

New parachute system improves battlefield efficiency

By Mark Schauer

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) is home to all manner of parachute testing, with spacious and instrumented ranges large enough to accommodate even the world's largest cargo parachutes.

YPG has long been on the cutting edge of developmental and operational testing of new airdrop capabilities, including the recently fielded Extracted High-Low Speed Container Delivery System (EHLSCDS), currently undergoing what may be its final follow-on testing after undergoing eight years of developmental testing here.

"The system is currently being fielded with some capabilities, and we are currently expanding that envelope," said Brian Gerike, test officer.

Unlike conventional cargo parachute drop systems that use gravity to slowly drop bundles from the back of an aircraft at airspeeds of up to 150 knots, EHLSCDS uses a new G-15 cargo parachute along with an extraction parachute to also have the capability of rapidly dropping bundles at airspeeds of up to 230 knots, keeping them in a tighter pattern and greatly reducing the aircraft's exposure time over a drop zone.

"The system allows an aircraft to



The Extracted High-Low Speed Container Delivery System uses a new G-15 cargo parachute along with an extraction parachute to also have the capability of rapidly dropping bundles at airspeeds of up to 230 knots, keeping them in a tighter pattern and greatly reducing the aircraft's exposure time over a drop zone. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

drop payloads from higher speeds than we are currently able to," said Gerike. "The extraction allows the bundles to come out quicker, which means a smaller drop zone than the traditional method. All of the bundles leave the aircraft within the span of a second instead of having it drawn out over several seconds."

The benefits of such a parachute system are significant. Troops on the ground have depended on air drops as a vital means of receiving supplies, particularly in harsh terrain that lacks ground transport infrastructure or where snowy winter months make mountainous roads impassable. Earlier this decade, more

than 75 million pounds of cargo, a record amount, was parachuted to troops in Afghanistan. Improved accuracy ensures these vital supplies reach their intended recipients intact and on target. An aircraft dropping EHLSCDS bundles flies in much faster and at a lower altitude than in typical airdrops. In theater, that means fewer overhead passes for cargo planes, which makes it easier for the dropped supplies to be safely recovered before an enemy can respond.

Ensuring these vital cargo loads come in safely means new rigging procedures for bundles prior to loading, which necessitated testing of

new designs for the rigged bundles' tie-downs and the parachute's deployment bag. While the EHLSCDS means a slower and tighter-patterned drop once the materials are out of the plane, dramatically greater force is exerted on the bundles when first extracted. YPG testers are also currently re-certifying that the new system can safely drop a wide variety of ammunition that Soldiers may need airdropped to them in theater.

Once the system lands during testing at YPG, a recovery crew folds and packs the parachutes into kit bags, which are loaded with the drop items onto the backs of large trucks and transported back to the proving ground's air delivery complex for further inspection.

"After each drop we bring it back, shake it out, and inspect it thoroughly to ensure we aren't damaging anything on the parachute. If it needs maintenance we fix it up and send it out for packing again."

YPG is the Army's primary personnel and cargo parachute tester, with heavily instrumented ranges and decades of institutional knowledge in rigging and evaluating these complex airdrop systems. YPG's nearly 2000 square miles of restricted airspace and favorable weather make it an ideal location for air drop testing.

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CRTC leaders serve Thanksgiving meal



Members of the Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC) staff lined up as CRTC Commander Lt. Col. Loren Todd, Technical Director Jeff Lipscomb, and Non-commissioned Officer in Charge, 1st Sgt. Bryan Morrissey served a Thanksgiving meal. (Photos by Sebastian Saarloos)

YPG children help decorate the Command Group Christmas tree



It's starting to look a lot like Christmas in the YPG commander's office! The Command Group provided the YPG Youth Center with supplies to make ornaments and invited the children to help decorate the Command Group's Christmas tree. YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger and Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson had a great time hanging out with the children. The kids were then given snacks and taken to see the new YPG Christmas tree inside the main atrium. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

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YPG employees help a family in need

By Ana Henderson

'Tis the season for giving. While most focus on giving to people they know, members of Shearwater Support Mission (SMS), contractor employees at Yuma Proving Ground, are giving to a family none of them know but all desperately want to help.

Taylor Cornett, a service ticket clerk with SMS explains that after talking about their holiday party SMS Project Manager Jayson Lockett suggested they should give back too. Cornett happened to have a contact at Amberly's Place a non-profit organization that assists victims of abuse. After reaching out the crew was matched with a family.

The family consists of a mother and her five children ranging from ages 14 to 4 years old. The family escaped a home of domestic violence and this is their first time spending the holidays with their new family dynamic.

"She's the leader of their pack and it's a whole new journey for all of them. We don't know what she or the kids have experienced so we just want them to have a good Christmas," said Cornett.

The 73 employees hope their combined

effort will raise enough money to provide the family with a Christmas dinner, clothes, and toys for the children. They hope to purchase one requested item too. They are not only focusing on giving to the children, the Mom will receive items too, "She had a lot of courage to do what she is doing" says Cornett. Kelsey Magana, an Accounting Clerk with SMS adds, "We took great pride in not leaving the mom out because it's important that she understands how brave she is."

The family has a little home so SMS personnel thought it would be special to buy food that the Mom could cook for her family on Christmas plus extra food following the holidays.

Magana know firsthand how the generosity of others can leave a lasting impression, "I am taking this really personal. It's a personal experience for me because I lived a little bit of that life. I know how it is to be helped by others who have compassion and what an impact it made on my life" adding, "To be able turn around and do this for another family is a tremendous honor."

The group will be submitting the items to the family the week before Christmas.

Chaplain's Corner

Sometimes the unspoken sends the loudest message

By Chaplain Maj.

Ronald Beltz

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going.

After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire.

Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited. The pastor made himself comfortable but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs.

After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in

quiet fascination.

As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and "dead as a doornail."

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting.

Just before the pastor was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."

We live in a world today, which tries to say too much with too little. Consequently, few listen. Sometimes the best sermons are the ones left unspoken.

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CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING



The Holiday Blues

By Casey Garcia

It's the most wonderful time of the year or is it? Joy to the world, jingle bells, and all the other holiday music fills the air. Everyone is happy this time of year right? Wrong, for some the holidays can deepen to the holiday blues.

The holidays are supposed to be a time of happiness, good cheer, joy, fellowship with loved ones and optimistic hopes for the coming New Year. During the holiday season, we are bombarded with reminders of the holidays. The multitude of reminders can be a trigger for several unresolved issues such as past loses, unresolved grief, never ending parties, a rough financial situation, or even the contrast between the image of holiday joy and the reality of one's life.

The holiday season is also a busier and more stressful time. We have more things to do, more things to buy, there is more traffic, parking is more difficult, stores are crowded and we wait longer. The extra demands on our time, attention, energy and finances can be very stressful, and for some, the "holiday blues."

In order to change your outlook you must challenge your assumptions. Rethink how you view and approach the holidays. Also, review your beliefs about what you have to do and the consequences

of not doing what you believe you must do. Is it really necessary to buy all those people gifts? Is it really necessary to buy such expensive gifts? What if you did not go to your aunt's for dinner? What if you didn't bring the poinsettias to your grandfather's grave?

The initial reaction might be disaster or that you are letting someone down but really think about what would really happen. Your aunt might be annoyed but then again she might be feeling stressed as well. Instead of trekking to your grandfather's grave, could you honor him in a different way by lighting a candle or saying a prayer or sharing stories of him together?

The key is to be conscious about what you're doing. This holiday season, don't just do things the same way just because that's how you always do them. If the old holiday traditions are not working, if they are not making you happy and causing holiday stress, it is time to do something different.

No matter what is happening in your life, think of the blessings you do have. Taking stock of all of the positives in your life, the ones right here and now. With a little bit of planning, some thoughtful considerations the holidays can be wonderful and can go a long way toward ending your "bah humbug" mood.



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YPG Distinguished Speakers series underway




YPG Heritage Center Curator Bill Heidner kicked off the first of this season's YPG Distinguished Speakers series presentations at the Foothills and Main branches of the Yuma County Library on Nov. 21 with a presentation on 19th century Army surveyor and civil engineer William "Bold" Emory. Next up in the series is an YPG overview presentation by YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson at the Yuma County Library's Foothills Branch on Thursday, Dec. 12 at 10:30 a.m. Future presenters through Feb. 19, 2020 include YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG Technical Director Larry Bracamonte, and YPG Public Affairs Officer Mark Schauer. We hope to see you there! (Photo by Mark Schauer)

YPG welcomes visitors



The tour season at YPG has begun. Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson welcomes visitors taking part in the Behind the Big Guns tour coordinated by Visit Yuma. Visitors get to learn about the testing conducted at YPG from subject matter experts as they tour the testing sites. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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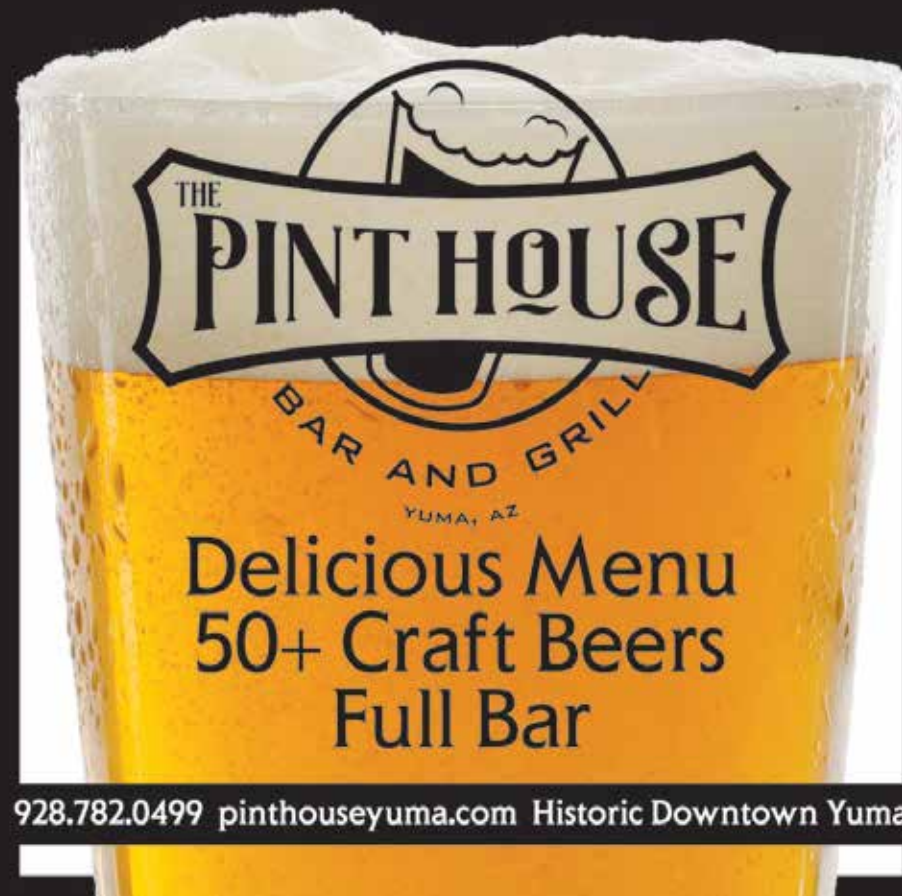
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Yuma Proving Ground's year in review



YPG hosted ATEC Commander's Conference

YPG hosted ATEC Commander's Conference. Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) had that opportunity to demonstrate its capabilities when the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command chose it as the location for the ATEC Commander's Conference.

Nearly all of ATEC's commanders, proving ground and test center commanders, sergeants major, and technical directors converged at YPG in

late July for the quarterly ATEC Commander's Conference.

Maj. Gen. Joel K. Tyler, the Commanding General of ATEC explained that holding the conference is a good way to stay in tune with the needs since ATEC is a large organization with approximately 8,000 people and 21 geographical locations. ATEC has around 2,000 efforts or projects a year which is about 700 Army programs.

"The Commander's Conference really gives us an opportunity to get together and assess where we are as the larger organization and hear from each of the subordinate organizations as to how they are doing and what they need. It also helps us come together as a single body and figure out where we need to go" explained Tyler. (Photos by Ana Henderson and Kurt Harrison)



Senior leaderships visits YPG for SPIKE Demonstration

The Future Vertical Lift Cross Functional Test, which seeks to develop the next generation of vertical takeoff and lift aircraft, occurred at YPG in late August with a demonstration of the SPIKE non-line-of-sight (NLOS) air-to-ground missile, a currently-fielded Israeli weapon with approximately four times as much range as the Hellfire or Joint Air Ground Missile currently used by American forces.

Among the bevy of officials who travelled to YPG to witness the test were the Honorable James McPherson, the senior official performing the duties of Undersecretary of the Army, and Gen. John Murray, Commanding General of Army Futures Command.

"This is important to senior leadership and we will attend these demonstrations to exhibit that importance," said McPherson. "It's important that the people put developing the next tip of the spear know that the folks in the Pentagon are truly interested, truly focused, and want to help them get their job done." (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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YTC Commander change of command

Lt. Col. Alicia Johnson assumed command of Yuma Test Center on June 20 from outgoing commander Lt. Col. Timothy Matthews in a ceremony held in front of YPG's Heritage Center Museum. Hailing from the Army Evaluation Center (AEC) at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Johnson pledged to continue the work that has made YTC the Army's premier test center. (Photos by Mark Schauer)





CDC Play Ground ribbon cutting

YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger, Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson, and Garrison Manager Gordon Rogers helped celebrate the Month of the Military Child by cutting the ribbon on an upgraded playground at YPG's Child Development Center in April. The upgraded playground sports new shade structures and play equipment, and is fully ADA compliant. Some of the improvements include, a separate infant play area and soft flooring, new shade structures, and existing shades were replaced. New sidewalks and fencing were installed on the inside perimeter, patches of grass were incorporated, and an irrigation system added. Plus, two preschool play areas which provide a better line-of-sight for staff to keep eyes on the children.



Baranca Road improvements

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 can now enjoying running along the road while staying at a safe distance from vehicles.



Library makeover

The Million Dollar Makeover at Yuma Proving Ground's Library was completed in Sept. 9, YPG leadership along with community members gathered for the ribbon cutting ceremony. Supervisory Library Technician, Malissa Donato, submitted a proposal for the grant in 2018. The library received a total of \$70,000: \$49,000 for library modernization from the Million Dollar Makeover Grant and \$41,000 from the Makerspace Grant. The upgrades included, a gaming room, a makerspace, a children's reading room and a teen room.



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Organizers improving issues from the YPG 75th anniversary for YPG 2020 event

By Ana Henderson

You live and you learn right? That is the case following the Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) 75th Anniversary celebration in 2018. It was the largest public event YPG had hosted. Afterwards the organizers saw what worked and what did not. They are using that information to improve upon for the YPG 2020 event.

"We had 12,000 people and we had one little tower and we just did not have enough bandwidth to get everyone on. Our media partners could not broadcast, our vendors couldn't use their Squares. This year our Network Enterprise Center worked with Verizon and we are going to have a minimum of four repeaters out and what they call the COW. A cell tower on wheels. That

should quadruple the bandwidth we have available," explains YPG's Family Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Director Rick Bessett.

For a first time event it is extremely difficult to predict how many people will attend which made parking an issue that caused a rippled effect. The problem started with the lack of parking which slowed down people trying to park, that in turn caused a ripple effect of traffic moving extremely slow and almost coming to a standstill on U.S. Highway 95.

"This time our Chief of Police has a parking plan that can accommodate 20,000 people. That's going to be bringing them on the Walker gate and parking them on the airfield where there is plenty of parking that can be done very rapidly."

Another unfortunate issue encountered was those waiting for the YCAT buses to arrive at the designated spots were at times left behind as the buses were full by the time they arrived to the final stop. This time around the stops will be express stops, "Instead of starting at one location and going to the next and being full by the time it got to the second or third stops. The various buses will each stop at one location, fill up the bus and come to YPG," says Bessett. YCAT is also allocating

more buses this time around to ensure everyone who wants to attend YPG 2020 makes it there.

The legendary band Grand Funk Railroad will be the headlining entertainment for the YPG 2020 event, the crowd-pleasing Manhattan Dolls are the opening act and there are a ton of performances throughout the day including a drone launch and K-9 stunt show.

The YPG 2020 celebration is taking place on the YPG installation on the Howard Cantonment. The gates open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., on Saturday, Feb. 15, and is free to attend.

There are still vendor and sponsorship opportunities available. Those interested can call 928-328-2020, the official YPG 2020 hotline. For updates the official website is www.YPG2020.com.

Again Bessett gives a huge thank you for MGM Design out of Yuma, whose team has worked closely with the YPG Marketing team to create a website and also other sponsors who have already pledged their support: The Yuma International Airport, TRAX Test Services, Shearwater Mission Support, IHG Army Hotel and Michael's Military Housing and most recently General Atomics.



The community came out by the thousands to the YPG 75th Anniversary celebration in 2018 to see firsthand what we do at YPG. Organizers of the YPG 2020 event expect to see the community once again and have worked out parking, transportation and cell phone connectivity issues. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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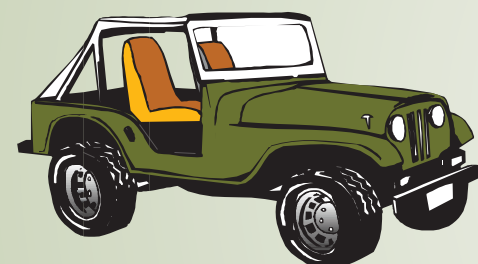
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Holidays	Kwanzaa	Winter Solstice
Hanukkah	New Years	Christmas

Cox Field undergoing reseeding

By Tyler Pitts, Engineering Technician,
Directorate of Public Works

For those of you who live or drive by Cox Field on the Howard Cantonment, you are probably aware the lawn is under maintenance. This maintenance is in support of winter activities.

Shearwater Mission Support (SMS) will be planting winter rye grass, beginning Monday, Dec. 16. Manure was donated by a generous supplier who will spread the manure over Cox Field beginning Dec. 17. The manure will be used to protect and to ensure proper grass growth. During the manure spread, the Howard Cantonment area will experience an odor.

The Directorate of Public (DPW) Works politely asks residents to reduce foot traffic on the field and keep animals from entering. DPW apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause...but lush winter grass is on the way.



Cox Field is currently being scalped and on Dec. 17 manure will be placed to help ensure proper grass growth. This will cause an odor. Residents are asked to please stay off the grass during this time. (Photo by Ana Henderson)



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