

## The Outpost

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

**VOLUME 69 NO. 13 JUNE 22, 2020** 

## **Bradley Fighting Vehicle upgrades tested at YPG**



The Bradley Fighting Vehicle has proved itself to be lethal and survivable in multiple theaters since first fielded nearly 40 years ago. Now, thoroughly digitized and boasting technology like thermal imagers, nearly 7,000 Bradleys have been fielded since their inception. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

#### By Mark Schauer

The Bradley Fighting Vehicle has proved itself to be lethal and survivable in multiple theaters since first fielded nearly 40 years ago.

In the first Gulf War, only three of the more than 2,200 Bradley Fighting Vehicles that thundered into Iraq were lost to enemy fire.

Moreover, the Bradley, armed with a 25mm chain-driven autocannon, a 7.62 mm machine gun, and twin Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wire-guided (TOW) missiles, destroyed more armored Iraqi vehicles than did the M1 Abrams Main Battle Tank.

Thoroughly digitized and boasting technology like thermal imagers, nearly 7,000 Bradleys have been fielded since their inception. Their ubiquity has influenced other important platforms in the country's ground combat arsenal. The M109A7 Paladin self-propelled howitzer, for example, sports an engine and transmission common to that found in the Bradley, an interchangeability of components that makes the mission of field mechanics easier and suggests

SEE **BRADLEY** page 5



YPG commander Col. Ross Poppenberger will retire from the Army at the conclusion of his three year tour in Yuma on July 8. (U.S. Army Photo)

# Outgoing YPG commander reflects on three years at proving ground

#### By Mark Schauer

Tough times don't last, but tough people—and organizations—do.

Such is the outlook of outgoing Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) commander

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Army's 245th
birthday
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### **YPG celebrates Army's 245th birthday**







America's Army: When we are needed, we are there. The American Army is celebrating 245 years of service. YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger along with Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson and Chief of Staff Minerva Peters shared the honor of cutting the Army's birthday cake. The usually large celebration was a small affair due to social distancing rules. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

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## Former CRTC commander battles COVID-19

By Mark Schauer

Military policeman. Installation commander. Manufacturing company president.

COVID-19 victim.

From his earliest days as a military police officer in Panama to stints in Afghanistan and Iraq, Col. John Cavedo, who commanded U.S. Army Cold Regions Test Center from 2009 to 2012, experienced his share of physical discomfort during more than three decades in the Army.

When he retired from uniform in 2018, he took a job as president of a defense manufacturing company in Michigan with 150 employees. He had gained weight without daily PT, but otherwise he was healthy and life was good.

"I took no medications. I'm slightly overweight and middleaged: those were my only underlying conditions."

When the COVID-19 crisis hit in mid-March, he instituted telework at his company for those whose job functions permitted it to help flatten the curve of new infection in the community and keep his workforce healthy. Of the four subordinates he worked in closest physical proximity to, only one had a slight cough that last day in the office.

"Her co-workers were making fun of her like, 'that's a COVID cough!" he recalled. "Well, it turns out it probably was."

Much later all four of the employees took antibody tests that indicated they had been exposed to the virus that has upended the world in 2020, even though none ever displayed the more distressing and frightening effects that COVID can bring: pneumonia, blood clots, respiratory failure. Cavedo, on the other hand, was about to face a rougher fight.

It took nearly two weeks before he showed any symptoms. During this incubation period, life went on in



"I thought maybe it was allergies, maybe it was a slight cold. I'm the president of my company-- I didn't want my team to think I was missing in action. Leaders sometimes push themselves too far to not abandon their team." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

the new normal. Mindful of the 65 employees whose job on the factory floor didn't allow for telework, he continued going to the office every day, but otherwise stayed at home except for two trips to the grocery store. He wore a face mask and practiced social distancing at all times. As March became April he made good on a promise to fight the weight gain he had experienced after retiring from the Army.

"The first week of April I started a new workout regimen. That weekend I thought, 'I really pushed myself this week'—my body was sore, my back hurt, my triceps were sore."

The aches intensified at work that Monday. Fatigue began to set in.

"When I came home from work, I was absolutely exhausted."

It was unlike him, but he went to bed at 6:00 that evening. More than 11 hours later, his body still ached and he had a slight fever. He staved home from work the next two days. When he woke up Thursday morning, the nagging body aches

persisted, but his temperature was normal. He brushed off his wife Stephanie's skepticism and went to the office.

"I thought maybe it was allergies, maybe it was a slight cold. I'm the president of my company-- I didn't want my team to think I was missing in action. Leaders sometimes push themselves too far to not abandon their team."

He socially-distanced from the employees and wore a mask as he walked around the shop floor,

but retreated to his office as his body aches and fatigue intensified. When he began to have a slight, but persistent dry cough he went to the county health department to be swabbed for COVID-19.

"That evening I felt really bad. The next morning I was coughing constantly."

The body aches got even worse and the fever returned, then broke over the weekend. But the coughing intensified and his breathing became labored. On Sunday evening, he got the call from the health department: he was COVID positive.

"I asked them if hospitalization was going to be necessary. They said it wouldn't unless I got significantly worse."

He did. The next morning he was stricken in his home office as he tried to coordinate things at work. He tried to walk upstairs to bed, but was floored before he could make it.

"I had a scary feeling like someone was sitting on my chest and holding a bag over my head," he recalled.

His wife rushed him to the emergency room. Worried that he had suffered a heart attack, the staff monitored him until night had fallen. His blood oxygen levels were abnormal, but not low enough to justify being administered oxygen. When he seemed to stabilize, he was discharged.

SEE **BATTLES** page 4



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## **BATTLES**

FROM PAGE 3

"They had a good many COVID patients that were in much worse condition than I was and said that unless something else happened they wanted to send me home."

Over the next few days he seemed to improve. He was able to work from home a few hours per day and felt optimistic that he had turned the corner. By Friday night, though, the intense coughing returned with a vengeance. In the wee hours of Saturday morning he was feeling intense pain in his back, under his scapula, and around his right rib cage. He thought he had pulled a rib from coughing. When his breathing became labored as it had on Monday, his wife took him back to the ER. where a CT scan showed he had a pulmonary embolism and pulmonary infarction of his right lung.

"I was very lucky that my complications weren't worse. If I

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From his earliest days as a military police officer in Panama to stints in Afghanistan and Iraq, Col. John Cavedo, who commanded U.S. Army Cold Regions Test Center from 2009 to 2012, experienced his share of physical discomfort during more than three decades in the Army...little did he know he was about to face a scarring illness. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

had never gone in and just pushed through the pain, another clot could have killed me."

Blood thinners eventually treated the clots, though not without days and days of purple-hued legs. By

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the following Tuesday he began to feel progressively better. His wife had felt ill, but tested negative for COVID, and their daughters remained healthy. After two weeks, he returned to work as normal, though his right lung is scarred from the infarction.

Cavedo hopes that his story will encourage others to closely monitor their own health during the pandemic.

"Don't ignore symptoms for days like I did. Body aches, low-grade fever, and fatigue are tell-tale signs, and I ignored them."

More importantly, though, Cavedo

hopes that people will wear a face covering whenever social distancing isn't possible for the duration of the pandemic.

"You wouldn't want to be one of those people who gave it to your friend or co-worker who turns out to be the one who dies from it. If keeping your distance and wearing an annoying mask in a hot environment can save your co-worker's life or keep the mission from failing, it is a small price to pay. I look at a face mask as part of PPE—it's no different from wearing steel-toed shoes or safety glasses on a shop floor."

## YPG Firefighter walks out of the hospital after surviving near-fatal accident

#### By Ana Henderson

Twenty-eight days after being involved in a head-one collision while commuting to work, YPG Firefighter Andrew Swick walked out of the hospital Sunday June 14.

He had been hospitalized since May 17 when he was in a head-on collision with a wrong-way driver. Swick was flown to a trauma center in Phoenix where he was treated for injuries to his abdomen, arms, and hands, as well as facial fractures among other injuries.

Early on in his ordeal he was in a medically- induced coma. Due to COVID restrictions his wife and family were not allowed to be by this side until the last week of his stay. His wife Stefany Swick was allowed to Facetime him and kept his loved ones updated via Facebook by posting videos where she detailed Swick's progress.

During those long weeks Swick worked hard in occupational, speech and physical therapy.

Now, he is happily at home with his family and tells the YPG community, "I'll be back soon!"





weeks in the hospital Stefany Swick was finally allowed to visit her husband in person. LEFT: The life of YPG fire fighter Andrew Swick was turned upside down while driving to Yuma for his shift on May 17 when he was in a head-on collision with a wrong way driver. On June 14, 28 days after the accident Swick walked out of the hospital and is at home with his family (Loaned photos)



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## **BRADLEY**

FROM PAGE 1

the Bradley will remain ready for battle for a long time to come.

In ensuing years, the threat faced by American Soldiers has mutated, but the Bradley has remained viable and relevant thanks to Army modernization efforts and extensive testing of all upgrades at YPG. At present, there are currently tests in progress on both the A3 and A4 variants of the vehicle.

"At the operator level they are very similar," said Ryan Waters, test officer. "The biggest difference is the transmission efficiency upgrade that gives the vehicle more power. They have various other small differences like a driver vision enhancer that gives the driver better visibility when operating in dark environments or with the hatch closed."

YPG has the range space to conduct live fire tests of the vehicle from both stationary and moving positions, as well as mobility tests across hundreds of miles of road courses. An M2A4 Infantry Fighting Vehicle

and M7A4 Fire Support Vehicle are among the variants currently undergoing performance, reliability, and maintainability testing.

"Each one is running 3,000 miles and in the beginning, middle, and end of that we are going to be doing a full gamut of automotive performance testing to see if there is any degradation to automotive performance as a result of running those miles," said Waters.

Test officers add a significant amount of weight to the vehicle, and distribute in a realistic way.

"We try to mimic what is going to be experienced by Soldiers in the field as much as possible," said Waters.

During testing, simulated missions take the Bradley across road courses featuring various terrain conditions, from paved to gravel to punishing desert washboard that would severely rattle less robust vehicles. As they traverse these roads, test vehicle operators continually verify performance of all the platform's sophisticated electronics.

"We're looking at it from a system level," said Waters. "When we're running a mission, we're testing



The Bradley has remained viable and relevant thanks to Army modernization efforts and extensive testing of all upgrades at YPG. At present, there are currently tests in progress on both the A3 and A4 variants of the vehicle. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

out the targeting system, boresight retention, the drivetrain, the communications system—pretty much everything in the vehicle."

YPG testers are also wrapping up a software upgrade test on the A3 Bradley that incorporates even more functionality into the platform. The purpose of the tests is to verify the system integration of software/hardware changes in ensuring functionality and performance

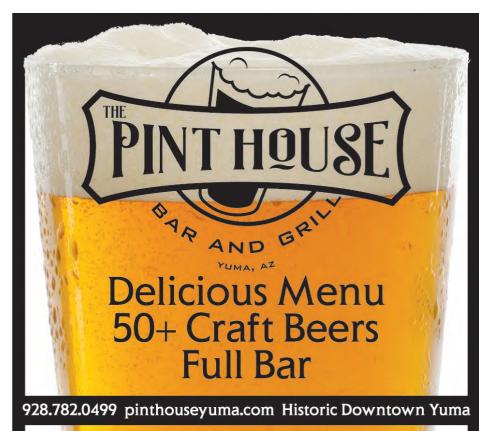
without negatively impacting safe vehicle operation.

"We have been testing software updates for several years now," said Julio Zambrano, test officer. "Since the Army still has a lot of A3s up and around, they still need to keep the vehicle operational."

As a one-stop shop for sophisticated testing, YPG is poised to continue supporting Bradley testing for many years to come.



YPG has the range space to conduct live fire tests of the vehicle from both stationary and moving positions, as well as mobility tests across hundreds of miles of road courses.



## REFLECTS

FROM PAGE 1

Col. Ross Poppenberger, who will retire from the Army at the conclusion of his three year tour here on July 8.

As incoming commander Col. Patrick McFall takes the reins, Poppenberger is bullish on YPG's long-term prospects, despite national and international crises like civic unrest and COVID-19.

"I think there is no other test center positioned better for the future than YPG. The competence and technical expertise here is second to none. This place is different than any other government organization I've ever been in."

Thus far in the COVID-19 crisis that began in March, YPG's workload never declined as precipitously as the post's senior leaders had initially feared. By the third week in June, the number of unique projects in progress had recovered to nearly the level seen at the same time the previous year. Poppenberger credits the flexibility and creativity of the workforce and YPG's long-standing reputation for

excellence within the military test and evaluation community.

"A lot of the initiatives we went after and accomplished were things I had set out to do. As with anything in life, I don't think you can make something happen by chugging along without a plan."

Most significantly during his time in command, the proving ground was quick to distinguish itself with the Army Futures Command (AFC) shortly after it was stood up in 2018. To help create the force of the future, AFC divided the Army's top modernization into eight different cross-functional teams (CFTs). The highest profile test project in support of the CFTs relates to the Army's top modernization priority: long range precision fires (LRPF), which is right in YPG's traditional wheelhouse. The Army aspires to field artillery systems capable of accurately striking targets more than twice as far away as currentlyfielded 155mm howitzer shells are capable of.

YPG testing has already achieved significantly increased distances in test fires conducted at both the proving ground and the nearby Barry M. Goldwater Range, a



During Poppenberger's tenure Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark Esper visited YPG where he paid particular attention to testing related to the Extended Range Cannon Artillery program, the Army's top modernization priority.

larger facility south of the proving ground that is shared by the Marine Corps and Air Force and primarily used for operational training with high-performance aircraft. As such, Poppenberger's strong relationships with his counterparts at both MCAS-Yuma and Luke Air Force Base were vital to conducting this testing successfully.

"Having good relationships is important," said Poppenberger.

"You don't get things done without partnership, especially these days."

LRPF received the lion's share of attention, but YPG testing is actively supporting six of AFC's eight CFTs. Later this year, the proving ground will serve as showcase for something called Project Convergence, a daylong demonstration of equipment



Poppenberger's strong relationships with his counterparts at both MCAS-Yuma and Luke Air Force Base were vital to conducting this testing successfully. Poppenberger is pictured here with MCAS-Yuma Commander Col. David Suggs.



"They aren't bringing us in to be the smartest test officer in the world—they already have that here." Remarked Poppenberger, "They need us to ensure we have the proper resources coming in, and the only way to do that is to get out and interface with key leaders and program partners." Poppenberger had regular meetings with area leaders, here he is meeting with Arizona Governor Doug Ducey (center), MCAS-Yuma Commander Col. David Suggs and Yuma 50 member and President of the Great Yuma Economic Development Corporation, Julie Engel.

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Throughout his command, Poppenberger received accolades for his support of public outreach efforts, one of which was regular interviews with local media outlets such as KAWC's NPR station in Yuma. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

from at least five of the CFTs working in tandem that is expected to draw a large audience of Army senior leaders, Congressional representatives, and national media outlets.

"Project Convergence is the number one demonstration in the Army for this year," said Poppenberger. "They didn't choose YPG by accident—they chose it because they believed in the leadership and the workforce's ability to make things happen. The fact that they wanted to bring this demonstration here is telling of what senior leaders in the Army think of YPG and the confidence they have in us."

Throughout his command, Poppenberger received accolades for his support of public outreach efforts, which included such unprecedented events as the YPG 75th Anniversary and YPG 2020 open houses, the latter of which drew 22,000 people onto the installation. He credits outreach efforts with results like the state's allocation of \$28 million to begin a long-needed expansion of Highway 95, YPG's major traffic artery, to four lanes.

"That's what I've done in prior

commands, too. It worked for the organization and for me personally, and I wanted to apply the same practices to this organization."

Poppenberger intends to stay in the Yuma area in his retirement. When asked what advice he would give his successor McFall, he offered this:

"They aren't bringing us in to be the smartest test officer in the world—they already have that here. They need us to ensure we have the proper resources coming in, and the only way to do that is to get out and interface with key leaders and program partners."



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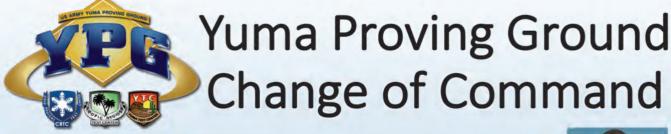
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Col. Patrick McFall
assumes command
of Yuma Proving Ground



## Weathering the COVID storm

#### By Mark Schauer, YPG Public Affairs Officer

As Yuma County experiences its peak of new COVID-19 infection rates, utilizing at all times the same Centers for Disease Control (CDC)-recommended guidelines used while at work is more important than ever.

Despite the immense social and economic upheaval the novel coronavirus has caused across the globe—and the nearly 120,000 lost souls in the United States thus far-- the opinion that COVID-19 is equivalent to seasonal influenza and other familiar viruses persists among some.

"The very best data that we have tells us that COVID is ten times deadlier than the seasonal flu," said Maj. Jennifer Fiandt, YPG Health Clinic Officer in Charge. "Some people think that it is a disease that only affects the very old: that is not accurate. The majority of COVID cases and hospitalizations in Yuma County have been among young and healthy adults."

According to the Yuma County Health Department, as of June 15 fully 46% of local COVID cases were among the 20-44 age group. Those over the age of 65

constituted only 12% of the 3,404 local confirmed cases.

As the pandemic's impact intensifies across the nation, we have reached a point where many of us who have been spared infection nonetheless know people who have not been so fortunate. Though mild cases can come and go without the individual knowing they were sick, so-called moderate cases can include side-effects such as blood clotting that can quickly and unexpectedly escalate into possibly deadly side effects such as embolisms and strokes. The agonizing and ultimately deadly respiratory distress that afflicts those with the most severe cases of the virus has been extensively portrayed in the media.

"We can't currently predict who is most at risk for these complications: there is simply too much that we do not know about this virus yet, as it has only been known to science for six months," said Fiandt.

There is no vaccine available for the novel coronavirus. Though a variety of government and private entities—including the U.S. Army—have stated their intention of having an effective vaccine available at scale by

the end of this year, the fastest vaccine developed in human history to date took four years to go from collecting viral samples to licensing. That vaccine—for mumps—was developed in the 1960s. Though medical technology has advanced significantly since then, it is still sensible to plan to utilize current CDC-recommended anti-COVID mitigation measures for the long term: namely, wearing face coverings in public, increased hygiene and sanitation efforts, and attempting to maintain six feet of social separation to the maximum extent possible in public places, particularly indoor ones.

"COVID-19 is a frightening virus, but it isn't a superbug," said Fiandt. "Simple measures such as hand hygiene and the use of face masks can significantly reduce the rate of transmission."

Face coverings reduce transmission 85%, and including eye protection adds even more, she noted. Though face coverings likely do not protect the wearer from airborne virus particles, they do dramatically reduce the number of particles an infected individual will expel into the air from a cough or sneeze. Even with a face mask, maintaining six feet of social distance is still important.

"While we protect ourselves, we have to think about how we protect others in the community, to include our neighbors, co-workers, and friends," said Fiandt. "We're in this for the long haul, whether we want to be or not."

Links to the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 from reliable sources such as the Centers for Disease Control can be found at www.yuma.army.mil/corona

## There are many ways your life can have an impact

#### By Chaplain Maj. Ronald Beltz

Remember the Oklahoma City bombing?

Rebecca Needham Anderson, a nurse, heard the first 911 call and headed immediately to the devastated federal building to aid the injured. Her husband, Fred, drove Rebecca to the scene of the disaster that morning on April 19, 1995. Shortly after arriving, Nurse Anderson was struck on the head by concrete from the collapsing federal building. She died five days later. Her heart, kidneys, eyes and liver went to recipients. "She gave her life doing what she wanted to do," said Fred Anderson.

What can we say in response to such dedication to duty?

We must always remember the courage and the sacrifices made by ordinary people. Of course, you don't have to give your life in order to make your life count. Being a great parent, making a difference in the community, serving your church--there are many ways your life can have an impact.

The Bible reminds us in Matthew 25:40: Truly I tell you whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. Be well and be blessed.

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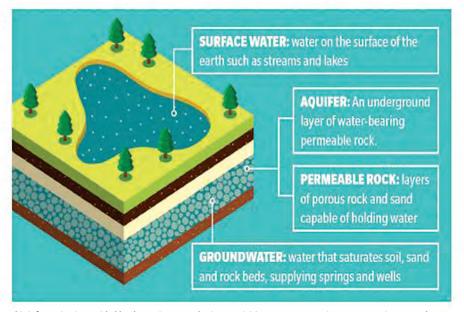
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THE OUTPOST JUNE 22, 2020 **11** 

### The Source of Your Drinking Water

Our water supply for HCA is derived from groundwater pumped from the Coarse Gravel Aquifer, which lies in the ancient streambed of the Colorado River. The water is pumped from two wells that range in depth from 140 feet to 145 feet. Although the minimum depth to groundwater is

approximately 27 feet, our tap water is drawn from between 105 feet to 130 feet below the ground surface. The pumped water is then treated through an electrodialysis reversal (EDR) unit to provide quality drinking water. Additionally, our water is chlorinated (treatment technique) to help prevent the growth of disease causing organisms, such as viruses and bacteria.

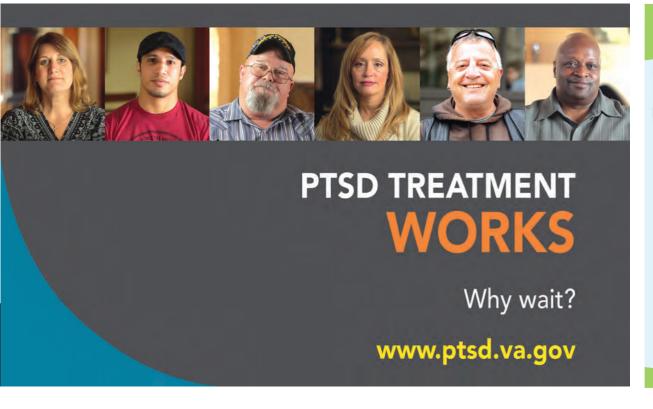


This information is provided by the Environmental Sciences Division, U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground. For questions or information about drinking water contact Abraham Cortes, Safe Drinking Water Program Manager at (928) 328-2977.

#### Protecting Your Water

Protecting the sources of drinking water helps protect our health. It's everyone's responsibility; here are a few ways you can help:

- Eliminate excess use of lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides—they contain hazardous chemicals that can reach your drinking water source
- Pick up after your pets
- Dispose of chemicals properly; take used motor oil to a recycling center





1025 W. 24th St. Ste 1 (928) 344-1968 www.ZoundsHearing.com



#### YPG Health Clinic Pharmacy Changes

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.

Employee Parking



## **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

