

# The Outpost

**U.S. ARMY YUMA PROVING GROUND, YUMA, ARIZONA 85365** 

**VOLUME 69 NO. 9 APRIL 27, 2020** 

## **Castle Dome Heliport improvements under way**



The Castle Dome Heliport, has served unmanned aircraft testing for more than 60 years. It has seen its share of recordbreaking achievements over the years including the record-setting endurance flights of the Zephyr unmanned aircraft took from the heliport in both 2010 and 2018. (Loaned photo)

## By Mark Schauer

Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) vast size includes nearly 2000 square miles of restricted airspace, making it as close to an ideal venue for unmanned aircraft testing as can possibly exist.

The clear, stable air and extremely dry climate where inclement weather is a rarity makes it highly coveted for this purpose.

Among the facilities used to support this testing is Castle Dome Heliport, a venerable facility that has served unmanned aircraft testing for more than 60 years. It has seen its

share of distinguished visitors and record-breaking achievements over the years: First man on the moon Neil Armstrong visited in 1971, and record-setting endurance flights of the Zephyr unmanned aircraft took wing from the heliport in both 2010 and 2018.

Over that same time period, however, the heliport deteriorated as the elements inexorably took their toll. By the time a request for sustainment dollars to pay for major restoration work inside the facility was submitted in 2013, the heliport

SEE **HELIPORT** page 5

## Forward-launched UAS technology tested at YPG

## By Kerensa Crum

Dozens of sets of eyes looked skyward at Yuma Proving Ground last month to watch the forward launch of an unmanned aircraft system from a helicopter and from a moving vehicle on the ground.

"This may seem like just another event – like 'well, we've done another experiment, we've done another demonstration' – but this is the capstone," said Col. Matthew Isaacson, Future Vertical Lift Cross Functional Team chief of operations.

The U.S. Army Combat

Capabilities Development
Command Aviation & Missile
Center Technology Development
Directorate (CCDC AvMC TDD) led
the demonstration that highlighted
the forward air launch of Area-I
Air-Launched, Tube-Integrated,
Unmanned System, or ALTIUS, 600.
The demo was the culmination of
over a year of buildup, planning and
testing and is in line with the Army's
pursuit of leap-ahead technological
advances aimed at dominating its
adversaries and reaching its multidomain operations goal.

"We've shown that we can be tactically relevant today in a way that redefines what manned and unmanned aircraft do," Isaacson posited. "So from this point on this day, launching at a tactically relevant altitude, future tactics, techniques and procedures, future enabling technologies, future payloads will

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Dozens of sets of eyes looked skyward at Yuma Proving Ground last month to watch the forward launch of an unmanned aircraft system from a helicopter and from a moving vehicle on the ground. (U.S. Army photo)



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YPG 911 operators are the community's lifeline /Page 6



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## TECHNOLOGY

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stem from this moment."

"The thing that makes it unique... first of its kind is the fact that it's done at a tactical altitude in forward flight, which means that as the airlaunched effect – that air vehicle comes out of the tube in forward flight, the rotor system is producing downwash to keep the helicopter aloft and to move it forward ... and the ALE must fly through that," explained Carvil E.T. Chalk, CCDC AvMC TDD deputy director for aviation technology.

It's even more remarkable due to all the factors that must be accounted for during programming. "When to deploy the wings, when to start the propulsion system on that air launch effect vehicle – getting all of that right, that's the tricky part," Chalk said.

With the ultimate goal of gathering intelligence in real time, ALTIUS can be manually flown with a

handheld remote or programmed by a ground control station where it can be commanded to navigate to a certain point. Designed to be recoverable, ALTIUS – an orange tubular object with wings that unfold once it self-stabilizes after being launched – can be set to land on any relatively level surface.

"These unmanned aircraft can fly low, they can fly high and they're small enough to be survivable and they are attritable enough to not need to be rescued," Isaacson said.

"To date, we've only launched from high altitudes which are not survivable in the current battle space," said Nate Bordick, AvMC TDD-Aviation intelligent teaming lead.

These launches provide tactical effects at strategic and operational distances. Isaacson said operating at high altitudes in a counterinsurgency environment can be survivable, but lower altitude is essential in the peer/near-peer environment. "The lower tier of air domain is decisive. By operating in the lower



Designed to be recoverable, ALTIUS – an orange tubular object with wings that unfold once it self-stabilizes after being launched – can be set to land on any relatively level surface. (U.S. Army photos)

tier of the air domain, with manned and unmanned aircraft and not having to climb to altitudes where survivability would be a concern, that's really what AvMC has shown here."

Reduced vulnerability, increased reach, endurance and standoff are key components of this recently developed technology. Isaacson said standoff of a weapon system or situational awareness on the battlefield is provided by the technology demonstrated at Yuma.

The ALTIUS provides the ability to locate the enemy and relay information that will ultimately be used to protect the Warfighter. "This is an ALE unmanned system with

advanced teaming capabilities that are operationally relevant in multidomain operations," Bordick said. "Over the next couple years we're going to demonstrate a lot more autonomy, a lot more collaboration from manned/unmanned systems, a teams of teams approach."

"The opportunity to continue to push the bounds of technological capabilities in support of airlaunched effects has proven to be very rewarding," said Dr. Juanita M. Christensen, AvMC executive director. "These future capabilities will enable our aviators to exhibit a warfighting edge during threat engagements while aiding the survivability of the crew."

## **THEOUTPOST**

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The ALTIUS is pictured here during a forward launch demonstration of the unmanned aircraft system from a helicopter. This launch took place at Yuma Proving Ground.

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## YPG continues supporting Army modernization, staying safe

## By Mark Schauer

As the nation moved into the sixth week of mobilization to flatten the curve of COVID-19 transmission, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) mitigation efforts had continued success keeping the workforce safe as testing began to ramp back up.

With Yuma County reporting 32 COVID-19 cases county-wide as of April 20, YPG still had no confirmed cases of the virus, which the post's leadership attributed to measures such as widespread utilization of telework where feasible, increased hygiene measures across the post, and mandating social distancing of at least six feet.

"Our practices are working," said Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG commander. "We're conducting our tests, we're remaining open for business, and we're doing it in a safe manner for all personnel."

As cases of the virus were projected to peak in Arizona in the ensuing weeks, the sixth week was one of increased vigilance. Poppenberger and other senior leaders fielded questions from the workforce in weekly command videos produced by the public affairs office, and the success of the workforce in adapting to the changing situation was reflected



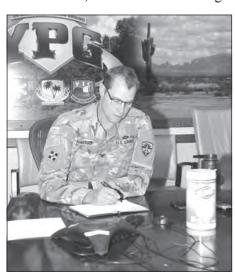
Most YPG food service facilities are still open for call in/ carry out orders. Coyote Lanes even offers free delivery on the Howard Cantonment Area with a minimum \$10 purchase. In this photo, Bobbye Williamson receives her order from the Coyote Lanes' pick-up window.

in the volume of questions received: whereas the first solicitation of questions from the workforce had garnered more than 70 responses, the next three received fewer than 10. The videos were so successful that Maj. Gen. Joel Tyler, Army Test and Evaluation Command commander, announced an intent to produce similar videos encompassing the entire command.

Members of the workforce teleworking from home as a social distancing measure also turned to The Outpost as a connection back to the post: online readership of the first two post-crisis issues of the venerable newspaper jumped 90% and 80%, respectively, over pre-crisis levels.

On post, new mitigation and hygiene measures continued. Furnished with some of the more than 3,000 face coverings rapidly produced by Soldiers from YPG's Airborne Test Force, personnel unable to maintain social distancing in the workplace wore face masks on the job. In YPG's vitally important range control room, new Plexiglas shields between work stations provided additional protection.

Meanwhile, test events on the range



YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger has maintained their lines of communication with community leaders. From the earliest days of the crisis, he had multiple teleconferences with leaders ranging from Yuma Mayor Douglas Nicholls to U.S. Senators Kyrsten Sinema and Martha McSally.



began to tick back up. The sixth week saw a test of the XM 1113 munition, part of the Extended Range Cannon Artillery project, in which testers sent live video and data feeds back to personnel on the East Coast who were prevented from participating in person as a result of Department of Defense travel restrictions. Testing of the Advanced Running Gear, a potential component of the Next-Generation Combat Vehicle, also continued. Plans for other large-scale test events later in the year continued apace with no indication of the schedule slipping.

Post commander Poppenberger also maintained their lines of communication with community leaders. From the earliest days of the crisis, he had multiple teleconferences with leaders ranging from Yuma Mayor Douglas Nicholls to U.S.



LEFT: In YPG's vitally important range control room, new Plexiglas shields between work stations provided additional protection plus personnel unable to maintain social distancing in the workplace are wearing face masks on the job. ABOVE: Test events on the range began to tick back up, one of the tests that was never halted is the Advanced Running Gear, a potential component of the Next-Generation Combat Vehicle. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

Senators Kyrsten Sinema and Martha McSally.

"I think Yuma is doing great work in mitigating the spread of COVID-19, and the Yuma leadership's decisions across the board are helping the YPG workforce stay safe. It is so good to be part of this Yuma community"

Though the question of how much longer Arizona Governor Doug Ducey's stay-at-home order would remain in effect, YPG remained postured to flex safely and effectively with whatever guidance came forth.

"I think this pandemic will most likely change the way everybody around the world does business in the future," said Poppenberger. "As we continue to get to our new normal, we'll continue to follow the policies put out by our national leaders, as well as our state and local leaders."



## YPG commissary: the heart of the community

By Mark Schauer

Like all of the proving ground, folks at YPG's commissary are practicing physical distancing. Yet customers still get friendly greetings from staff members like store manager Randy Kreiser. In turn, the customers have consistently expressed their appreciation for the staff's service throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

"Ever since this started, everybody says, 'thank you, guys, we really appreciate you being here for us," said Kreiser. "It makes my heart feel good that we are doing something good for the community, and that they appreciate it and verbalize it. That makes a big difference to all of us."

Most regular items are available in the usual quantity ordered, including meat, bread, and eggs. The exception, however, is items that have been in short supply throughout the nation due to a general shortage of the items within the supply chain: toilet paper, rubbing alcohol, bleach, hand sanitizer, and other similar cleaning agents.

Despite this, though, today's situation is markedly improved over that found during the first week of the crisis. Volunteers have helped the store's employees re-stock shelves rapidly, and patrons have cooperated with new policies like a limit of 20 customers in the store at a given time and mandatory face coverings.





Ever since everybody says, 'thank you, guys, we really appreciate you being here for us, says YPG Commissary Store Manager Randy Kreiser. (Photo by Mark

## — Chaplain's Corner — God gives us a foundation

By Chaplain Major Ronald Beltz

Many years ago, Japan asked the famous American architect Frank Lloyd Wright to design a hotel for Tokyo that would be capable of surviving an earthquake. When Wright visited Japan to inspect the site where the Imperial Hotel was to be built, he was appalled to find that the soil there was only about eight feet deep. Beneath that was 60 feet of soft mud that slipped and shook like jelly. Every test hole he dug filled up immediately with water. Now a lesser individual probably would have given up right there but not Wright.

Since the hotel was going to rest on fluid ground, Wright decided to build it like a ship. Instead of trying to keep the structure from moving during a quake, he incorporated features that would allow the hotel to ride out the shock without damage. Wright knew that the major cause of destruction after an earthquake was fire, because water lines would break and there would be no way to put out the fire. So he insisted on a large outdoor pool in the courtyard of his hotel, "just in case."

On September 1, 1923, Tokyo had the greatest earthquake in its history. There were fires all over

the city, and 140,000 people died. News reports were slow in getting to the U.S. One newspaper wanted to print the story that the Imperial Hotel had been destroyed, as rumor had it but when a reporter phoned Frank Lloyd Wright about it, he said that they could print the story if they liked, but they would only have to retract it later. He knew the hotel would not collapse. Shortly afterward, Wright got a telegram from Japan. The Imperial Hotel was completely undamaged. And when the fires that raged all around the hotel threatened to spread, bucket brigades kept the structure wetted down with water from the hotel's pool.

Frank Lloyd Wright knew about foundations. So does God. We must keep God forever fresh in our hearts especially during this scary and uncertain times. God takes away our fears; God gives us a foundation; so that no matter what life or the world throws at us we can stand strong in the face of any adversity.

Psalm 18:2 reminds us: The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

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## **HELIPORT**

FROM PAGE 1

was showing its age: The floors of the hangar bays, never reworked or reconditioned, showed the wear of decades of traffic from unmanned aircraft and other heavy equipment. The hangars' original insulation stood uncovered and degrading. Slipresistant flooring was deteriorated to the point of lacking all traction. A leaky roof over a stairwell rotted carpeting and put personnel at risk of slips. Outside, large cracks and chips in the apron's aging paving put taxing aircraft at risk of damage.

Recently, two major sustainment projects were funded and are currently underway: one for interior repairs and upgrades, and one to repave the heliport's apron.

"We are really excited to see all

this new work and needed repair finally happening," said Yvonne Kennedy, Air Combat Systems Test Directorate facilities manager.

The heliport's apron is being repaved. The hangar bay floors are being reconditioned

Castle Dome Heliport has seen its share of distinguished visitors and recordbreaking achievements over the years: First man on the moon Neil Armstrong visited in 1971. (U.S. Army photo)

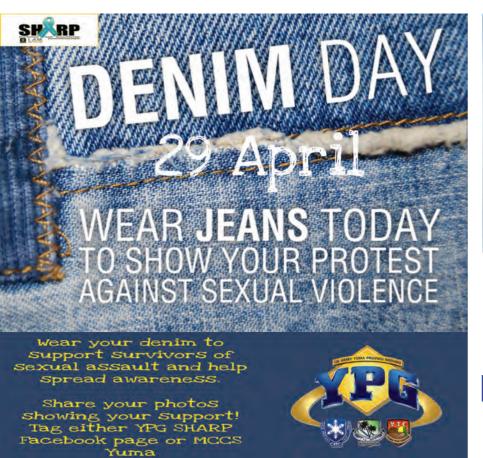


The original exposed insulation is being removed and replaced with modern vapor barrier insulation that will resist moisture and pests. (Loaned photo)

with new safety lanes striped with fresh paint. Several offices are being re-floored and re-carpeted, and stairwells are sporting new slip-resistant flooring. The original exposed insulation is being removed and replaced with modern vapor barrier insulation that will resist moisture and pests.

"The vapor wrap looks great, and just having areas that have significant degradation repaired is really nice," said Kennedy.

Both projects are scheduled to be completed by the beginning of summer.





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# YPG 911 Operators are the lifeline between you and help

### By Ana Henderson

United States Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Emergency 911
Operators answered more than 10,000 calls in 2019. When they answer those calls they don't know what situation they will be assisting with. It's that unpredictability that veteran operator Peter Efroymson thrives off, "You never know what you are going to deal with during your shift." Efroymson has been dispatching help for the YPG community for nearly 30 years.

Diane Heffernan, a fellow 911 Operator is much newer to the field with just over a year of experience, "I saw it as an opportunity to help the entire installation on a daily basis."

Efroymson and Heffernan are just two members of YPG's dedicated Emergency 911 Operator team whose service extends beyond the YPG community. "We routinely work with the Department of Public Safety, Rural Metro and the Yuma County Sheriff Office," explains Supervisory Emergency Services Operator, Michael Smith

While no two days are alike, Efroymson describes a so-called typical day, "911 Operators monitor the feeds from 50 plus cameras, and the alarms for over 100 buildings. We check with off-post agencies to determine for example how many ambulances or medical helicopters are available."

They perform all these tasks from the Enhanced 911 Center located at YPG. "We work 12-hour shifts and are surrounded by computerized control panels that require detailed dexterity," explains Smith.

When taking a call, 911 Operators need to act quickly and confidently because during an emergency every second could make the difference between life and death or the safety of first responders.

"I see 911 Operators as being the backbone of public safety. There are times we lead people through some very difficult moments. It is important to keep in mind that we are the lifeline between someone that needs help and those that will be providing it," says Heffernan.



911 operators Sasha Belenski and Warren Putt are working their 12-hour shift at YPG's Enhanced 911 Center. In 2019 operators answered more than 10,000 calls. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Those difficult moments can make this line of work emotionally draining. "Hearing some calls can bring you down, hearing 'my husband is dying' or a husband crying 'my wife is dead' to the first responders can make you emotional for them."

However, Smith says those who can handle the demands of the job can

have a gratifying career. "Working for the safety and well-being of your family, friends and neighbors makes this job a highly rewarding one."

To ensure YPG 911 Operators are equipped with the skills they need to handle the pressure of the job, Efroymson and Heffernan attended the Western Arizona Law



"It has given me a refresher on various topics from a field perceptive, also a new sense of pride in the job I do. It has allowed me to pass new information along to others," explained Efroymson. (Loaned photo)



"Even though I have been a dispatcher for a year I jumped at the chance to gain formal training," said Heffernan. (Loaned photo)

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Diane Heffernan attended the Western Arizona Law Enforcement Academy earlier this year. Supervisory Emergency Services
Operator, Michael Smith attended the graduation to support his team. (Loaned photo)

## Do Not Flush

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www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epaencourages-americans-only-flushtoilet-paper



Photo Courtesy of San Antonio Water System

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Enforcement Academy earlier this year.

The three-week academy consisted of instruction and exams. "We were trained in Incident Command, CPR, the National Crime Information Center Law Enforcement database operations, and emergency medical dispatch. We also had numerous lectures on things like 911 Operator responsibilities during active shooters, kidnaps, abuse, neglect and vehicle pursuits," explained Efroymson.

While he has a wealth of experience on the job, the opportunity to attend the academy provided benefits for Efroymson and others in the department. "It has given me a refresher on various topics from a field perceptive, also a new sense of pride in the job I do. It has allowed me to pass new information along to others and allowed the department as a whole to compare and contrast the operations of other agencies to see what we can use to improve our operations."

If YPG residents dial 911 they will reach operators at the Enhanced 911 Center at YPG.

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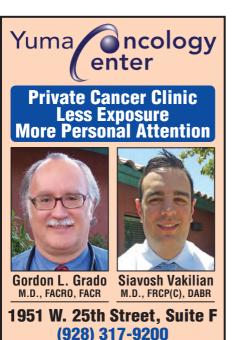


# Safety Corner: How to avoid rattle snakes and what to do if bitten

## By Ronald Van Why, Director of Safety

Rattlesnakes will make every effort to avoid contact with people. We are far more dangerous to this secretive animal than it is to us. In almost every case, we are treading on the snake's home territory when we encounter them, and in almost every case, the rattlesnake loses its life. Many bites are the result of someone trying to capture, kill, or handle the snake, and a good number of bites occur to snake keepers, both private and professional. The bite is a defensive reaction and should not be considered an act of aggression. The rattlesnake's rattle offers the snake a means of communication, designed to warn larger animals of their position.

In the United States, humans experience about 8,000 bites from venomous snakes each year. Of those, an average of 12 per year, less



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than 1%, result in death. Far more people die each year from bee stings, lightning strikes, or almost any other reason

## **Avoiding Rattlesnakes/Bites**

Rattlesnakes can be found in rock piles, woodpiles and shaded areas when the temperatures are high and sunning themselves on rocks or in the middle of a trail during cool periods. To avoid bites and spot snakes, carry a long walking/snake stick, a flash light, and wear heavy high boots. The key is situational awareness, and making sure you are heard and felt by the snakes, they have more fear of you and will flee.

Don't walk quietly or softly and never ever venture into a space you cannot visually check. Don't walk through high brush, if you can't clearly see the ground. Most people step on snakes because they are not looking where they step. The same applies for climbing around, don't stick your hands in places you can't visually check. Insects can be a greater hazard then snakes in some places, so it is also advisable to blouse your boots to keep things from crawling up your pant legs.

## What Not To Do

1. Don't make incisions over the



Rattlesnakes can be found in rock piles, woodpiles and shaded areas when the temperatures are high and sunning themselves on rocks or in the middle of a trail during cool periods. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

snakebite.

- 2. Don't constrict the flow of blood.
- 3. Don't immerse a limb in ice water.
- 3. Don't elevate the bitten area (this will increase the flow of venom to other tissues).
- 4. Don't use your mouth to extract venom. Sucking out the venom is no longer a recommended practice, and wastes valuable time (commercial venom extractors like the Sawyer snake-bite kit may be somewhat
- helpful if used properly, but should not be relied on. The important thing is to get to a hospital as quickly as possible).
- 5. Don't run or carry unnecessary items as you go for help, to avoid elevating your pulse rate.
- 6. Don't try to catch or kill the snake.
- 7. Don't administer any pain medications or antihistamines, unless instructed by a doctor or EMT.

Though uncommon, rattlesnake bites do occur. The first thing to do if bitten is to stay calm. Generally, the most serious effect of a rattlesnake bite to an adult is local tissue damage, which needs to be treated. Children, because they are smaller, are in more danger if they are bitten. Get to a doctor as soon as possible, but stay calm. Frenetic, high-speed driving places the victim at greater risk of an accident and increased heart rate. Remember, about onethird of all rattlesnake bites are "dry" bites, when no venom has been injected.



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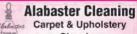
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E OUTPOST APRIL 27, 2020 **1**:

## Easter Bunny cruises around YPG bringing joy

### By Ana Henderson

The Easter Bunny would not allow a pandemic to stop Easter fun at YPG. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all of Morale, Welfare and Recreation's (MWR) activities have been cancelled including the Easter egg hunt. The night before the cancelled event an employee suggested since the kids cannot attend the hunt the Easter Bunny should go to them. There

was very little time to notify the community so MWR asked the YPG Police Department for some help. Sgt. Enriquez escorted the Easter Bunny and used sirens to alert the community to come on out as they drove through the entire housing area and travel Camp. Family Support Director Mardy Clark said, "It was a fun time. It turned out better than I thought it was going to."

## **Viewpoints:**

What do you look forward to doing once life gets back to normal after the COVID-19 social distancing order is lifted?

## Casey Scharenbroich, Test Officer

"I'm looking forward to enjoying a beverage of choice with my colleagues!"

(photo by Ana Henderson)





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

"Hugging my family and traveling! I love seeing neighborhoods come together. I'm hoping that continues with the addition of talking and getting to know one another rather than just a wave from a distance when this passes."

(Loaned photo)



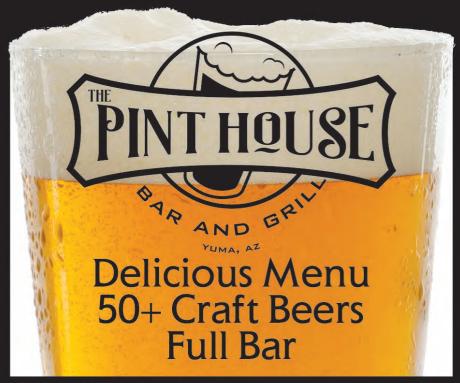
Carpi Rippi happily reaches up to grab some candy from the Easter Bunny who drove by her house after the annual Easter egg hunt was cancelled. (Photo loaned by Tiffani Rippi)



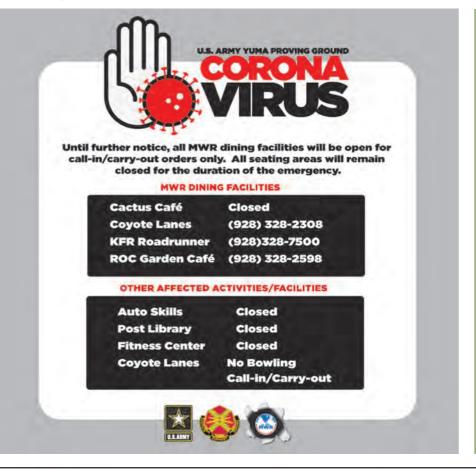
Even T-Rex (Rebekah Stewart) followed the rules of wearing a protective face cover while saying hi to the Easter Bunny. (Photo by Iselle Oquendo)



The Easter Bunny, escorted by the YPG Police Department cruised through the YPG housing area passing out candy to children while keeping at a safe distance. (Photo loaned by Calvin Chavez)



928.782.0499 pinthouseyuma.com Historic Downtown Yuma





Clinic Phone: 928-328-2666

Refill Phone: 760-380-3127

Pharmacy Hours of Operation 0800-1600 Closed for Lunch 1200-1300

301 C Street,
Bldg. 990
Howard Cantonment
Yuma Proving Ground

Please be aware that Yuma Proving Ground will be implementing medical screening at all access gates on 30 March. Please anticipate delays.

### Pharmacy Operations During COVID-19 Pandemic

Pharmacy operations are being modified to allow for social distancing and minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Starting 1 April all routine and non-formulary drug requests

Starting 1 April, all routine medication pick-ups such as refills will be done outside of the clinic in a drive-through lane.

Medication requests should be requested in advance so that they can be prepared and ready prior to pick-up.

Controlled medications and injectable medications must now be scheduled as appointments.

Transfers of multiple medications

must be dropped off in advance and will be scheduled into virtual appointments. These requests will take 3-5 business days. Recommend dropping off paper

prescriptions in advance as medications may need to be ordered. Call the clinic to request a renewal of an annual prescription. These requests will take 3-5 business days.

Drive Through Lane Ops:

Enter the drive through lane on the far side of the clinic; typically our gated fire lane. Either press the call button or call the front desk at 928-328-2666.

Please know which medications you need from the pharmacy.

A medic will come outside and verify your ID and medications you are requesting. You will remain in your car while

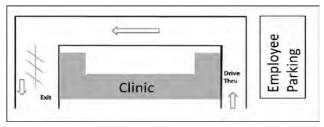
the medic takes your information inside to the pharmacy.

The medic will return to your car with

the medications in a paper bag.

Continue driving around the clinic through the fire lane and exit through

the parking lot on the other side.
If there are any questions or
delays, you may be asked to pull
around the building and park.





## **USAHC Yuma Proving Ground**

Clinic phone number: (928) 328-2666 Hours of Operation:

Mon-Fri: 0730-1630 • LABS: 0730-1430 • X-RAY/IMMS/PHARM: 0730-1630 CLOSED FOR LUNCH: 1200-1300 • Federal/Training Holidays: CLOSED

Per new Defense Health Agency guidance regarding social distancing and COVID-19, routine care such as well child and adult physicals will now be deferred to alater date. All appointments will be triaged to determine if patient needs can beaddressed virtually. Virtual appointments can be booked with the clinic directly at (928) 328-2666.



If you have any questions regarding COVID-19 please call the Army COVID-19 information hotline:

1-800-984-8523

If you have a medical emergency, dial 911

