

Game-changing unmanned aircraft tested at YPG

By Mark Schauer

YPG is currently the epicenter of testing for the Army's top modernization priority: long-range precision artillery fires.

Artillery testing has long been the proving ground's bread and butter, but aviation testing for both military and civilian customers has long been another specialty at YPG.

Recently, YPG has served as an important testing facility for development of the General Atomics-designed MQ-9B Sky Guardian unmanned aircraft, which two years ago set an endurance record by flying 48.2 hours in YPG's restricted airspace.

"A lot of the history is based on the Predator B," said Chris Dusseault, program senior director. "It's a re-design where needed, but a lot of things have worked very well from our other program."

Perhaps the MQ-9B's most

revolutionary feature is its full compliance with regulations that allow aircraft to fly in the world's crowded civilian air space. It is scalable to fit a multitude of possible mission sets, and can be outfitted with various payloads, cameras, radars, and even weapons based on a given customer's needs.



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As for its application in combat, the craft and its new ground control station has dramatically streamlined its ability to be deployed overseas. Whereas current ground control stations are bulky, vehicle-mounted cabs that need a prime mover to transport and a support crew to man, the Sky Guardian is controlled by a highly portable laptop computer, cutting the ground crew down to more than three individuals. In theater, the system can be started up via a touchscreen laptop and be flown by a pilot located hundreds or thousands of miles away. It also has automatic launch capability.

When it comes to pre-flight checks, the new platform needs far fewer than earlier aircraft, which translated to even greater ease and efficiency. Rather than the typical

SEE **AIRCRAFT** page 6

Remember those who served—before it is too late

By Mark Schauer

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery is perhaps the most stirring of symbols for Memorial Day.

Built as a final resting place for an unidentified Soldier who fell on the battlefield in World War I, the tomb has a permanent military honor guard on duty at all hours of the day and night, all year 'round, no matter how inclement the weather. Their stoic presence is a reminder of America's unceasing devotion to all who have served honorably

in uniform to defend its liberty and ideals.

The thought of forgetting one

SEE **REMEMBER** page 2

REMEMBER

FROM PAGE 1

who gave their last full measure of devotion to this country is unconscionable to most of us. Yet how many lifelong civilians—which, since the end of conscription in 1973, describes the vast majority of Americans-- have loved ones who served honorably in the military, but whom we know little or nothing about their experiences in uniform?

In my extended family, I have more than I can count on the fingers and thumbs of both hands. Yet recently my thoughts in this

area focus mainly on my maternal grandfather.

When the United States defeated Imperial Japan in August 1945, numbering among the men in the 305th Infantry regiment of the Army's 77th Infantry Division was Stanley Wellence, who had turned 19 years old two months before.

Less than 16 months earlier, he had been wrapping up his senior year at Edison High School in Gary, Indiana, then home to the largest steel mill in the world. He was captain of the school's football team in this steely American city, a place where the mills were so productive that white laundry left on the clothesline



At the tail end of World War II, the 77th Infantry Division saw action in a variety of places in the Pacific Theater, including Guam, the Philippine island of Leyte and on the Japanese island of Okinawa, where the 305th regiment's third battalion received a unit citation for action in May of 1945. (file photo)

THE OUTPOST

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Arlington National Cemetery's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is a monument dedicated to deceased U.S. service members whose remains have not been identified. The tomb sentinels of the 3rd Infantry Regiment, The Old Guard, stand guard at the tomb 24 hours a day, seven days a week. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

for more than an hour would be blanketed by a covering of soot.

He was inducted at Indiana's Camp Atterbury and ultimately shipped to the Pacific Theater, where he saw action on the Philippine island of Leyte and on Okinawa, where the 305th's third battalion received a unit citation for action in May of 1945. In July he was back in the Philippines, this time on Cebu. The next month, Japan surrendered unconditionally.

Had the war continued, he surely would have been part of a massive invasion of mainland Japan. In anticipation, the War Department contracted for one million Purple Heart medals—every Purple Heart issued to wounded American Soldiers since 1945 was manufactured in this batch.

Like most members of the Greatest Generation, after the war my grandfather was honorably discharged and returned to civilian life. He married, worked, had children and grandchildren. Only one of the grandchildren-- a National Guardsman about to deploy to Afghanistan—ever heard a word about his war experiences pass from his lips.

It never occurred to me to ask him,

despite my interest in history and the fact that I work for the United States Army. I lost my chance to do so when he died at age 90 in 2017.

Sadly, many of my generation with an interest in genealogy may never know even a small part of their heroic forebears' actions. A four-day fire at the National Personnel Records Center in 1973 burned the records of an astonishing number of service members: an estimated 80% of the records for Army personnel discharged between 1912 and 1960, and 75% of those for Air Force personnel between 1947 and 1964 with a surname between H and Z, were completely destroyed. All told, at least some service records of nearly 20 million American veterans were reduced to ashes. It was by far the most catastrophic archival loss in American history.

If their ancestor was reticent about sharing their war stories, the only chance of reconstructing their service record calls for a visit to the National Archives in Washington, DC to view documents like medal citations, general orders, after action reports, pay vouchers, and casualty lists. A small number of volunteers on site

Veteran recalls 1950s Yuma Test Station days

By Mark Schauer

When Pfc. George W. Bauer arrived at Yuma Test Station (YTS) in late 1958, Dwight Eisenhower was President, the country had 48 states, and America's first satellite had launched months before.

At that time, YTS was home to about 1,000 Soldiers and Bauer, fresh out of Army Clerk Typist School after undergoing basic training at Fort Knox, departed for Arizona expecting to serve as a chaplain's assistant. He wouldn't get the position—it was already filled—and his trip to his new post was fraught with snags.

"My travel orders said I was assigned to Yuma, but my plane tickets sent me to Bisbee-Douglas International Airport," he recalled with a laugh. "All the Army had to do was look at the darn map and see the difference between west and east—it couldn't have been more obvious!"

When he finally arrived, he was assigned the role of billeting clerk. The office was responsible for assigning single Soldiers to the barracks, single officers to the Bachelor Officers Quarters, and accompanied personnel to trailer homes that sat on the present-day location of the housing area. He also helped Master Sgt. Robert Moore supervise the housekeeping staff,

which primarily consisted of wives of Soldiers on post.

"Once a month, my job was to type out the name, rank, and serial number of everyone living on post. It usually took me two or three days."

A clean and easily legible copy of the report was expected. Since correction fluid had only recently been invented and was not yet commonly available on the commercial market, if Bauer made even a small error while facing his deadline, he had no choice but to discard whatever he had typed and start over.

Though the test station had few organized activities beyond a modest recreation center that occasionally showed movies, Bauer and his buddies engaged in a variety of sporting and recreational activities. He was popular in part thanks to his soon-to-be friend Sgt. 1st Class James Dodd, who managed the officer's club adjacent to the billeting office and took Bauer aside on his first day of duty. In addition to manning the euphemistically-dubbed 'package store' that discreetly sold liquor to Soldiers after duty hours, Bauer was assigned the task of preparing Dodd a special cup of morning coffee, which was at least equal parts King William IV Whiskey and coffee. Dodd termed



Pfc. George Bauer (left) married wife Mary (second from left) during his time stationed at Yuma Test Station. The couple will celebrate their 60th anniversary on June 27. (Loaned photo)

the concoction 'black coffee.'

"I would sample his 'black coffee'-- just a quick nip before I completed the task. I believe that is how I acquired a taste for Scotch."

Bauer lived in the barracks, occasionally pulled kitchen patrol duty, and faithfully went to Sunday mass at the post chapel. In June 1959, however, Bauer got leave to go home to Rochester, New York to marry his wife, Mary. The next day they boarded a train and came to YTS, where they lived together until his discharge from the Army in June

1960. On June 27th, the couple will celebrate their 60th anniversary: they have six children, 18 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Though YPG has grown significantly over the years, its basic mission remains unchanged, a fact former Soldier Bauer appreciates. He was especially proud of the post's recent 75th anniversary, and looked on the 75th anniversary issue of The Outpost with great interest.

"I read it cover to cover. I especially liked the war stories from the old Soldiers."



When Pfc. George W. Bauer served at Yuma Test Station, the post was home to about 1,000 Soldiers and had few organized activities beyond a modest recreation center that occasionally showed movies. (File photo)

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Call me crazy...I own it! I am off to see the Wizard

By Casey Garcia

Stigma is when someone views you in a negative way because you have a distinguishing characteristic or personal trait that's thought to be, or actually is, a disadvantage (a negative stereotype). Unfortunately, negative attitudes and beliefs toward people who have a mental health condition are common.

Stigma can lead to discrimination. Discrimination may be obvious and direct, such as someone making a negative remark about your mental illness or your treatment. Or it may be unintentional or subtle, such as someone avoiding you because the person assumes you could be unstable, violent or dangerous due to your mental illness. You may even judge yourself. Heck I did, and still do some days. Why people wait to get help varies but in my case it was that the Marine Corps breeds a warrior culture, never admitting you are weak and I thought no one would understand anyway. It is the overall

stigma attached to mental illness in this society. It's the attitude that you don't look wounded, so you must be okay. Well, in my case, I wasn't okay. I transitioned out of the Marine Corps fast and didn't have a whole lot of time to come to grips with the fact that I was replaceable. You see I was damn good at my job and my fellow Marines respected me but I no longer wore the uniform, I no longer had a place to be, I no longer had people relying on my decision making abilities, I was no longer needed for advice. I was no longer GySgt Garcia. I thought that it would feel good to experience civilian life and create a new chapter in my book called life. I was sad, worried about finding a job, worried that my family would be disappointed in me, terrified I would fail at civilian life. Every time I left the house I would

compare myself to every female out there and tell myself I was too fat, my hair was bad, that my make-up made me look like a clown, and that my clothes were not good enough. Why? I had camouflage

and regulations to hide behind before and I lost sight of what it means to have self-confidence. Still today some days are good, and some days are bad. I struggle with anxiety and depression and I will outwardly admit

it. I also see my Wizard (term for psychologist in the Marine Corps) regularly. Why? Because I do not want to become one of the 22 veterans who commit suicide every day.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), mental illness is the leading cause of disability in the United States. The Center for Workplace Health

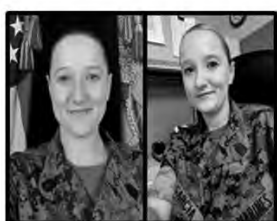
estimates that as much as 7% of full-time workers experience major depression. In terms of YPG employee statistics that is 167 people. Half of the cost of major depression is borne not by the healthcare system but by the employer—in the form of absenteeism and presenteeism (dramatically reduced productivity on the job). NAMI also reports that eight of 10 people suffering from mental illness report shame and stigma prevent them from seeking treatment.

We now have a good knowledge of what mental health stigma is and how it affects sufferers, so how can we eliminate stigma? In my opinion, it is simple. Empathy. One word. It goes a long way and I promise if you embrace it those facing a difficult time will be more apt to open up and seek help when needed. Others' judgments almost always stem from a lack of understanding rather than information based on facts. Learning to accept your condition and recognize what you need to do to treat it, seeking support, and helping educate others can make a big difference.


May is Mental Health Awareness Month. There is no better time than the present to recommit to bringing mental health issues out into the open.

So call me crazy...I own it! I am off to see the Wizard.

"It's the attitude that you don't look wounded, so you must be okay. Well, in my case, I wasn't okay"





When life was going grand and I knew my place in this world;



Then retirement happened and happened quickly due to an injury out of my control...

But it was ok, I had a degree and I thought that it would feel good to experience civilian life and create a new chapter in my book called life.







I transitioned out of the Marine Corps fast and didn't have a whole lot of time to come to grips with the fact that I was replaceable. Not being needed is a tough pill to swallow after 15 years of being the go to gal. My injury was getting worse which is why I retired early and now I have all these emotions I don't know how to deal with.


It's the attitude that you don't look wounded, so you must be okay. Well in my case, I wasn't okay.

Still today some days are good, and some days are bad. I struggle with anxiety and depression and I will outwardly admit it.






The key is to try to put one foot in front of the other and find the things that make life enjoyable and accept the bad days for what they were. Just a bad day.



I outwardly admit I am crazy..I own it...but life is so much better since I embraced the crazy and got help. Erase the negative stigma of mental health and don't wait to get help. Life is definitely worth living.



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Out and about



TOP LEFT: Yuma Proving Ground Chief Donnie Lucas sat down with KYMA reporter Ciara Encinas and KAWC reporter Jasmin Arenas for an interview. Chief Lucas discussed the dangers YPG employees encounter on their commute to and from work when traveling on Highway 95. To date, there have been 47 accidents on Highway 95 one of which was fatal. ABOVE: YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger recently visited with members of the Fort Yuma Rotary Club, discussing YPG's position in the forefront of the Army's modernization efforts and plans for the post's open house on February 8, 2020. "YPG is a national treasure right here in Yuma's backyard," he said. "Essentially every piece of kit that gets fielded to Soldiers goes through Yuma Proving Ground. We have some of the world's finest engineers and technicians that deal with this equipment day in and day out." LEFT: Students at Immaculate Conception School learned about the Holocaust from YPG Museum Curator Bill Heidner. During Heidner's presentation to Mrs. Lee's eighth grade social studies class. Of the 20 Divisions of Soldiers that trained in the California-Arizona Desert Maneuver Area, 10 have been recognized as "Liberating Units" by the U.S. Army Center of Military History. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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AIRCRAFT

FROM PAGE 1

30 to 45 minutes to get an aircraft running, pre-flight checks now take less than 15 minutes.

Testers are excited about the platform's future applications for both military and civilian use.

"This airplane and this ground control station are the perfect bridge for us to get operational aircraft into the national airspace system," said Tim Just, pilot. "The man-machine interface of this new system are very simple and it takes less time to get the aircraft powered up and in the air. It is a delightful airplane to fly."

YPG is the third-largest installation in area in the Department of Defense, which allows for the testing of long-range artillery projectiles and other weapon systems without fear of hitting occupied areas. Less intuitive, perhaps, is that YPG's vast size also includes nearly 2,000 square miles of restricted airspace. The proving ground seems as close to an ideal venue for UAS testing as can possibly exist. The clear, stable air and extremely dry climate where inclement weather is a rarity makes it highly coveted.

"We have great flying weather here and restricted airspace higher than



YPG has served as an important testing facility for development of the MQ-9B Sky Guardian unmanned aircraft, which two years ago set an endurance record by flying 48.2 hours in YPG's restricted airspace.

the service ceiling of the airplane," said Just. "We are able to fly here 365 days a year."

YPG's unsurpassed capabilities allow for extensive testing without having to compete for runway and airspace with manned fighter jets as at other installations. Another critical bonus of testing at YPG is

the presence of a wealth of other infrastructure meant for other sectors of YPG's broad test mission that can be leveraged to support UAS evaluations. YPG is home to things like technical and tactical targets, as well as generator and combined maintenance shops, all of which are useful for UAS testing. The

Sky Guardian's testers also give high marks to YPG's spectrum management office, which ensures they have the frequencies they need for their specialized testing: YPG has nearly 600 permanent radio frequencies assigned to it, and uses more than 1,000 temporary ones in a given month.



While current ground control stations are bulky, vehicle-mounted cabs that need a prime mover to transport and a support crew to man, the Sky Guardian is controlled by a highly portable laptop computer, cutting the ground crew down to more than three individuals.



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"YPG is a fantastic place," said Ken Ehresman, program manager. "YPG gives us access to not only restricted airspace, but ranges and capabilities that help us test. We have world class support here from a very motivated team on the YPG side."

General Atomics expects to continue testing here for the foreseeable future, and to expand the amount of aviation testing they conduct here. This is largely due to the support efforts of the YPG workforce, officials add.

"They are very flexible," Ehresman

said. "We came here two years ago not knowing what to expect or how long we would be here. The support has been so professional that we

built a hangar here with the intention of staying longer and bringing more test programs here—we've been doing a lot and intend to do more."



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Congratulations Lt. Col. Matthews!

The Army has selected Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Timothy Matthews for promotion to Colonel.

“This is a significant accomplishment, as the Army has chosen Lt.

Col. Matthews to serve in positions of greater responsibility,” said Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG Commander. “Selection to Colonel is a very challenging cut.”

Matthews, the only officer within the Army Test and Evaluation

Command selected for promotion to Colonel in the Army’s most recent board, believes that YTC will remain the busiest of the Army’s test centers into the foreseeable future.

“I take no credit for it: YTC’s outcomes are entirely the result of the workforce’s good work,” he said. “We have the most faithful, hardworking civil servants that I have ever seen in my 20-plus years in the Army.”

(Photo by Mark Schauer)



REMEMBER

FROM PAGE 2

strive to help those who can’t make the journey themselves, but their ranks are far smaller than the volume of requests for assistance they receive. There are also private companies that conduct similar research for a fee. The less information that you know about your relative’s service, however, the more difficult the search for the needle in the haystack.

Much easier, of course, is to simply ask the veterans in your family to share with you about their service-- and

not wait until it is too late.

It’s important to thank veterans for their service, but so much more vital to listen and learn about it from them. If you have the opportunity, don’t miss it.

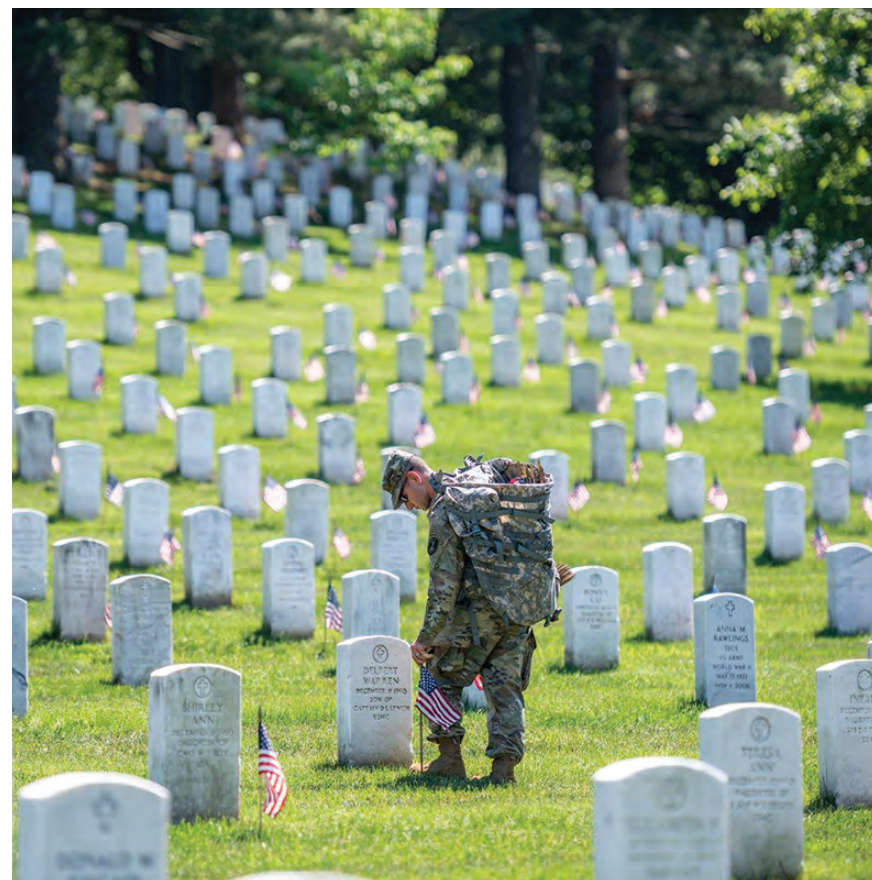
War Time U.S. Military Deaths

Revolutionary War	4,435
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Civil War	498,332
Spanish-American War	2,446
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World War II	405,399
Korean War	54,246
Vietnam War	90,220
Persian Gulf War	1,565
Global War on Terror	6,852

The total number of Americans killed in all US Wars is over 1.1 million.

Sources: Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs

Chaplain’s Corner Never Forget



By Chaplin Ronald Beltz

U.S. Senator John A. Logan, Establishing Decoration Day, 1868:

“We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. All that the consecrated wealth and taste of the nation can add to their adornment and security is but a fitting tribute to the memory of her slain defenders. Let no wanton foot tread rudely on such hallowed grounds. Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic. If

other eyes grow dull and other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remain in us.

Let us, then, at the appointed time gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with the choicest of flowers of spring-time; let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us a sacred charge upon a nation’s gratitude, the soldier’s and sailor’s widow and orphan.”

Happy Memorial Day! Never Forget!

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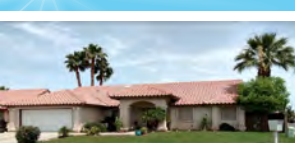
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Coyote Lanes closed for construction



The Coyote Lanes bowling alley on YPG's Howard Cantonment Area is currently closed for a three-pronged repair and remodel project. The facility is expected to be closed for approximately 90-120 days. In the meantime a temporary food trailer is open at the Post Library parking lot and seating is available inside the library's lobby. A limited Coyote menu will be served and breakfast is served until 10:30am. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

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In early February the Directorate of Public Works closed Barranca Road from the Price School Gate to the intersection of Camp Avion Road and Barranca Road to repair the road and install a dedicated walking path. Soldiers will can now enjoying running along the road while staying at a safe distance from vehicles. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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