



THE OUTPOST

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YPG Commander addresses workforce in all-hands meeting

By Mark Schauer

Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG commander, addressed personnel across the command via video teleconference in late September.

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 watched by video link.

Other speakers at the event included YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson, Chief of Staff Minerva Peters, technology and Investments Directorate Chief Todd Hudson, along with other senior leaders.

A major part of Poppenberger's address concerned YPG's active test support of six of the Army Futures Command (AFC)'s Cross Functional Teams (CFTs) building the Army's future force, which seeks to retain overmatch with near-peer adversaries in a high intensity conflict while maintaining the competency in waging irregular warfare that has been achieved since the 9/11 attacks. From support of the Extended Range Cannon Artillery project to testing related to Army combat vehicles and the Future Vertical Lift program, YPG



YPG Commander, Col. Ross Poppenberger hosted an all-hands town hall for the workforce in late September. He told the crowd of nearly 200 employees, "YPG has always been relevant and will always be relevant, but we have some significant things that will really put us on the map for the next two decades to come." (Photo by Ana Henderson)

will remain busy for the foreseeable future.

"YPG has always been relevant and will always be relevant, but we have some significant things that will really put us on the map for the next two decades to come," he said. "The budget is always challenging, but the workload is coming."

CFT-related testing accounted for 6% of YPG's 1.8 million direct labor hours in the previous fiscal

year, and Hudson told the audience this figure will rise significantly. As such, YPG has proactively changed its organizational structure to align with AFC's needs. YPG has begun to acquire new radar systems in the past fiscal year, and will continue to replace legacy radars over the next several years. Optical tracking mounts will also be upgraded, and new instrumentation necessary to test autonomous vehicles and other

artificial intelligence is on the horizon.

"We are testing the modernization of the Army and will continue to play a big role in our national defense," said Hudson. "We've already had some good successes for the Army—we've effectively doubled the range that we can shoot artillery at, and we are looking to shoot even farther."

Poppenberger also discussed Highway 95 widening efforts, the first installment of which has been funded by the State of the Arizona in the current budget. The funding is a testament to the importance the state places on what goes on at YPG, Poppenberger said.

"The good news is that the state had dedicated \$28 million in the state budget to begin the Highway 95 expansion project. But, for your foreseeable future Highway 95 is probably going to be under construction. In the long-term, though, it will be much better than it is now, so bear with it."

On the budget front, Peters explained the challenges and forecast of living under a continuing budget resolution, which expires on November 21. As such, only mission-

SEE **ALL-HANDS** page 3

**Soldier
spotlight**
/Page 2



**Shearwater crews
are a call away**
/Page 5



**Trespassing on
YPG is illegal**
/Page 6



Soldier spotlight



Staff Sgt. Gregory La Fleur is currently assigned as an Aerial Delivery Equipment Repair Supervisor/Tester for the Airborne Test Force at Yuma Proving Ground. He's originally from Rhode Island and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 2006. Staff Sgt. La Fleur has deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom on four separate occasions. His hobbies include movies, theater, discovering new breweries, shooting, and drawing. He is married to Nicole and has four children. (Photo by Casey Garcia)

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: ana.c.henderson.civ@mail.mil

Commander: Col. Ross Poppenberger

Public Affairs Officer: Mark Schauer

Public Affairs Specialist/Outpost Editor: Ana Henderson

Administrative Officer: Casey Garcia

Technical Editor, Cold Regions Test Center: Clara Zachgo

Visual Information Manager: Riley Williams



Amazing Race event brings awareness about serious issues in a fun way



The Family Advocacy Program is bringing awareness to domestic violence in a fun way. On Sept. 17, the program hosted the Amazing Race. Participants not only learned about domestic violence, they learned about suicide prevention, dangers of drunk driving and also ways to keep children safe while using social media and their cell phones. The winners of the Amazing Race were Soldiers from the Medical Clinic. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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ALL-HANDS

FROM PAGE 1

essential items vital to continue testing or to rectify things that pose a health or safety hazard can be funded at this time.

"You have to understand that our Resource Management Office is doing the best they can with the funding that they have available. I hope you have patience and work with RM as they work through this."

YPG Command Evaluator and Wellness Coordinator Michele Dominguez announced a new Civilian Fitness Program. The program allows three hours per week devoted to fitness with a six-consecutive month lifetime limit. Supervisor approval and a doctor's clearance are necessary to participate, and an application packet will be located on the Wellness Program's Sharepoint page.

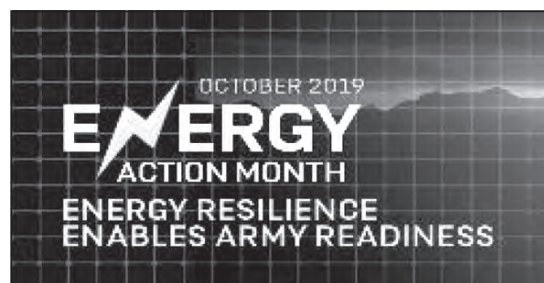
"We're giving you the tools to be a good steward of yourself, and after six months you can be proud of what you've done to begin your fitness journey," Dominguez said.

By Gregory P. Skaggs, Energy Manager, Public Works Operations and Maintenance Division

October is Energy Action Month. This year's theme is "Energy Resilience Enables Army Readiness." It reflects the Army's strategic pivot to focus on the energy and water resilience of critical missions at its installations, rather than energy and water conservation in general. Yet, we still have annual energy and water conservation goals that require our actions year-round. The Army's goals are to reduce energy intensity by 2.5% per year, water use by 3%, and energy costs by 5%. Energy conservation funds now go into resiliency projects, so we can't spend our way into saving energy, water, and money. The only way we will achieve our energy and water conservation goals is through our actions.

What actions do we all need to

Energy resilience enables Army readiness



take? There are really only four things that we need to do.

1. Watch your thermostats. The Army temperature standard for an air conditioned space is 78. When the area is unoccupied, such as nights and weekends, the temperature standard is 85. The number one action to save energy and money at Yuma Proving Ground is to set thermostats to the Army policy. What happens if you want your office to be a cooler than Army policy? Setting the temperature lower uses much more electricity. A setting of 72 will use about 30% more energy than setting of 78. A setting of only 76 will still use 13% more energy. The temperature standard for heat is 68 occupied, and 55 for unoccupied times like nights and weekends.

2. Turn off the lights and equipment that you are not using. Do you remember to turn your lights off when you leave your office? Do you leave the lights on in conference

rooms and other common areas when no one is there? Do you leave equipment on when you are not using it? If you don't need the lights or equipment to be on, and they don't have a sleep mode, just turn them off.

3. Buy energy efficient equipment. The Department of Defense policy is to purchase

only Energy Star rated equipment, when available. If you are purchasing equipment, first check to see if Energy-Star versions are available.

4. Stop Waste. Keep doors and windows to air-conditioned areas closed. Are there any problems in your building that causes energy or water to be wasted? Can you see light streaming in around outside doors and windows in air-conditioned areas? You might need new weather stripping or caulking. Any holes in walls or broken windows? Do you have any leaking fixtures or toilets or faucets that drip or run? Does your air compressor run when no one is using it? Just call 3005 and put in a Service Order to have it fixed.

If we all pay attention to just those four actions, we will be able to save Army funds and meet our energy and water conservation goals.

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Contractor employees may attend YPG Organizational Day at no cost to the government and must make arrangements with their employers for their attendance

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Shootin' the Breeze High Noon

By David J. Horn

The following is an old memory of the Kofa Maintenance Shop, from a time long ago, back before the breakroom tables were bolted down to the floor.

We all know that America builds the best tanks and tactical vehicles, but occasionally even the best machines need to come in for a little mechanical tweaking. Here at YPG, we have a fine facility to accommodate all our maintenance needs...the Big Shop out at the Kofa Firing Range. Blending professionalism, excellent facilities and tools, and a little axle grease, it's one smooth operation.

That's not to say that the shop is without its color, however, there are times, normally hidden from the view of the innocent, when you are able to see a more primal side. One of those times is at "High Noon." As the time for the mid-day lunch break approaches, and the normally mild-mannered mechanics and technicians walk down the short hallway to their breakroom, where a strange metamorphosis takes place. As they all gather, the lunchroom too, is transformed into something reminiscent of the catacombs of a primeval cave. It is like when the olde Romans laid down their tools and gathered at the Coliseum for

mortal combat. Your first sight is of two guys fighting over a rancid leg-of-burro. All you hear are growls of various emotional intensities. You cautiously venture deeper into the room, easing past everybody all the while sending signals back to those suspicious stares that you are well aware that an attempt to steal something out of one of their lunch pails would be your life.

Finally easing through a crowd of lookie-loos with a social pecking order all its own, you get to the source of what generates the raw excitement...the card game. Four gladiators on opposite corners of a lone table in the center of the room, just big enough to keep them beyond each other's reach. The rules of "the game" are simple...no holds-barred verbal intimidation. An onlooker can always tell when they get new blood in the game because the rookie might say something like, "If you dump on me I'll rip your face off!," or some other equally lightweight threat. Things get truly interesting when one combatant is taking a particularly bad beating, especially when it's due to a poor strategy executed in full view of the peanut gallery. Comments from onlookers are not taken lightly, and the snaring reactions are themselves part of what makes the entire event an experience for all the senses.

Eventually, someone will manage to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory, allowing another, now exuberant conqueror, to relish his triumph for the rest of the afternoon. And even though the others may go off to lick their wounds, the only real victims of all of this are probably the tables... which are by now covered with the stains of a coffee strong enough to open the eyes of a dead man, and the

sauce of dozens of dripping burritos.

As the noise dies down and everyone takes their last shot at the garbage can as they head down the hallway back to the shop floor, an unbelievable transformation again takes place. Emerging from the lunchroom you hear, "William, may I help you carry your tools back to the tank?" "Why Charles, that would be very nice of you."

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Shearwater crews are ready on a phone call's notice

By Ana Henderson

There have been a handful of times when testing has seized at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) due to storm damage. Whenever most of the workforce is asked to steer clear of the area, it is usually the Shearwater Mission Support (SMS) crew called into action for repairs.

The crews repair water damaged roads with their heavy equipment, secure high voltage powerlines, and make sure the installation is safe for the workforce to resume testing.

"Whenever we get a storm, the power and roads become issues because 90% or the roads out here are dirt roads," explains Jaysen Lockett, Project Manager for SMS.

SMS works at YPG under the Installation Support Services contract in support of the Director of Public Works. SMS crews provide a wide range of services explains Lockett. "They do everything that supports the infrastructure at YPG and anything and everything that relates to testing. It starts with grounds, and expands all the way to high voltage distribution across the base. Essentially, what these guys do every day has a direct impact on testing."

The services range from locksmiths, pest control, and ground maintenance



Shearwater crews routinely maintain the roads at YPG especially after a storm. "Whenever we get a storm, the power and roads become issues because 90% or the roads out here are dirt roads," explains Jaysen Lockett, Project Manager for SMS. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

to larger jobs such as mission test support: test site setup, crane support and test course maintenance.

On average, SMS competes 444 service orders and standing job orders and 781 preventive maintenance per month.

When the crews are not busy filling service orders or emergency calls, they spend time making sure equipment continues to run properly. "They perform preventative maintenance on air conditioning and HVAC systems so they don't fail. Essentially what we are trying to do is predictive maintenance. We go out there and identify anything that can go wrong and repair it so it doesn't fail."

Lockett adds, "For the customers, having a support contractor that does

a good job is one they don't know or hear about because when they come into work every day their AC is working, their lights are working, water is running, all that kind of stuff. It's only when one of those things fail that they realize that they have a support contractor."

When things do fail, YPG employees know when they see the

men wearing the bright orange shirts that help has arrived.

"Once they see us pulling in, they get excited and happy. 'The service guys are here.' Every time they see us they seem very happy," remarks Jose Herrera Jr., a plumber with SMS.

For Lockett is it important for his crew to realize their value to the YPG family. "I have shown them the video of the YPG promo so these guys can see how what they do directly impacts testing. What I am trying to do is reinforce to the crews is that what we are doing out here is ultimately in support of the Warfighter. So that way they know and they have some ownership."

Several of the staff are either former military or have children that are in the military.

"They are not working just for a paycheck, it is value-driven," said Lockett.



Shearwater crews are pictured repairing high voltage lines after a storm. The crews repair water damaged roads with their heavy equipment, secure high voltage powerlines, and make sure the installation is safe for the workforce to resume testing. (Photo by Casey Garcia)



Edward Bouzanquet (left) and Jose Herrera Jr. (right) are pictured repairing a water main line. Herrera Jr. says, "Once they see us pulling in, they get excited and happy. 'The service guys are here.' Every time they see us they seem very happy." (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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Trespassing on YPG is dangerous, illegal



LEFT: This unauthorized structure was built on YPG property, "They had shade structures and lights, even a skeet shooting range," said Nieto. CENTER: A citation for a first offense of trespassing carries a \$280 fine, and fines for repeat or particularly egregious violations can run into the thousands of dollars. Two years ago, trespassers built and used for several months a makeshift clubhouse several miles inside of YPG's boundary. RIGHT: Trespassing within YPG's borders can also degrade the proving ground's range conservation efforts. "These ranges are our natural laboratory and we try to keep them as pristine as possible," said Daniel Steward, YPG wildlife biologist. Not pristine is this makeshift Christmas tree left behind by the trespassers. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

By Mark Schauer

It's not a jungle out there, but trespassing on Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) vast desert ranges is dangerous enough.

Unauthorized entry into any military installation is a crime, but the proving ground has a host of hazards that are as unique as its mission testing virtually every piece of equipment in the ground combat arsenal in a natural environment.

After 76 years of existence and plenty of posted no trespass signs, you might think people would steer clear of these areas.

But you would be wrong instances of trespassing, even vandalism, have increased in recent years, necessitating a vigorous enforcement response from the YPG Police Department.

"The off highway vehicle (OHV) population is pretty prevalent," said Sgt. David Nieto, range conservation officer for the YPG Police Department. "They've been using one of the BLM roads, driving

around our restricted area signs, and establishing a new road across our boundary."

In addition to the possibility of unexploded ordnance from the proving ground's distant history as a World War II training facility, YPG's 1,300 square mile ranges accommodate the surface danger zones for test fires of powerful long-range artillery shells and airdrops of cargo parachutes carrying multi-ton pallets of equipment or military vehicles. The testing of laser targeting technology in the area also carries the risk of causing serious eye injuries to unwitting persons traipsing in areas that they do not belong.

"I try to stress to them that there are so many dangers to trespassing within our boundaries, especially not knowing what is being dropped or shot," said Nieto. "The people I encounter are mostly harmless and have no malicious intent, but that won't protect them from these hazards."

A citation for a first offense carries a \$280 fine, and fines for repeat or particularly egregious violations can run into the thousands of dollars. Two years ago, trespassers built and used for several months a makeshift clubhouse several miles inside of YPG's boundary. YPG Police identified the culprits easily, for they had scrawled their names and a unique internet hashtag onto a picnic bench they brought to the site. The responsible individuals were cited for multiple offenses and their creation was demolished at their expense.

"They had shade structures and lights, even a skeet shooting range," said Nieto.

The dangers to life and limb are bad enough, but trespassing within YPG's borders can also degrade the proving ground's range conservation efforts and mission readiness.

"We want to preserve wildlife habitat, but the larger objective is supporting our test mission," said Daniel Steward, YPG wildlife

biologist. "These ranges are our natural laboratory and we try to keep them as pristine as possible."

Steward says that federal law allows for some public access to military installations, an obligation the proving ground takes seriously.

"We provide for some limited public access where it's not interfering with our mission," Steward said. "We permit hunting in very specific areas and with our range controllers notified of where it is taking place to keep people safe. If we have unauthorized access and range control is not aware of it, it puts people in danger and affects our test mission."

Steward believes that some members of the public may conflate YPG with the Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR), a training range jointly controlled by the Marine Corps and Air Force southeast of YPG that allows significant public access to people who apply for and obtain a permit. Such a liberal policy is not possible at YPG, however.

“Our mission is so much different than that of BMGR,” explained Steward. “They’re not doing as intensive work on the ground as we do at YPG. Also, the experimental nature of YPG’s mission has a lot more safety and security concerns than theirs.”

Steward doesn’t anticipate any significant changes to this policy, either.

“The areas we do allow hunting in are very remote and with a volume of visitors we can sustain without impacting our test mission,” he said. “There is a huge demand for OHV recreation, and we just couldn’t sustain allowing unlimited public access.”

YPG’s successful wildlife conservation efforts have sustained a variety of creatures that are imperiled in many other places of the American West, from bighorn sheep and Sonoran pronghorn to fringe-toed lizards and the Sonoran desert tortoise. They have also provided ample habitat for numerous species of bats in several abandoned mines that predate the proving ground’s existence. The mines, however, also attract trespassers, which can wreak havoc on fragile roosting locations for the bats, natural predators of all manner of pesky insects.

“When there is a bat breeding colony in a mine, one entry is all it takes to wipe out an entire reproduction season for those bats,” said Steward. “A lot of bat species are very high conservation concern because of the lack of habitat availability.”

Additionally, Steward adds, isolated abandoned mines are extremely dangerous places for people to visit.

“Mines are flat-out hazardous,” Steward said. “They have bad air, unstable ground and ceilings, and deep, sometimes flooded shafts. They are real death traps. Stay out and stay alive.”

The public can access Cibola Lake Road and Ehrenberg Road through YPG, but there are strict restrictions. Individuals who are not YPG personnel are not permitted to stop, camp, or hike on YPG lands alongside these roads. Members of the general public must call in to YPG’s range control for clearance prior to entering YPG on either Cibola Lake or Ehrenberg Roads: there are posted signs as you enter YPG’s boundaries with the appropriate phone number. These roads are subject to temporary closure, and members of the public must obey any and all posted roadblocks.



YPG FD opens station for Fire Prevention Week



The YPG Fire and Emergency Services Department marked Fire prevention week with an open house. With this year's theme being, "Not every hero wears a cape. Plan and practice your escape" they invited children from the YPG Child Development Center, Price Elementary School and Youth Services to learn about fire safety. The children also met Sparky and had the opportunity to spray water from the fire hose. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



Employee perspectives:

Choice, chance and change: no matter what, it all starts with you

By Casey Garcia

I left Yuma on Sept. 8 to attend the Civilian Education System (CES) Intermediate course in Kansas. I thought to myself, "If 15 years in the Marine Corps did not teach me everything I needed to know about leadership, then the Army is not going to teach me anything in three weeks." I was wrong.

Not only did I learn a thing or two but I realized that to know oneself and seek self-improvement does not stop after you retire from the military. I graduated the CES Intermediate Course after three weeks of blended learning consisting of small group seminars and innovative individual exercises. The Intermediate Course prepares current and aspiring Army Civilian leaders



Students of the recent Civilian Education System Intermediate course gathered for a group photo upon completing the three week course. The Intermediate Course held in Kansas prepares current and aspiring Army Civilian leaders to become more innovative, self-aware, and prepared to effectively lead and care for personnel and resources at the organization level. (Loaned Photo)

to become more innovative, self-aware, and prepared to effectively

lead and care for personnel and resources at the organization level.

Communication is a competency in the Army Leadership Requirements Model (LRM). LRM is not like the buffet at the Cactus Café, we don't get to just pick what we want. The Army expects its leaders to exemplify all aspects of the LRM. The bottom line up front is that a poor communicator cannot be an effective leader, and active listening inspires quality communication.

My biggest take away from the Intermediate Course of CES training is that you have a choice to take a chance in order to implement change. We learned that leaders solve problems and in order to do that they must identify the problem. One who listens to understand rather than to respond will identify the problem rather than the symptoms. Shared understanding is essential to mission accomplishment. One who listens poorly will never fully understand what it is the team is trying accomplish. People who are ignored tend to back away

from the team, which affects unity and impedes the shared sense of purpose and understanding. We reviewed the Levels of Listening chart and assessed ourselves. Take a moment to assess yourself. Are you practicing active listening or are you at level 3 just waiting to pounce? Remember you have the choice to listen, and I mean really listen.

We learned in order to be an effective leader you must look inside yourself, become aware of your own strengths and weaknesses, and do your best to model the Army civilian service ethos. I never thought of a strength being a negative until I heard it put this way: overdone strengths can become weaknesses. For example overdone trust becomes gullibility, overdone self-confidence becomes arrogance, overdone cautiousness becomes suspiciousness, and overdone flexibility becomes indecisiveness.

We learned a leader contributes to meeting the organization's mission requirements meanwhile continuously looking to improve themselves and their subordinates. Take a chance on your subordinates, they just might surprise you. A leader fosters a learning environment capable of meeting current and future missions and creates a positive climate of trust, candor, respect and resilience. A leader listens to understand. If we do not have a shared understanding, the mission fails.

A leader can impact change, but so can you. CES training is just one of the options the Army civilian Corps provides its workforce. You are the one who draws the link between the education and deciding what you want to learn or get from it. You have the choice to take a chance and implement change.

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Chaplain's Corner

Without struggles, we never grow

By Chaplain Ronald Beltz

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole.

Until it suddenly stopped making any progress and looked like it was stuck.

So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily, although it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings.


The man didn't think anything of it and sat there waiting for the wings to enlarge to support the butterfly. But that

didn't happen. The butterfly spent the rest of its life unable to fly, crawling around with tiny wings and a swollen body.

Despite the kind heart of the man, he didn't understand that the restricting cocoon and the struggle needed by the butterfly to get itself through the small opening; were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings. To prepare itself for flying once it was out of the cocoon.

Moral of the story:

Our struggles in life develop our strengths. Without struggles, we never grow and never get stronger, so it's important for us to tackle our challenges!



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PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

SAFE BACKING / GROUND GUIDING

SAFE LIFTING TECHNIQUES / ERGONOMICS

SLIPS TRIPS FALLS

POST YOUR VIDEO TO THE SAFETY OFFICE SHAREPOINT SITE <https://intranet.yuma.army.mil/cmd/Safety/Video%20Contest/Forms/Thumbnails.aspx> NO LATER THAN 30 OCTOBER 2019. MULTIPLE ENTRIES ARE PERMITTED. VIDEOS MUST BE CLEARED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE PRIOR TO POSTING. A PHOTO PASS IS REQUIRED TO FILM AT YPG

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