

# THE OUTPOST

U.S. ARMY YUMA PROVING GROUND, YUMA, ARIZONA 85365 | VOLUME 68 NO. 22 NOVEMBER 11, 2019

## M1 tank frequently tested at YPG



An M1 is pictured on one of YPG's many road courses, "We have multiple test courses here that simulate different types of roads we might encounter in different areas of the world," said Robert Wilson, test officer. "We test these vehicles' durability for thousands of miles across these various road surfaces." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

By Mark Schauer

What has outstanding offensive and defensive capability and represents the tip of the spear in a major land war?

It's the M1A2 Systems Engineering Plan (SEP) version 3 (v3) main battle tank, and right now it's being put through its paces across the more than 200 miles of rugged road courses at U.S. Army Yuma Proving

SEE **TANK** page 7

## YTC Commander addresses workforce in town hall meeting

By Ana Henderson

Yuma Test Center (YTC) Commander Lt. Col. Alicia Johnson addressed the workforce in her first town hall meeting as the test center's leader. She's been at her post just over 100 days.

Johnson said she wants to meet everyone and get out to the range and see what the workforce in action saying, "Don't be surprised if you see me."

Johnson who served at the Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC) before coming to YTC said, "I truly believe in what ATEC does," adding that she is proud to be leading YTC and told the workforce, "How we support the Warfighter that means a lot to me. We have one of the most critical missions in the Army."

With that said she thanked the workforce in attendance and proceeded to recognized some of them for their outstanding work.

Johnson presented Richard Bloomfield, a Test Officer with the Munitions and Weapons Division, the honor of Employee



YTC Commander, Lt. Col. Alicia Johnson hosted her first town hall meeting for the YTC workforce in late October. During the town hall Johnson awarded Munitions and Weapons Test Officer, Richard Bloomfield with the Employee of the year award. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

of the Year. David Dupuis, Test Exercise Management Office, Exercise Coordinator and Jason Anderson, Test Safety Specialist were both chosen as Employees of the fourth Quarter for the support and test sides respectively.

The awards did not stop there,

Johnson presented Certificates of Achievements and Certificates of Appreciation to several members of the workforce and presented YTC Commander's coins to deserving members of the workforce.

"Thank you. You guys go

SEE **TOWN HALL** page 5

YPG Education  
Center relocates  
and renovates

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YPG's operations  
usually can't be  
heard from Yuma

/Page 6



YPG's recycling  
center is  
now open

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## YPG Vet Clinic Soldiers awarded for work with students



YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger and Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson presented five Soldiers, from the YPG Veterinary Clinic, each with an Army Achievement Medal. The Soldiers were recognized for their work as subject matter experts and instructors during the Gains in Education and Mathematics and Science summer program hosted by YPG. (Left to right) Command Sgt. Maj. Nelson, Sgt. Arthur Geronimo, Capt. Charles Andersen, Sgt. Tamlyn Burnham, Spc. Jeremy Blue, Col. Poppenberger. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

## Dignitaries visit YPG



Rep. Charlene Fernandez, Minority Leader of the Arizona House of Representatives, visited YPG on Oct. 31. Accompanied by Retired Navy Capt., former astronaut and current United States Senate candidate Mark Kelly, Fernandez was provided a command overview briefing by YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger, and also visited a gun position and YPG's Target Threat Yard. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



# THE OUTPOST

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## Chaplain's Corner

# Men and women of our Armed Forces quietly act with courage

By Chaplain Maj. Ronald Beltz

In January 1982 an Air Florida jet crashed into the icy Potomac River in Washington, D.C. After the crash, there was a helicopter that was trying to rescue people from the downed plane. It dropped a line and one woman grabbed it and the helicopter began to drag her toward the shore but the woman was so cold and tired that she couldn't hold on and so she dropped back into the icy Potomac. At that moment a man on the shore jumped in the cold waters

and quickly swam to her aid and saved her life. His name was Lenny Skutnik.

Lenny Skutnik was a government employee who worked for the Congressional Budget Office in Washington D.C. Shortly after his heroic rescue, President Ronald Reagan invited Skutnik to attend the 1982 State of the Union address where Skutnik sat in the Presidential Gallery next to the First Lady Nancy Reagan. President Reagan in his speech praised Skutnik for his heroic

actions that day and he received a standing ovation. Lenny was a hero and his actions exemplified bravery and courage.

It is interesting to note that "Lenny Skutnik" has become a term used for others invites to sit in the Presidential Gallery and honored in the President's address at the State of the Union.

On Nov. 11, 2019 we celebrate and recognize the 100th Anniversary of Veterans Day. A day that we honor the courage, bravery and sacrifices that the men and women of our Armed Forces have made past and present. Like Lenny Skutnik the men and women of our Armed Forces quietly act with courage and bravery every day keeping our nation safe.

## Casey's Word Hunt

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# YPG Education Center relocates and renovates

**By Lindsay Kelly, Test Examiner/  
Multi-Use Learning Facility  
Coordinator, IMCOM**

While it may no longer be breaking news, the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Education Center has relocated to Building 2100 in Rooms 6, 7, and 8. After years of being split between up and downstairs at Building 501, they are now centralized to house the Multi-Use Learning Facility (MLF), Army Personnel Testing (APT) room, and Education Services office in one location.

The Army Continuing Education Division (ACES) has the ability to touch Soldiers worldwide. ACES promotes lifelong learning, readiness, and resilience through flexible and relevant education programs, services, and systems in support of the Total Army Family Organization. ACES also provides the opportunity and means by which Soldiers can develop and sharpen skills in visionary-thinking, innovation, adaptability, creativity and decision-making. With ACES as a major player, the Military is making the transition to a knowledge and capabilities based force, organized around information and information technologies.

As a spoke on the Fort Huachuca Education Center hub, the goal of the YPG Education Center is to promote a pathway for Soldiers,

Family members, and Civilians to reach their individual education goals.

The YPG MLF operates as a student center offering support to unit and individual distributed training, leader development, and self-development through independent study. The MLF hosts 15 computer stations complete with new tables, chairs, and headphones available Monday-Thursday from 7 a.m. - 4 p.m. for student convenience as well as a location for YPG Civilian and contract personnel to complete required

Information Assurance training. Two computer stations will soon provide guest access to the YPG network for specific training as well.

The Army Personnel Testing (APT) program encompasses standardized tests to determine eligibility for specialized training and language proficiency testing. APT tests available include, but are not limited to, the Defense Language Aptitude Battery, Defense Language Proficiency Test, Oral Proficiency Interview, Armed Forces Classification Test, and the

Selection Instrument for Flight Training. Thanks to new furniture and equipment, YPG is now able to schedule two Soldiers at a time with the potential for up to four.

American Education Week (AEW) is Nov. 18-22, which coincides with our monthly visit from Arizona Western College's Military Services representative. On the third Wednesday of each month, you'll find AWC located in Room 7 from noon - 3:30 p.m. to answer questions related to using your tuition benefits at Yuma's community college. Make sure to swing by the new Education Center for a quick look and perhaps a sweet treat on Nov. 20.

The Army Slogan for AEW 2019 is "Army Credentialing and Continuing Education: Today's Preparation Determines Tomorrow's Achievement" leading into the Credentialing Assistance Program available Dec. 1. Checkout the education article in the next issue of the Outpost for more details.

For more information on services contact YPG Education Office at (928) 328-3926 or lindsay.m.kelly5.ctr@mail.mil. You can also visit Building 2100, Room 8 during office hours Monday-Thursday 7 a.m. - 3 p.m. If you see the Do Not Disturb and Testing Zone signs out, please help provide our Soldiers a noise and distraction free test area.



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# TOWN HALL

FROM PAGE 1

above and beyond.”

Employees were also recognized for their time of civil service in 10, 15, 20, 30, 35 and 40 year increments and Soldiers who received promotions were congratulated.

Johnson used the town hall as an

opportunity to tell the workforce about herself and shared her philosophy which she titled “What we do here MATTERS.” Each letter in MATTERS represented a topic she feels strongly about, “If you wonder how I process the world, this is how.”

Those topics include maximizing resources, aligning priorities, recruiting and retaining top talent, training, enforcing safety, customer

service, and supporting the Warfighter.

“You guys are efficient, and

innovative, your experience and knowledge and technical expertise is second to none.”



David Dupuis, Testing Exercise Management Office, exercise coordinator and Jason Anderson, test safety specialist, were both chosen as Employees of the Quarter for the support and test sides respectively. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



During the town hall Lt. Col. Johnson presented Years of Service awards, Certificates of Achievement, Certificates of Appreciation and YTC coins to deserving members of the workforce. (Left to right) Johnson, Kimberly Butler, Casey Scharenbroich, Chris Kissinger, Annette Silva, Jeff McNierney.

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# YPG's operations usually can't be heard from Yuma

By Mark Schauer

Given that the Yuma area is home to U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), Marine Corps Air Station Yuma and the Barry M. Goldwater Bombing Range (BMGR), the potential for military-related noise in the region is high.

Usually, though, when such noise is heard in populated areas, YPG is not the source of the sound.

The immense size of YPG's range space, larger in area than the state of Rhode Island, makes the proving ground an ideal place for testing long-range artillery shells. Last fiscal year, for example, saw nearly 400,000 total rounds fired at the proving ground. YPG is the epicenter of testing related to the Army's top modernization priority: long range precision fires. The Army aspires to field systems capable of accurately firing

at targets 100 kilometers away in the next few years, and YPG testing has already achieved significantly increased distances in test fires conducted at both the proving ground and, on several occasions, the nearby BMGR.

These artillery tests can take place at all hours of the day and night depending on the needs of the item under test: the high-speed cameras testers use to capture crisp images of projectiles in flight have forward looking infrared capability, which allows images to be captured at night without artificial light.

Whatever time of day they occur, YPG's isolation and natural terrain bowl of mountains surrounding it on

three sides usually mute the sound of these test fires so far as people who live in Yuma County are concerned. Rarely, an atmospheric condition called an inversion, associated with upper level ridges, can create a 'density barrier' that reflects sound waves back to the ground and disperses them over wide areas. As such, people in locations far from the source of the sound might hear the muted crump of artillery fire during an inversion event.

YPG's vast size also includes nearly 2,000 square miles of restricted airspace, with clear, stable air and an extremely dry climate where inclement weather is a rarity. All of these factors make the post

highly coveted for aviation testing, and YPG's specialty is helping to prove the airworthiness of a given airframe once weapons systems and sensors are integrated into it. YPG's aviation personnel are testing some of the most cutting-edge platforms around—they have already hosted a demonstration related to the Future Vertical Lift, the next generation Army helicopter— but none of YPG's aviation testing ever causes a sonic boom.

"We don't allow aircraft to break the sound barrier in our air space," said Hugh Lottinger, range operations manager. "From a YPG standpoint, there is no reason at this point in time to do any type of

supersonic flight here. We aren't conducting that type of testing, so we have no reason for that to occur."

Testing is YPG's bread and butter, but the proving ground also hosts training activities for Soldiers, Marines, and even various civilian law enforcement agencies. However, these operations usually aren't responsible for noise heard by the general public, either.

"If we support demolitions or artillery training, the sound generated would be equivalent to what is produced by test operations," said Luis Arroyo, chief of the Training Exercise Management Office. "The size and scope of training operations here is miniscule compared to the test operations. It is extremely unlikely that anyone in the City of Yuma or the Foothills will hear anything related to training operations at YPG."

These and all other test and training activities at YPG are conducted in extremely remote locations that are far from any populated areas. Tests and training missions are all done in accordance with Army regulations that require surface danger zones to ensure that all possible hazards are contained within that zone.

Putting military equipment through punishing testing at YPG ensures it is safe and effective prior to the time when a Soldier or Marine's life may depend on it. So far as the general public is concerned, this fact is orders of magnitude louder than the noise of our operations.



Last fiscal year, YPG saw nearly 400,000 total rounds fired. The proving ground is the epicenter of testing related to the Army's top modernization priority: long range precision fires. The Extended Range Cannon Artillery shown in this photo is just one of the many tests conducted at YPG. (U.S. Army photo)



## TANK

FROM PAGE 1

Ground (YPG), all to ensure it functions as it should wherever in the world it could be called on to serve.

"We have multiple test courses here that simulate different types of roads we might encounter in different areas of the world," said Robert Wilson, test officer. "We test these vehicles' durability for thousands of miles across these various road surfaces."

Except for the exterior, today's SEPv3 would be almost unrecognizable to the tankers who served on its earliest incarnation. YPG testing has touched virtually every aspect of this behemoth, and in a variety of situations that simulate the less-than-ideal conditions

Soldiers might encounter in combat.

"We put it in situations where the vehicle is on a slope that would cause all the fuel to settle on one end to see if the fuel pump can still pull fuel through the system and adequately restart it after sitting awhile," said Wilson. "We run side slopes in a sinusoidal pattern and check things like the fuel pump and brakes."

The list of improvements is lengthy: improved fire control electronics mean the SEPv3's gun can shoot faster and more accurately; the engine, drivetrain, and tracks have been updated for higher performance and to support the platform's weight increase; it may even sport hubcaps and road arms

manufactured by way of 3D printing, a facet that is under test here at YPG.

"As the technology advances, the tanks have to advance as well," said Martin Velazquez, test team lead. "The SEPv3s have a lot more onboard diagnostics than earlier iterations: they have removable screens that carry the tech manuals that can accomplish a lot of diagnostics on the vehicles without taking it to the shop."

The newest Abrams is also more heavily armored than previous versions, which necessitates improvements in the power system and suspension.

"A lot of the extra weight is from the kits that get installed, such as the Abrams Armor Reactive Tiles that are installed in close-combat situations," said Velazquez.

For all its dazzling technology, however, the newest Abrams remains true to its original conception: overwhelming power and overmatch against any adversary.

"The purpose of testing is to get it ready for combat," said Wilson. Ultimately it is going to end up in the warfighter's hands and we want it to be as perfect as it can be and perform flawlessly."



These photographs demonstrate examples of slope testing, "We put it in situations where the vehicle is on a slope that would cause all the fuel to settle on one end to see if the fuel pump can still pull fuel through the system and adequately restart it after sitting awhile," said Wilson. "We run side slopes in a sinusoidal pattern and check things like the fuel pump and brakes." (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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## Halloween fun at YPG



Children from the YPG Child Development Center celebrated Halloween with a parade. The children dressed in everything from scary creatures to historical figures, walked a short distance around YPG and received candy from Soldiers and various employees who came out to greet them. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



## Dogs join the fun, too



YPG's Army Community Service (ACS) Family Advocacy Program hosted a pet costume contest to raise awareness on how pets play a role in domestic violence situations. Up to 65% of domestic violence victims delay or cannot escape their abusers because they are concerned about what will happen to their pets when they leave. Paws against Domestic Violence works to reduce this statistic. ACS partners with local animal organizations and ensure that pets have a safe place to go when a victim of domestic violence leaves home. (Photos by Casey Garcia)

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# YPG's recycling center now open

By Dusti Rinehart,  
Environmental Protection  
Specialist

Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) Recycling Center officially opened on Oct. 21; just in time for National America Recycles Day!

At this time there is not a collection route in place. Organizations are responsible for ensuring their recyclables make it the installation's recycling center. Supervisor's and facility managers are encouraged to try some of these tips to help your organization/facility get started.

- Plan to take recyclables once a week (you may find that a less frequent schedule works better for your organization/facility).

- Ask if anyone is willing to assume the responsibility of transporting recyclables to the recycling center (mission and workload permitting).

- If participation is low, make it fun. You may find a simple good-faith challenge can get personnel motivated.

- Be clear in your discussions with organization/facility personnel on participation efforts and expectations.

The Army is committed to being good stewards of the environment and upholding such a reputation within our local communities. Many of us already contribute by recycling at home and YPG is already recycling scrap metal, used fuel and oil, lead-acid batteries, and printer toner and ink. However, YPG is aiming to up its game with the implementation of its new installation recycling center.

Aside from ensuring we do our part as good stewards of the environment, recycling also

has environmental, economical, and community benefits. Recycling reduces the amount of waste sent to our landfills, conserves natural resources (i.e. timber, water, minerals), and prevents pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw material. Further, it increases economic security by tapping a domestic source of materials, supports American manufacturing, and helps create jobs in the recycling and manufacturing industries throughout the U.S.

"Recycling is a major part in the Army's holistic strategy (including Army Sustainability and Net Zero) to improve energy, water and solid waste management and increase Army resiliency. This approach is a force multiplier. It enables the Army's stewardship of available resources, manages costs and provides Soldiers, Families and Civilians with a sustainable future," states the U.S. Army Environmental Command on its official website.

## Recycling Center Hours of operation:

Monday-Thursday 6:30 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Location: Walker Cantonment Area.

At the end of Sanchez Street,  
East of Building 2660

Accepted items: Cardboard, glass,  
aluminum, plastic, wood pallets

## NATIONAL AMERICA RECYCLES DAY IS NOVEMBER 15TH



YPG's Recycling Center officially opened on Oct. 21 just in time for National America Recycles Day! The hours are Monday-Thursday from 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The facility is located in the Walker Cantonment area off Sanchez street east of Building 2660. Accepted items are cardboard, aluminum, plastic, glass and wood pallets. (Photos by Dusti Rinehart)

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