

The Outpost

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

VOLUME 69 NO. 19 SEPTEMBER 28, 2020

Next Generation Combat Vehicle Cross-Functional Team converges efforts during Project Convergence 20

By Spc. Carlos Cuebas Fantauzzi

United States Army Futures Command converged next generation capabilities as a campaign of learning during Project Convergence 20 (PC20) at Yuma Proving Ground, Aug. 11 – Sept. 23. PC20 is a demonstration of the five phases of convergence, Compete, Penetrate, Dis-integrate, Exploit and

Recompete.

The Next Generation Combat Vehicle (NGCV) Cross-Functional Team is at the forefront of the Exploit phase of convergence, providing systems that can map out hostile terrain and artificial intelligence that can autonomously engage a target. NGCV systems

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The autonomous system, Origin, prepares for a practice run during the Project Convergence 20 capstone event at Yuma Proving Ground. Project Convergence 20 is the Army's campaign of learning to aggressively advance solutions in the areas of people, weapons systems, command and control, information, and terrain; and integrate the Army's contributions to Joint All Domain Operations. (Photo by Spc. Carlos Cuebas Fantauzzi)



An Air Launched Effects system is launched from a UH-60L Black Hawk as part of capabilities testing during Project Convergence at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground. The autonomous weapons system was designed to launch from in-flight aircraft at high tactical altitudes. Project Convergence's capstone event was the Army's largest capabilities demonstration of the year. (Photo by Spc. Javion Sidors)

Project Convergence: A glimpse of the Army's future force at YPG

By Mark Schauer

The calendar said 2020, but the Army's most senior leaders saw the year 2035 at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) during the first of two capstone capabilities demonstration of Project Convergence (PC) on Sept. 21.

Due to the overwhelming demand to witness the capabilities of equipment used in PC, the post hosted two demonstrations during the week attended by many of the most senior officials in the Army.

PC, designed to aggressively advance and integrate the Army's contributions to the Joint Force, is ensuring the Army can rapidly and continuously converge effects across all domains—air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace—to overmatch near-peer adversaries in competition and conflict.

“At its core, Project Convergence is a campaign of learning,” said Lt. Gen. James M. Richardson, U.S. Army Futures Command Deputy

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YPG Childcare centers welcome back all families

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YPG's open air museum is a must see

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Autonomous weaponry tested at YPG during Project Convergence 20

By Pvt. Osvaldo Fuentes

As the Army works to modernize warfare during Project Convergence 20 (PC20), a campaign of learning happening at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), a dedicated group of scientists and engineers are on the ground experimenting with equipment and testing ways to make modern systems and artificial intelligence work for the Warfighter.

PC20 is an Army Futures Command-led effort that will ensure the Army, as part of the joint force, can rapidly and continuously converge effects across all domains – air, land, maritime, space and cyberspace. To do that, scientists and engineers with Combat Capabilities Development Command's (CCDC) Army Research Lab are at YPG studying sensors, artificial intelligence (AI) systems, data collection, and state-of-the-art weaponry.

Dr. Patrick Baker, Director of the CCDC's Army Research Lab, said the early experimentation being done with autonomous technologies at Yuma will eventually lead to capabilities that Soldiers can use to dominate the battlefield.

"Autonomous technologies provide transformational capabilities on the battlefield that will only advance," Baker said. "It will become more capable over time."

As part of the Army Modernization Strategy, the Army is focused on becoming Multi-Domain Operations-capable by 2035. These AI systems being tested by scientists and engineers at YPG eventually will be integrated with frontline Soldiers to provide precise tactical advantages.

"The technology has been made very applicable to Soldiers in all aspects," said Kayla Riegner, the lead for the line of effort dedicated



A U.S. Army autonomous weapons system known as "Origin", maneuvers through desert terrain as weapons testing commences during Project Convergence 20 at YPG. With new data collection capabilities, the "Origin" provides Soldiers on the frontlines with precise terrain descriptions prior to engaging enemy forces.

to producing unmanned Next Generation Combat Vehicles. "The collaboration will continue to push the technology further."

Exercises like PC20 continue to prove the significance of interconnecting military resources and rapid modern technology growth to provide precise attacks on enemy forces while producing less

casualty rates on the battlefield. The effectiveness of the teams working in cohesion during PC20 has shined a brighter outlook for any future combat-related conflicts.

"It really comes down to the people on our teams," Baker said. "All together, they have done such a tremendous job at supporting PC20 and the Army mission."

THE OUTPOST

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During Project Convergence 20, a dedicated group of scientists and engineers are on the ground experimenting with equipment and testing ways to make modern systems and artificial intelligence work for the Warfighter. (Photos by Pvt. Osvaldo Fuentes, 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

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Domestic Violence Awareness Month: engaging as a bystander

**By Lori Bell, YPG Family
Advocacy Program**

As we find ourselves at the end of Suicide Prevention Month another prevention month door opens in October to welcome Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). For Suicide Prevention Month we have focused our intentions on being present for one another with the theme of: "Connect to Protect: Make it Your Mission to be There" and we continue in that spirit as we enter into DVAM.

People who experience family violence often feel embarrassed, ashamed, or lacking support; they feel alone. COVID-19 has presented social challenges that are pre-existing in the life of a survivor of domestic violence. Social distancing has been necessary for the benefit of public health; however, can be detrimental to someone who is experiencing domestic violence. Isolating is the first step an abuser takes to gain control in a relationship. Often beginning subtly, isolation is a manipulative strategy used by an abuser to try to make a member of their household feel like they are greatly loved. The result is the survivor of domestic violence having little to no social or familial support network. This is where even more harmful and dangerous behaviors escalate bringing a survivor to a place where they feel like they have no one to

talk to.

Make it your mission to be there: to connect and protect. Engaging as a bystander is a recommended way we can fight the global pandemic of domestic violence. There are steps we can take to reach out to our peers, neighbors, coworkers, family members, and friends in a caring, supportive, and nonjudgmental way to let them know that they are not alone and there is help. If you notice that someone is not engaging in activities

and relationships the way they once used to, seem fearful of an intimate partner or member of domestic household, has unexplained injuries, or if someone's partner is frequently possessive or jealous here are some ways you can connect to protect:

Maintain a judgement free posture. Survivors of domestic violence, like anyone else, has their reasons for decisions that they make whether it be to seek help for their abuse, not seek help for their abuse, leave a situation, or stay in a situation. Life is complicated. When someone feels judged they are less likely to seek or utilize support. Let a survivor know that you are here for them.

Ask a survivor of domestic violence how they would prefer to connect. Find a safe communication channel that doesn't put a survivor in more danger.

Be creative with how you stay in touch. Pose an invitation for a Zoom playdate or play an online

game. Go for a socially distanced walk. Try to keep most of your communication with a survivor of domestic violence out of the data stream and consider that an abuser can utilize digital abuse to further isolate a survivor. Create a code word or phrase with them.

Know what resources are available and share them with a survivor of domestic violence. Remind the survivor that they are not alone and that there is help available.

Throughout the month of October your Family Advocacy Program will be providing ways to safely

deliver more information about domestic violence topics and how to connect to protect our YPG family and community. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence and need immediate victim advocacy assistance, please call your YPG domestic violence hotline at 928-287-3361. Your YPG Family Advocacy Program has many other resources available to promote healthy relationships, healthy families, and resiliency and can be contacted at 928-328-3224 or visited at Bldg 309 on the Howard Cantonment.

Chaplain's Corner

Finding a new direction

By Chaplain Maj. Ronald Beltz

A pastor in San Diego was called into the sanctuary early one morning. The custodian wanted him to see a strange offering that had been left on the altar. Hanging on the altar were a pair of brown corduroy pants, a belt, a white T-shirt, a pair of tan suede boots, and a note. He noticed blood stains on both the shirt and on the note. The note consisted of only three words, "Please listen God." It was signed and included a phone number.

The pastor dialed the number. A 19-year-old man answered and told his story. He had run away from home and had been wandering in a wasteland of drugs, drifting from one place to another, getting into all kinds of trouble and involved in all kinds of sordid behavior. The night before he had hit bottom. There had been a fight and an almost fatal beating. After making sure

the victim of his assault would be all right in the emergency room of a nearby hospital, this young man came to the church, found an unlocked door, and went into the sanctuary. He stayed there all night, crying, and praying. He asked God to forgive him and show him the way to go. All at once the presence of God became real to him. He knew God was there. He felt God's forgiveness. A wonderful peace came over him. He was determined to make right the things he had messed up.

The young man felt fresh and clean, like a new person. To symbolize his new life and new commitment, he had put on some new clothes he had with him and had left his old clothes on the altar as a kind of offering, giving God his old life. He walked out the door a new person filled with a new hope, a new life, a new direction.

YPG Department reminds residents: "Serve up fire safety in the kitchen!"

Submitted by Deputy Fire Chief
Jack Bailey

The Yumpa Proving Ground (YPG) Fire Department is teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) — the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for more than 90 years — to promote this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, "Serve up fire safety in the kitchen!" The campaign works to educate everyone about simple



but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe. This year's Fire Prevention Week is October 4-10.

According to NFPA, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in the U.S. Almost half

(44%) of reported home fires started in the kitchen. Two-thirds (66%) of home cooking fires start with the ignition of food or other cooking materials.

"We know cooking fires can be prevented," said Lorraine Carli,

NFPA's vice-president of outreach and advocacy. "Staying in the kitchen, using a timer, and avoiding distractions such as electronics or TV are steps everyone can take to keep families safe in their homes."

The YPG Fire Department encourages all residents to embrace the 2020 Fire Prevention Week theme. "The most important step you should take before making a meal is to "Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen!" said Fire Inspector Craig Martin. "A cooking fire can grow quickly. I have seen many homes damaged and people injured by fires that could easily have been prevented."

YPG Fire Chief Gerald Ball wants to share safety tips to keep you from having a cooking fire.

Never leave cooking food unattended. Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling or broiling. If you have to leave, even for a short time, turn off the stove.

If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.

You have to be alert when cooking. You won't be alert if you are sleepy, have taken medicine or drugs, or consumed alcohol that makes you drowsy.

Always keep an oven mitt and pan lid nearby when you're cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan to smother the flame. Turn off the burner, and leave the pan covered until it is completely cool.

Have a "kid-free zone" of at least three feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

To find out more about Fire Prevention Week programs and activities on YPG, please contact the YPG Fire Prevention Section at (928) 328-2672 or 2699. For more general information about Fire Prevention Week and cooking fire prevention, visit www.fpw.org.

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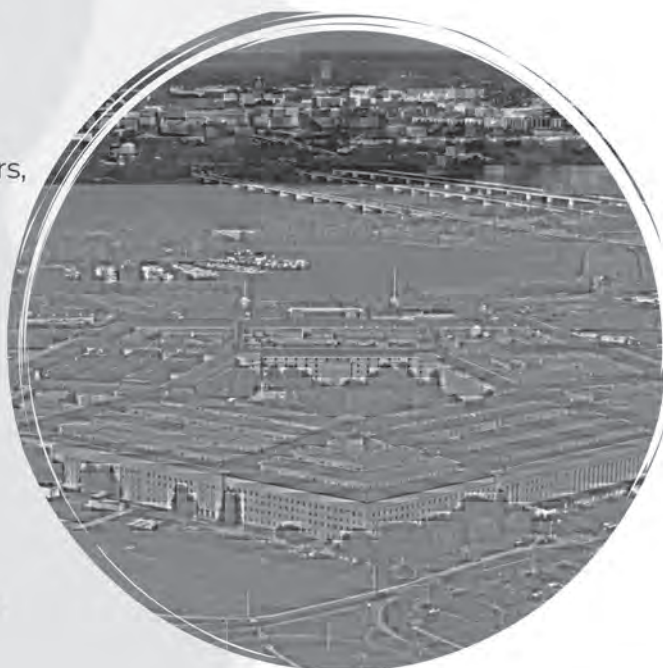
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Employee Spotlight



By Ana Henderson

Meet Shannon Schmidgall. She is the Administrative Assistant for Parent Central Services (PCS) at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). Schmidgall who has been part of the YPG family for more than 10 years is one of the two team members who works at PCS and provides Military, civilian and contractor families with the paperwork needed to utilize childcare at YPG.

Schmidgall and Child and Youth Services Liaison, Education and Outreach Services Director Paula Alarcon guide parents who are looking to enroll their children in the Child Development Center, Youth Services or sports. They can also help with the transition to grade school.

PCS is located in Bldg. 1105 next door the Child Development Center. To contact PCS call 928-328-3119/3339. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Soldier Spotlight

Staff Sergeant (Staff Sgt.) Melvin Bullard is the Pack Operations non-commissioned officer in charge and a test parachutist for the Airborne Test Force at Yuma Proving Ground. Bullard is originally from Marion, South Carolina and enlisted in the Army in 2013. His hobbies include watching movies, exercising, and attending sporting events. He is married to his wife of seven years and they have three sons.



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CONVERGENCE

FROM PAGE 1

receive input from numerous sensors, improving battlefield situational awareness and shortening the decision-making timeline.

These processes will allow our Soldiers to see further, deeper, and make real-time decisions that can weigh-in on the overarching result of the battle.

"As we move forward, the ground fight is going to be changing significantly," Spangler says.

These changes come in the form of autonomous systems with the ability to map, in real-time, the terrain a Soldier will be facing as well as target recognition of the hazards ahead.

"Trying to understand how we bring autonomy into the fight is going to be very key information in how we move forward in the fight."

Spangler says.

AUTONOMY

Future fights, as described in the National Defense Strategy, will be characterized by greater speed, growing autonomy, and increasingly dispersed footprints in difficult-to-maneuver environments. Whoever can see, understand and act first, will win.

"We are pushing the envelope in terms of artificial intelligence," Lt. Col. Christopher Lowrance, Artificial Intelligence Task Force autonomous systems lead says.

The goal of Artificial Intelligence Task Force in PC20 is to demonstrate a collaborative team of air and land systems with the ability to communicate amongst each other, then convey the information back to the Soldier in an effort to mitigate the risk.

"These systems are able to operate in the forward line to exploit and



Luke Travisano, engineer with Robotic Research LLC, conducts a test run of the autonomous system Pegasus, during the Project Convergence capstone event at Yuma Proving Ground. (Photo by Spc. Carlos Cuebas Fantauzzi, 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

pinpoint the enemy ahead of the troops," Lowrance says. "Our goal is to enable the Soldier to effectively conduct multi-domain operations."

One of the overarching goals of NGCV technology is to limit Soldier risk. As in any battle, communication is key. In this case, proper interconnectivity enables troops on the future battlefield to make quick decisions.

COMMUNICATION

An almost immediate sensor to shooter timeline relies on system interconnectivity. The technology that makes it happen is Firestorm.

"Firestorm is a system that ingests data from the systems and relays the information to the best shooter," Ketula Patel, Intelligence Systems Branch Chief from U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Armament Center says.

Prior technologies that relayed information back to the Soldier took almost 20 minutes to give the data back. The new Firestorm system has the ability to bring that time down to 32 seconds. Greatly advancing our capabilities on the battlefield and putting us that much further ahead of our adversaries.

"Firestorm is essentially the

brains of the operation," Marc Sanzari, computer scientist at the Combat Capabilities Development Command, Armaments Center says. "This software utilizes different sensors and algorithms to determine the best course of action for the commander, cutting the decision-making time."

PC20 is a demonstration that has brought together multiple facets of various organizations to reach the goal of modernization in combat. It contains teams from the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command, The Research and Analysis Center, the Artificial Intelligence Task Force and various other teams all with the capabilities to win a Joint Multi-Domain battle.

The ability of these teams is to collectively come together, in less than optimal conditions and work toward a goal has been a step toward the final goal of aggressively advancing the capabilities of our Armed Forces.

"The hallmark of what we are trying to achieve is the convergence of the enterprise coming together to achieve something that we have never done before." Matthew Horning, director of operations for PC20 says.



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FUTURE

FROM PAGE 1

Commanding General. “Project Convergence is going to inform multi-domain operations and how we fight as a team in the future. It will also inform how the Army organizes in the future.”

The demonstrations at YPG utilized cutting-edge equipment from five of the Army Futures Command’s cross-functional teams (CFTs), which were created to each focus on an Army modernization priority. YPG testing has actively supported six of the eight CFTs since AFC was stood up in 2018. The capstone PC capabilities demonstrations took many months of pre-planning and six weeks of active set-up, testing, and data collection, during which time

in excess of 900 personnel from all across the Army came at some point to YPG.

“The initial takeaway after being here six weeks: the technology is already here,” said Richardson. “We just need to ruggedize it.”

YPG’s developmental test expertise and large, highly instrumented range attracted the attention of PC’s organizers, as did the extreme desert environment that was in full summer effect during the project’s time here. Between Aug. 9 and the culminating week of operations, the local area saw nine days of record-setting heat.

“It is really hot, dangerous, rough terrain,” said Brig. Gen. Ross Coffman, Next Generation Combat Vehicle Cross Functional Team Director. “We thought that if we could do it here, we could probably



Yuma Proving Ground hosted two demonstrations during the Project Convergence week on Sept. 21. Brig. Gen. Ross Coffman, Next Generation Combat Vehicle Cross Functional Team Director said “We thought that if we could do it here, we could probably do it anywhere.” (Photo by Mark Schauer)



Among those in attendance to watch the live demonstrations during Project Convergence were Under Secretary of the Army James McPherson (right) and Gen. Joseph M. Martin, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (left), along with dozens of generals and senior civilians from across the Department of Defense and partner nations. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

do it anywhere.”

Hosting the Army’s largest capabilities demonstration of the year was no small task for YPG, particularly during in an environment menaced by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the supporting the challenging technical work associated with the ambitious project, the proving ground developed groundbreaking new COVID mitigation protocols to ensure the demonstrations safely proceeded as scheduled.

“The entire proving ground executed this demonstration,” said Todd Hudson, Director of YPG’s Technology and Investments Directorate. “There were multiple Yuma Test Center test officers across all divisions supporting this, along with a lot of different instrumentation sections. There aren’t many organizations on the mission or garrison side that weren’t involved in some way.”

Conducting what was essentially a combined developmental and operational test on equipment from the five CFTs in tandem required an immense amount of range space, which few other Department of Defense installations possess in the

abundance of YPG. Likewise, the amount of high-level visibility on Project Convergence meant YPG was in the spotlight in a manner that is largely unprecedented.

“You could probably add up the last 10 years of operational test events we’ve supported and make this one,” said Hudson. “The same is probably true for the number of distinguished visitors we hosted.”

Among those in attendance were Under Secretary of the Army James McPherson and Gen. Joseph M. Martin, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, along with dozens of generals and senior civilians from across the Department of Defense and partner nations. All watched in real time on large screens in YPG’s elaborate Forward Operating Base as out on the range cutting edge artillery like the XM-1113 155 mm artillery projectile worked in tandem with air launched effects. The various realistic scenarios imagined going toe-to-toe with near-peer adversaries, with the decisive advantage going to those who could process data quicker and make decisions faster.

“This is truly going to change the way we fight and organize as a joint coalition team,” said Richardson.

Caregivers on post are excited to welcome back all children

By Ana Henderson

Caregivers at the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Army Child and Youth Service Programs think of the children they provide care for as their own, so the news of the CDC (Child Development Center) and YS (Youth Services) being allowed to welcome back all children on Sept. 15, brought some to tears.

"All of the teachers were extremely happy. Some of them cried," says CDC Director Teri Robinson "They really miss the children."

The reaction was very similar for the teachers at the YS building which provides care for children in grades kindergarten through fifth grade.

"I think I cried when I got the word" says YS Director, Sommer Cloinger, "I can tell you from my staff and from myself not having the kids this summer has really taken a

toll on us. We just really miss our kids."

Seeing the kids she has worked with for the last few years was especially important for Cloinger who received permanent change of station orders, "To see my kids before I leave, that was extremely important to me."

This is the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic that children of non-essential workers can return to both childcare facilities at YPG. Once COVID restrictions were implemented, the Army had to make the difficult decision to only allow children of essential workers a spot at childcare facilities.

The very popular YS summer program filled with activities and weekly field trips was scaled back this summer and ended up operating out of the CDC.



Children will have their temperature taken before entering the facilities and those three years and older are required to wear face coverings/mask. Providers are also wearing face coverings/masks and gloves. (Photo by Ana Henderson)



In the past children would eat family style passing the dishes around and serving themselves. Now, providers will serve all food and drinks. (Photo by Ana Henderson)



Grayson Chavis and Geneva Buco enjoy playing a game of air hockey at the Youth Services game room. This game and others will be sanitized after each use. (Photo by Sommer Cloinger)

As the centers welcome more children, families will notice some policy changes at both childcare facilities. Drop-off and pick-up will continue to be curbside, parents will sign their children in/out from their vehicles and will not be allowed to enter the building, and children and staff will all have their temperatures taken before entering the facilities. Additionally, those who are three years and older, to include staff, will be required to wear face coverings/masks.

Even with new procedures in place families can still count on a healthy learning environment for their children.

The CDC continues to provide the excellent care they did pre-COVID, "All the fun stuff is still there, all the learning is still there," says Robinson...so yes, students will still bring home their adorable artwork.

Cloinger says children at the YS facility will focus on independence more than ever. There will be a lot of activities that will promote personal growth.

"This will definitely be a lot more interactive than we have seen before because how independent the activities will be. There will be a lot more individual hands-on activities."

Overall YPG's very valued caregivers are excited to welcome back all families.

"We are there to provide a healthy learning environment for those

kids and be there for them. It's extremely important for their social and emotional wellbeing, especially during a time of so much uncertainty and uncontrollable circumstances" says Cloinger.

Robinson adds, "We have been waiting for this day and we are very happy that it is here."

Families need to have up-to-date enrollment paperwork complete and request care via MCC.com. For enrollment information contact Parent Central Services at 928-328-3119/3339.

Families with current paperwork needing drop-in, daily or hourly care from YS can call 928-328-2860 at least 24-hours in advance to reserve a spot.



Ms. Agnes walks out Tatum Miller for pick-up. Drop-off and pick-up will continue to be curbside, parents will sign their children in/out from their vehicles and children and staff will all have their temperatures taken before entering the facilities. (Photo by Sommer Cloinger)

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Price School offers grab and go lunch

By Ana Henderson

Kids living on the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) installation rolled in on their bikes, skates and scooters with a smile on their face, ready to get their free pre-packaged school lunch from the lawn at James D. Price Elementary School.

"I love the interaction," exclaimed Taryn Chase who drove up with her son to grab a lunch.

"It's a nice extra thing showing that they care. In these trying times just this little bit of relief especially for parents who work from home it definitely makes a big impact."

The free school lunches are part of a nutrition program provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) grant. Select schools within Yuma School District 1 are providing grab and go lunches to children under the age of 18.

Price school located on the YPG installation almost missed out on the opportunity because of logistics explains Price School Principal Jarrod Norris, "We don't have a cafeteria here. So Price doesn't typically give out hot lunches but once a month."

This is where Stacie Oliver, administrative secretary at Price and Melissa Henderson, Military Free Fall School Peer Network Coordinator stepped in. Oliver was in the process of emailing the nutrition program about Price's monthly meal when Henderson walked into the office asking

about the daily meals. The ladies had never met before. In the first week they handed out more than 400 lunches.

Henderson picks up the lunches at Desert Mesa Elementary School and transports them to YPG Monday-Friday and Oliver organizes the lunches and helps pass them out. "It's a huge team effort," says Henderson.

This is Henderson's second time at YPG, her husband served at YPG once before and her children attended Price when they were stationed here before. Currently, her kids are older and no longer at Price, which actually makes her service even more remarkable. "As parent I understood the struggle of always having to pack a lunch."

She also finds the experience rewarding, "We have happy kids and happy parents. We get smiling faces, everyone wants to talk. They are out in the community which is great because have all been so cooped up."

Norris says, "It is one more thing we can do for the YPG community."

The USDA grant provides meals until the school winter break in December. At YPG the service might not continue on a daily basis through December because of the logistics but for now it's here Monday-Friday.

For a LIMITED TIME, Price Elementary School is offering free grab and go lunches for children 18 years old and younger. Lunches are available Monday - Friday 11-12 P.M. Quantities are limited. Thank you to Yuma School District One and Melissa Henderson, the Military Free Fall School Peer Network Coordinator for making this service possible.



Stacie Oliver, administrative secretary at Price and Melissa Henderson, Military Free Fall School Peer Network Coordinator joined forces to provide grab and go lunches at Price Elementary School. In the first week they handed out more than 400 lunches.

August "Excellent Eagles"

Congratulations the following James D. Price Elementary School students

Kindergarten - Mekhi Bullard
1st/2nd grade - Kai Scaife
2nd/3rd grade - Karrington Compton
4th/5th grade - Mikaela Jimenez
Monitored on-site remote learning space - Tatum Miller



Heritage Center at YPG voted top places to visit in Yuma

By Ana Henderson

A huge congratulations is in order to the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Heritage Center for being named a Trip Advisor Traveler's Choice winner for 2020. According to Trip Advisor, this puts the center in the top 10% of travel site ratings worldwide.

YPG Museum Curator, William Heidner explains that the ratings are due to visits at the Wahner Brooks Interpretive Display best known as the Open Air Museum which features macro artifacts just outside the YPG gates in front of the Visitor Control Center.

"We are very proud of this recognition by the public, as this is based on their unsolicited comments to the Trip Advisor Web site. In their site, under "The 15 best things to do in Yuma" we are ranked #3."

Comments from visitors on Trip Advisor include,

"A great place to visit for the military enthusiast as well as children. You can walk up to the vehicles and such. A great experience."

"It is a good place to walk, relax,



This outdoor display of military artifacts scored YPG's Heritage Center a Trip Advisor Traveler's Choice winner for 2020. It's #3 on the list of 15 best things to do in Yuma. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

take the children for a walk and share a good meal outdoors with the family."

The Open Air museum is open to the public and requires no special access.

Prior to the pandemic the Heritage Center's brick and mortar museum was similarly recognized. The museum is currently closed due to the COVID-19 restriction. Once the health protection condition (HPCON) is reduced from Charlie to Bravo the museum will reopen.



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At 8:46 a.m. on the morning of Sept. 11, 2020, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground conducted a solemn flag-raising ceremony in memory of those lost in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. "This day is about remembrance and sacrifice," said YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall. "It is to remember those who were lost and to honor the first responders who ran into the flames." (Photos by Mark Schauer)



To pay tribute to the firefighters who died during the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) fire fighters climbed the tower at YPG 21 times. That is approximately the numbers of stairs that were in the World Trade Center. This climb is part of a nationwide 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb. (Loaned photos)



Honoring Hispanic Americans Essential To the Blueprint of Our Nation



Francisco Vázquez de Coronado (c. 1510 - 1554) was a Spanish governor in modern day Mexico who went on to explore the southwest United States. His expedition was one that was prompted by stories of myth and riches. He was looking for the fabled Seven Cities of Gold. This journey took him into new areas not yet previously explored by Europeans. His travels went from present day Mexico, into parts of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and up to present-day Kansas. He did not find this fabled city of riches. But he and his men found something else that people from far and wide come to see even still today – the Grand Canyon. He and his men are also the first Europeans to live among the Pueblo and Indians, explore the Great Plains. His description of the areas he explored helped create updated maps of the lands. Coronado's explorations helped open up the southwestern United States for future Spanish colonization.

exploration.marinersmuseum.org

Juan Ponce de Leon (c. 1460 — July 1521) is credited as the first European known to have visited mainland of the present day United States. He was also Puerto Rico's first governor. The Spanish crown encouraged Ponce de León to continue searching for new lands. Ponce de Leon learned from Indians of an island called Bimini (in the Bahamas) on which there was a miraculous spring or fountain that could rejuvenate those who drank from it (the Fountain of Youth). Although he did not find the Fountain of Youth, the Spanish king was happy with Ponce de Leon's discovery.

Even though he was never able to establish a colony in Florida, his discovery of the land led to continued Spanish exploration of the Americas. He was knighted, given a coat of arms, and made adelantado (Spanish for "governor") of both Florida and the island of Bimini.

After his death, more and more Spanish explorers wanted to sail west to explore Florida. Many of the colonies he set up in Puerto Rico survived long after his death, and his influence is still known throughout the area. Ponce, Puerto Rico's third largest city, is named in his honor.

exploration.marinersmuseum.org



Vasco Núñez de Balboa (1475–January 15, 1519) was a Spanish explorer, colonial governor, and Conquistador. He is known principally for having crossed the Isthmus of Panama to the Pacific Ocean in 1513, becoming the first European to lead an expedition to see and then reach the Pacific coastline of the New World.

In San Francisco, California, USA, Balboa's name appears among a row of avenues which are named after Spanish conquistadors. There are large public parks in both San Francisco and downtown San Diego, California named after Balboa. Balboa's name is also honored in Madrid with a street and an underground metro station.

New World Encyclopedia