

"The front doors were completely

stuck," said Barrera. "Luckily, we were able to force the back doors open. We had to cut their seat belts."

The occupants were scratched up and shaken, but had escaped serious injury. The truck, on the other hand, was a total loss.

"The only one who wasn't wearing a seatbelt was the dog," said Barrera. "He was OK—he was wagging his tail."

When YPG's first responders arrived, the male occupant refused transport to the hospital, but the female occupant was taken as a precaution.

Pierson credits the two men for their selfless heroism.

"A lot of people are afraid to come up on an accident and possibly see blood," he said. "Some people can't do it, or don't want to do it. Kudos to these men for helping."



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By David J. Horn

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to talk to a soldier who had just returned from a long deployment. He was admitting to me, in a regretful voice, that he had a big fight with his wife the day he returned home. He said that after the initial hugs at the airport, when he got back to their house, he made the big mistake of telling his wife he didn't like the way she had re-arranged the furniture in the living room. Yep, not a very smart thing to say.

While the Outpost regularly publishes articles from people who are actually professionally qualified to give advice on relationships, and I probably have no business talking about such things, here are some of my observations (from a guy's point of view) anyway.

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& FURNITURE

So, Observation No. 1. For all you guys out there on deployments

getting ready to go home to your spouse, go up to the front door and open it just wide enough to shove a big bouquet of roses in first, all the while you emphatically repeat the phrase, "Honey, the house looks great!!"

relationship, "Don't go fishing off the company dock." Enough said.

Observation No. 3. Over the years, I've noticed that, "Girls marry guys hoping to change them, but they never can. Guys marry

girls with the idea that they'll never change, but they always do."

Observation No. 4. When two people first move into a place together, they need to be real careful what

stuff around the house they touch during that first, precarious week. As an example, during that first week together, the first person who touches the vacuum cleaner will own it... forever

Observation No. 5. One of the happiest days in the life of a parent is when their newborn is able to sleep through the night. Years ago when my son was just a couple of weeks old, my YPG group needed to send someone TDY to Detroit in January. Forget the cold weather... for me, I jumped at the chance to go TDY because it meant an entire night of uninterrupted sleep! Things were going nicely according to plan until about 2:00 in the morning, when the phone rang in my motel room and all I heard was, "If I gotta get up, YOU gotta get up!"

Observation No. 6. Wavering honesty. People are more likely to hear things like, "We really need to buy that new fishing boat...for the benefit of the children."

Observation No. 7. By the time the kids grow up and leave the house, the "love will conquer all" attitude can be a little hard to find. Communication is key in all relationships, and if one person is out sitting in a boat and the other person is out with friends who take the time to listen, people can grow apart.

Observation No. 8. Dating again in your 50s and 60s is hard, and not what it's cracked up to be. By then, everybody has a lot of "baggage." A lot of..."history."

Observation No. 9. I've noticed that the happiest people in the world, are those in a healthy relationship. That the unhappiest people, are those in a bad relationship. And that single people are somewhere in between.

Observation No. 10. You know, when I get home from work tonight, the TV remote is going to be right where I left it.



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REMEMBRANCE

Golan, and not long after there was a knock at the elder Golan's front door. An attaché from the Israeli Defense Forces told the family that their son and his comrade Staff Sgt. Mark Eilon had succumbed to their injuries in the terrible accident.

Two years later, YPG dedicated the memorial stone to the two lost soldiers with their families in attendance. In 2009, Eilon's parents and brother returned for what they said would be their last visit to attend a ceremony commemorating 20 years since the accident. This year, Golan's parents made the same journey, and received a similar reception. On hand also were some of the two men's surviving comrades: Maoz Lev, Ilan Kottler, Yosef Sasson and Albert Levy. In addition to the traditional prayer Kaddish and the lighting of candles, the ceremony reflected on faith, friendship, and the act of remembrance.

"Mark took my place in the project," said Kottler, now the president of a synagogue in West Palm Beach, Florida. "I believe that I was given a second chance in life, and I've done a lot in my life to justify my continuing existence, including

coming here today and continuing to remember."

Lev's departure from the project was similar to Kottler's: he had wanted to extend his tour, but his then-girlfriend insisted he return home as planned. In addition, Lev's entire participation in the project was by happenstance.

"I wasn't supposed to come at all," he recalled. "A friend who had been selected to go invited me to come with him to the interview, and the Lt. Col. ended up selecting me instead."

His parents, he added, were happy to hear he had been chosen to go to the United States, which they saw as a safer place of duty than their own country.

Kottler reflected on how this year's ceremony was timed to coincide with the occurrence of both Yom HaZikaron, Israel's Memorial Day, and Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day.

"In Israel, Memorial Day is a very somber day. Nothing is open that is festive, all the music on the radio is somber. There's not one person who doesn't know somebody who was lost—it's a very personal day for everyone."

Israel's Independence Day, on the other hand, is as joyous as its American equivalent, he said. Both Golan and Eilon's sacrifices helped ensure Israel's continued survival as a

"Above all, a ceremony like this reflects that there is no bond tighter than that of brothers under arms," said YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger as family members and fellow soldiers of the two men listened.



Mark took my place in the project," said Ilan Kottler (left), now the president of a synagogue in West Palm Beach, Florida. "I believe that I was given a second chance in life, and I've done a lot in my life to justify my continuing existence, including coming here today and continuing to remember." Also, in attendance were Yosef Sasson (right) Maoz Lev, and Albert Levy, who also participated in the 1989 M109 Paladin test project. In addition to the traditional prayer Kaddish and the lighting of candles, the ceremony reflected on faith, friendship, and the act of remembrance. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

free country, he added.

"Above all, a ceremony like this reflects that there is no bond tighter than that of brothers under arms," said Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG Commander, in remarks at the ceremony, "Thirty years later, these

men are here remembering their fallen comrades. It gives those of us who wear the uniform now continued hope and strength that should something happen to us, our efforts are not lost and we will be remembered throughout time."



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Law Enforcement Torch Run brings together Soldiers, Special Olympians

By Ana Henderson

It was a memorable day for two Special Olympians and members of the YPG Airborne Test Force (ATF) who participated in the 2019 Law Enforcement torch run.

"I love it" exclaimed Staff Sgt. Brandon Hunter, an ATF jumper who's taken part in the torch run for four years. "There's nothing else better than having the opportunity to come out here to uplift and motivate and run with these guys."

Santiago Lomeli, a Special Olympian for the last seven years felt the same way about the ATF team: "I like them!"

Leading the group was YPG Col. Ross Poppenberger, Lt. Col. Timothy Matthews, and Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson, who ran side by side, each passing the torch as they jogged for more than a mile.

Poppenberger felt a personnel connection to the run.

"I have some family members who are severely handicapped so I look at it as a way to give back to



Col. Ross Poppenberger, Lt. Col. Timothy Matthews, Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson along with Soldiers from YPG's Airborne Test Force and Special Olympian Santiago Lomeli ran in the Law Enforcement Torch run benefiting the Yuma chapter of the Special Olympics.

them," he said. "I am grateful for the health I have, and the abilities I have to be able to do the things I do. My entire life I always had that in the back of my mind-- that's why I have always done everything I could do, just knowing I had two cousins that couldn't."

The Special Olympians feed off of that positive energy from their

running mates.

Special Olympian Leslie Traylor who has taken part in torch run since 1997 when his family moved to Yuma and has been part of the program since he was eight years old said meeting the runners is his favorite part, and adds that everyone is a "good sport."

His Mother Linda has seen a

change in her son since he became part of the team.

"His mental acuity has gone way up since he started Special Olympics," she said, adding that her son has met a lot of new friends and met people from all over the state each time he attends the Special Olympic games.

It's those games that brought everyone together in early May. The torch run supports their out-of-town trips, paying for transportation and hotels.

Traylor was really excited about the run's purpose: "We are going to make a lot of money from the torch run for our trips!"

Lomeli did a great keeping pace with the Soldiers and just when he was losing steam, Nelson gave him a final encouraging push.

"Come on, come on, here you go!" he said as he crossed the intersection and Lomeli passed off the torch to Traylor, who then passed it to the next group who would help the torch make its way to Phoenix for the 2019 Special Olympics Summer games.



"I love it," exclaimed Staff Sgt. Brandon Hunter, an ATF Soldier who has taken part in the torch run for four years. "There's nothing else better than having the opportunity to come out here to uplift and motivate and run with these guys."



Santiago Lomeli, a Special Olympian for the last seven years ran alongside members of the YPG's Airborne Test Force. When asked about them he said, "I



Special Olympian, Santiago Lomeli, ran for more than a mile. He was losing steam towards the end of the run, but Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson shared words of encouragement to help him make the torch pass. The torch then made its way to Phoenix for the 2019 Summer Special Olympics games.

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YPG table tennis champion wins for 13th year

By Ana Henderson

Most people around YPG know Luong Nguyen as one of Munitions and Weapon's (M&W) veteran and busiest mortars test officer (TO). He's been a TO for 26 years.

Many might be surprised to know he's also a table tennis champion!

Nguyen has been playing table tennis, also known as ping pong, since he was a teenager. Nguyen played while attending college and in several tournaments in his hometown in Indiana, then stopped for a few years when he moved to a small town where there were no organized tournaments.

Table tennis become something of a family sport for the Nguyen family--it was Nguyen himself that taught his seven brothers and four sisters the game.

"I started out with it first then I teach it to my brother and sisters," he said. "All of my brothers and sisters play, so when I go back to Indiana we play. They are good."

His brothers have won the state championship in Indiana and his sister has also won her share of championships, so winning is all in the family.

"I've beat those guys when they were younger, but they beat me now," he says laughing. "I'm still very close to beating them, even though I don't play as often as they do."

Now, Nguyen says he plays to stay fit. "I like the game so it's just like an exercise for me now."

The exercise has brought him 13 trophies just here at YPG. Throughout the years Lu has played against several different people and once played doubles with some fellow M&W TOs helping them score trophies.

Nguyen has certainly made a name for himself in the YPG table tennis community.

"They all know I'm the guy to beat," he said with a smile.

Nguyen has no plans on hanging up

his paddle: even though he's getting older, the game is fun and easy. "I've seen people play when they are 70, 75," he said.

Nguyen prepares for his tournaments training with a table top machine. He initially bought the machine for his now-grown children and ended up using it himself.

To stay sharp Nguyen prepares by working on drills.

"Foreword hand, backhand, and the movement of the legs. It's the footwork you have to practice. You have to move into the right position to take you there, so it's important you learn how to move your feet."

The 2019 YPG table tennis tournament involved approximately 12 players. It had a double elimination, giving players two chances to stay in the finals. The tournament took about two weeks, with contestants playing their match after their long workday. Each match could last anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes because they play for the first to reach 11 points and the best of three games.

Each time Nguyen earns the trophy, it validates that he still has it. "If I win, that means I'm still playing good."



The 2019 YPG Table Tennis Tournament involved approximately 12 players. It had a double elimination, giving players two chances to stay in the finals. The tournament took about two weeks, with contestants playing their match after their long workday. Each match could last anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes because they play for the first to reach 11 points and the best of three games. (File photo)



Luong Nguyen and Don He, the 2019 YPG Table Tennis Tournament champion and runner-up smiling with their trophies. Most people around YPG know Luong Nguyen as one of Munitions and Weapon's mortars test officer. He's been a TO for 26 years. Many might be surprised to know he's also a table top tennis champion! He's won the YPG Table Tennis Championship 13 years. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Chaplain's Corner A Mother's Love

By Chaplin Ronald Beltz

There is a story about two tribes in the Andes that were at war. One tribe lived in the lowlands and the other high in the mountains. The mountain people invaded the lowlanders one day, and as part of their plundering, they kidnapped a baby of one of the lowlander families and took the infant with them back up into the mountains. The lowlanders didn't know how to climb the mountain. They didn't know any of the trails that the mountain people used, and they didn't know where to find the mountain people or how to track them in the steep terrain. Even so, they sent out their best party of fighting men to climb the mountain and bring the baby home.

The men tried first one method of climbing and then another. They tried one trail and then another. After several days of effort, however, they had climbed only several hundred feet. Feeling hopeless and helpless, the lowlander men decided that the cause was lost, and they prepared to return to their village below.

As they were packing their gear for the descent, they saw the baby's mother walking toward them. They realized that she was coming down the mountain that they hadn't figured out how to climb. And then they saw that she had the baby strapped to her back. How could that be?

One man greeted her and said, "We couldn't climb this mountain. How did you do this when we, the strongest and most able men in the village, couldn't do it?"

The mother shrugged her shoulders and said, "It wasn't your baby."

Every mother understands this. There is nothing that moms will not do for their children!

Happy Mother's Day!!!

It's not how you bowl, it's how you roll

By Casey Garcia

I was going to tell you a really bad bowling pun but I thought I would spare you, so instead we will chat about the art and science of war.

On 23 April, Dem Boyz waged a bowling war with the Head Shed. In true soldierly fashion the plans were laid out with YTC Lt. Col. Timothy Matthews, Chief of Range Operations and Training Division, Omar Silva, Ground Combat Systems Director, Eddy Patchet and Air Combat Systems Director, Jeff Rogers creating Dem Boyz.

YPG Col. Ross Poppenberger, Command Sgt. Maj Jamathon Nelson, Adjutant Rick Swensen, and Public Affairs Specialist Casey Garcia made up team Head Shed.

The first attack by stratagem was placed by Matthews when he got a Turkey in the first game putting Dem Boyz up by 39 pins. While the Head Shed team was putting up defensive tactics by talking a lot of smack they fell short in game two by another four pins putting the total pin count to -44.

Desperate times called for

desperate measures and the Head Shed team had to exploit the enemy's weaknesses. In order to get inside Dem Boyz brain housing group, Nelson decided to switch it up and combine baseball and bowling. Nelson was in his pitchers stance with runners on first and second, and his coach (his wife) screaming on the sidelines "You better focus" and one by one those pins fell over. Poppenberger got his groove back in game three and was closing frames left and right. Swensen's consistency as the leadoff bowler was instrumental in the team's comeback.

By this point Dem Boyz were very worried and it was beginning to show. Pin by pin Head Shed returned fire until there were no pins left standing. Justice was served and the battle was over. The Head Shed team came back in game three, beating Dem Boyz by four pins.

The Head Shed team figured out the science of the game (pins will fall at a 7.5 degree tilt) and ultimately won the bowling war.

So it is not how you bowl, it's how you roll. Season two roll off will begin in a few months. Will you be joining us?



It was an action packed season of bowling highs and lows for teams Dem Boyz and Head Shed. The final game was played at the Coyote Lanes Bowling Alley in late April and in the end Team Head Shed took the win. (Photos by Casey Garcia)

YPG MWR brings meals on site

By Ana Henderson

Many times testing at YPG takes employees, private industry customers, and Soldiers in training to remote locations where driving back for meals does not logistically make sense.

The Moral Welfare and Recreation program (MWR) at YPG has mastered how to solve this logistical problem: they bring meals to the remote sites.

"We will do mobile meals outside at the Forward Operating Base site whenever we have a unit out there, and serve breakfast, lunch and dinner," explained Anthony Williams, business manager at the Cactus Café. "We have fed up to 500 people at the FOB."

Recently, Carlos Anaya, aviation test officer, had nearly 70 foreign customers testing and utilized this service to provide meals.

The food is just one aspect of this service. The other is the actual dining accommodations, in this case a massive military grade tent

Luis Arroyo, chief of the Training Exercise Management

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THE OUTPOST MAY 13, 2019 **11**

Army G-4 offers tips to prepare for the peak moving season

By U.S. Army G-4

Up to 60,000 household goods shipments for Soldiers, civilians and family members are expected to be moved this summer, and U.S. Army Logistics, HQDA G-4, is providing some tips to help make your move less stressful.

MOVE PLANNING AND EXECUTION

Peak season for Permanent Change of Station begins May 15 and runs through Aug 31, with the busiest weeks being May 15 — July 4.

Soldiers, civilians and Families should avoid moving around the holidays and during the last week of May and June, if possible.

Upon receipt of orders, Soldiers should immediately create an account or login into Defense Personal Property System, via www.move.mil; upload orders and complete all shipment applications for the move.

MOVE ENTITLEMENTS

If conducting a first PCS move, moving to or from a foreign country, or making a final retirement or separation move, Soldiers must schedule a counseling appointment with the transportation office to review entitlements.

STORAGE OF HHG

After a Soldier's shipment arrives at destination they are authorized short term storage for 90 days. Long-term storage is authorized for overseas tours, retirement or separations, and training courses that are longer than 20 weeks.

PERSONALLY PROCURED MOVE -ALSO KNOWN AS DO-IT-YOURSELF MOVE

Soldiers must obtain PCS orders before they are authorized to conduct a PPM or DITY move. Before conducting a PPM or DITY move, Soldiers must receive counseling and approval from their transportation office.

Upon move completion, a Soldier must submit receipts, weight tickets, and contracts. All paperwork must be dated after the published date of their orders, or they will not be reimbursed.

FINAL STEP

Once any move is complete Soldiers should complete the online customer satisfaction survey to rate the moving company. A list of customer satisfaction survey scores for all moving companies are on the Defense Personal Property System customer landing page, accessed via www.move.mil.

MEALS FROM PAGE 8

Office, worked with Mission
Contracting Command and MWR
to fulfill the test officer's need.
Arroyo's team resourced tents and
set up the tent with the support
of TRAX personnel. In fact, they
combined two tents to provide
enough space. It was equipped with
air-conditioning as well as electricity,

tables, chairs, a refrigerator, and a microwave.

Arroyo explained that its makes more sense and saves time to bring the food service to the customers in a remote location versus trying to bus everyone back for each meal.

Williams says providing this service is fulfilling. "It's just support, that's what we do. I love it and my employees love it, and so far I think everyone out here seems to love it."



program at YPG brings meals to remote sites. 'We will do this outside at the FOB site whenever we have a unit out there, and serve breakfast, lunch and dinner." explained Anthony Williams, business manager of the Cactus Cafe. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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