

The Outpost

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

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"The most important thing the Army is doing"

Project Convergence's impact will resonate for years to come



PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy addresses Project Convergence distinguished visitor attendees at YPG on September 23. "Today exceeded any expectation I personally could have had about where we are in the process of Project Convergence," he said in remarks to the national media later in the day.

By Mark Schauer

The Army's senior civilian and uniformed leaders visited U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) on September 23 to witness the capstone capabilities demonstration of the 2020 iteration of Project Convergence (PC).

Both Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy and Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville characterized the demonstration held at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground as one that will have substantial impact on the Army for decades to come.

"Today exceeded any expectation I personally could have had about where we are in the process of Project Convergence," said McCarthy in remarks at a media roundtable held at YPG after the demonstration. "If you think about having a discussion with General Murray about this concept just over eight months ago and being able to bring these elements to bear and put it into the form of a real experiment is truly remarkable."

"This is a major step forward in transforming the United States Army for the next 40 years," added

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U.S. Army Network Cross Functional Team displays full-force network lethality technologies at Project Convergence 20

By Spc. Daniel J. Alkana,
22nd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

As technology advances at an ever faster pace, the U.S. Army's network capabilities must evolve faster to enable the future of modernized warfare. The Army is driving the procurement and operation of networked lethality technologies to achieve overmatch. At Project Convergence 20 (PC20), in Yuma Proving Ground, the Army Network Cross Functional Team (N-CFT) deployed a mesh network to further evaluate the ability to augment human sensing and decision making, optimizing the pace of battle.

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Both Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy and Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville characterized the demonstration held at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground as one that will have substantial impact on the Army for decades to come. "If you think about having a discussion with General Murray about this concept just over eight months ago and being able to bring these elements to bear and put it into the form of a real experiment is truly remarkable," McConville added, "This is a major step forward in transforming the United States Army for the next 40 years."

PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER



IMPORTANT

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McConville. "We'll be working with our joint partners and coalition partners to make this all happen. This is a significant event, and I'm real proud of the Yuma team that supported all those who came in to make this happen."

The demonstrations at YPG utilized cutting-edge equipment from five of the Army Futures Command's (AFC) 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. Though multiple pieces of equipment were used in tandem in realistic scenarios on YPG's rugged ranges, PC's leaders emphasized that the real emphasis was to dramatically reduce the amount of time between identifying and successfully prosecuting a target — from minutes today to seconds in the future.

"We didn't come out here for a precision fires exercise, we came here to increase the speed of information between sensing a target and passing that information to the effector," said Brig. Gen. Ross Coffman, Next Generation Combat Vehicle CFT director.

The demonstration was particularly noted for using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning in several ways: Ground robots paired with UAS digitally mapped and transmitted images of the terrain, AI was used for target recognition and to autonomously conduct ground intelligence and deploy sensors, and machine learning trained algorithms on identification of various types of targets.

"We know that on every future battlefield, the commander that can best utilize autonomy, artificial intelligence, and robotics will have an

advantage of decision space and time without putting Soldiers in harm's way unnecessarily — a robot can get out in front and do the really dirty jobs," said Coffman.

Across the six weeks on Yuma's ranges, testers were able to make changes and improvements to computer algorithms in real time, another example of the proving ground's status as a natural environment laboratory.

"When we identified something that wasn't working right or when we identified an opportunity, we had the computer expertise on station to recode the computer programs or algorithms to make it better on the spot," said Coffman. "You had young men and women who are very exceptional in this area sitting next to an operator and iterating and iterating until we got what we wanted."

That most of the items were not yet an Army program of record will likely mean significant cost savings to the American taxpayer as well.

"The ability to take things out in the dirt and 'try before you buy' will pay huge dividends in the future," said Gen. John Murray, U.S. AFC commanding general.

Though artificial intelligence and machine learning are likely to be important aspects of future warfare, officials were quick to point out that human beings will still be the ultimate decision makers on a battlefield — machines will help humans obtain and process the information to make decisions with more rapidly.

"There are some things that machines just do better and faster than humans do," said Murray. "A lot of this is keeping humans in the loop and allowing them to do what they do best and allowing machines to do what they do best."

Officials stressed that the information gathered and lessons learned during PC 20 will influence Army acquisitions and doctrine for decades to come.

"This may be not only be the most important thing Army Futures Command is working on, it may be the most important thing the Army is doing today," said Murray.

THEOUTPOST

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Distinguished visitors tour YPG



PHOTO BY ANA HENDERSON

Deputy Commanding General of the Army Futures Command, Lt. Gen. James Richardson gets a briefing from Juan Elizarraras, M&W artillery team lead at the YPG Maintenance shop.



PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

Brig. Gen. Ross Coffman, director of Project Convergence 20 and director of the Next Generation Combat Vehicle Cross Functional Team, tours YPG's Threat Systems & Target Simulation yard and gets a close up of one of the vehicles in its fleet.



PHOTO BY ANA HENDERSON

U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC) Commanding General, Brig. Gen. James Gallivan made two visits to YPG leading up the Project Convergence. During this visit he meets with Mike Schwitzing as YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall and ATEC Command Sgt. Major Ronald Graves look on.

Project Convergence brought distinguished visitors to Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). While at the installation YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall along with other members of YPG leadership gave the Army senior leaders a tour of the installation. The stops including meeting with the workforce who make up the many support shops and hearing how they provide support to the Army's Cross-Functional Teams, six of which YPG supports, as well as all testing at YPG.



PHOTO BY ANA HENDERSON

YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall briefs ATEC's Executive Technical Director James Amato, on YPG's capabilities.



PHOTO BY ANA HENDERSON

Principal Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army in Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, Jeffrey White toured YPG's Non-Destructive Test and Laser Bore Mapping lab. David Le demonstrates the various types of non-destructive inspection techniques.



PHOTO BY ANA HENDERSON

Dr. Catherine Dale, Senior Advisor to the Commanding General of Army Futures Command mingles with the workforce at the Maintenance shop nicknamed the Monster Garage for its work on combat vehicles.

Disability Awareness

A disability can be a motivating factor

By Ana Henderson

Steven Wilson has accomplished a tremendous amount in his lifetime. He's started working at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) at the age of 20 in 1984; he's been at YPG 36 years now.

His career started out in the Television Instrumentation Section capturing aerial chase video from an Army UH-1 Huey and recording rocket and bullet impacts fired from AH-1 Cobra and AH-64 Apache attack helicopters.

"This was done by flying in helicopters using video cameras and recording the events." He explains he held the cameras, "Out the side door for sling loads and looking down through a hole in the helicopter to view ground impacts."

A fun fact Wilson shared is that a Huey he regularly flew in is now displayed at the entrance of the Laguna Army Airfield.

While working at YPG Wilson has become an instrumented rated commercial pilot flying his Cessna 182 on weekends for the last 20 years, accumulating more than 2,000 hours as a pilot in command.

His thrill seeking doesn't stop there. He's performed tandem skydiving three times with Jay Stokes, the world record holder for the most jumps in 24 hours, he also restores classic cars.

While working full-time, Wilson has earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Aviation Management, a Master of Engineering degree in Systems Engineering, and a Master of Business Administration degree in Project Management.

Wilson has an impressive resume to say the least. What you will not see on his resume but you will notice in person is that Wilson is confined to a wheelchair.

At 23 years old, three years after



LOANED PHOTO
A Team Lead in the Combat & Automotive Systems Division, Steven Wilson became paralyzed at age 23, since then he's accomplished a tremendous amount.

starting his career at YPG he was involved in a rollover accident where he was ejected and left paralyzed from the waist down.

"At the onset of my injury, I didn't know what to expect. Life is full of challenges; however, I believe it is how we accept and deal with adversity and try to make the best out of life with what we have is what's important."

He says it was the support of his YPG family plus his wife, and their one year-old son, at the time, who motivated him to continue on.

"I have a lot to be thankful for, and my wife, Julie, deserves much of the credit for my accomplishments. She has been very supportive of all my endeavors and I thank her for helping to make it all possible."

All the achievements Wilson accomplished were done after his life altering accident.

"Due to the injury I just pushed myself and tried to achieve as many accomplishments as I can."

Wilson has not let his injury stop his success and he provides support to others as well. He's the local chapter president of the Spinal Cord Society, which is an organization dedicated to research for cure of spinal cord injuries.

Wilson who is now a Team Lead in the Combat & Automotive Systems Division is proud of his career. "The work we do at YPG is important and rewarding. I appreciate being able to contribute to what we do each day to provide safe, reliable, and effective products to the warfighter." Adding that his career was never jeopardized by his disability. "Shortly after I was injured, I was informed that as soon I was able to return to work, I still had a job to come back to, which I was thankful for."



These are a few of the masks Jessica Soto sewed. She enjoyed sewing the children's colorful masks the most.

LOANED PHOTO

YPG community thrives off helping others

By Ana Henderson

A silver-lining of the world-wide pandemic is it inspired people to reach out and help. An example of that here in the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) community are the residents who saw the shortage of face-coverings and masks and decided to do something about it.

Air Force Technical Sgt. Jessica Soto, who serves as a Military Training Leader Flight Chief at the Military Free Fall School had been at YPG for just about a year when COVID-19 hit the community. While still rather new to the area she couldn't sit with idle hands, "I saw a need... there weren't masks available that fit my daughter and I knew we were going to be in them for the long haul. Even just purchasing them became very difficult."

Soto wasn't super confident about her skills, but she still pulled out her supplies and started sewing.

"I am self-taught at it but I just wanted to be able to provide to the community."

She provided masks to employees at Youth Services and the Post Exchange.

"They are people that are serving us, and I felt the need to do something to try to say thank you."

She also sent masks outside of YPG to her brother and his co-workers in the restaurant industry and her parents. "Whoever was in need, I just bought the material and whatever was needed

I made them."

In all, about 200, if not more.

Hannah, a military spouse living at YPG, also estimates she sewed more than 200 masks: she stopped counting at that point. Now a stay at home mother Hannah felt compelled to help after seeing her best friend a nurse and her former co-workers in the healthcare field in need of masks.

"I am at home with a newborn and I'm seeing all my friends in the healthcare field and everyone at YPG and I can't do anything."

She knew she had a sewing machine, a ton of fabric and also elastic which was very scarce at the time and thought, "If everyone has a mask, that can help."

Once she sewed through her supply people donated fabric, elastic, and money so she could continue to provide masks. Hannah didn't make a profit she put the money back into getting supplies.

Hannah donated to her neighbors and friends and outside of the YPG community to substance abuse rehab hospitals in Tennessee, juvenile delinquency facilities, and reservations in the Dakotas which were being hit hard by COVID.

"I just want to continue to see the community do what they can to protect each other," says Hannah.

Serving her community brings Soto joy. "When I see someone wearing a mask I sewed I don't say anything, it just makes me smile."

YPG Soldiers of the Year honored



PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

The Military Affairs Committee of the Yuma County Chamber of Commerce recognized Spc. Kiley Keswick of the YPG Health Clinic and Staff Sgt. Melvin Bullard of the Airborne Test Force as YPG's Soldier and NCO of the Year, respectively. Local media was on hand to cover the ceremony, which typically takes place at the Caballeros de Yuma's annual Fourth of July flag-raising event at Armed Forces Park, but was postponed this year due to COVID-19. Congratulations to Staff Sgt. Bullard and Spc. Keswick.

YPG helps honor Army heritage



PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER

On Sept. 26, YPG personnel were out in force at Yuma's Desert Lawn Cemetery supporting an annual memorial ceremony honoring the Bushmasters, Soldiers of the 158th Regimental Combat Team who earned international acclaim for their tenacity in jungle combat in the Pacific Theater of World War II. YPG Soldiers served as lead color guard, and YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall spoke in praise of the Bushmasters' sacrifices in service of our country. At the conclusion of the ceremony, McFall, his family, and YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson participated in the customary Company L honorary roll call.



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Army senior leaders gather at YPG to witness Project Convergence

By Jonathan Koester, U.S. Army Joint Modernization Command

After six weeks of experimentation in the desert of Yuma Proving Ground, Project Convergence 20 culminated in two distinguished visitor days on Sept. 21 and 23, allowing the scientists, engineers and Soldiers of the modernization enterprise to show off what they had learned.

It wasn't always easy, with the Yuma desert heat that often topped 115 degrees Fahrenheit taking a toll on both equipment and people, but that's what the Project Convergence campaign of learning was all about.

"Like any scientific venture, you learn so much through experimentation," Gen. John M. Murray, commanding general of Army Futures Command (AFT), said when he announced Project Convergence 20 in early September. "AFC has always said that if we're going to fail, we need to fail fast, learn, and get it right

the next time. So Project Convergence isn't about always getting it right, it's about understanding where our opportunities and vulnerabilities are now — before we ask Soldiers to employ these capabilities in combat."

Among the more than 100 Army senior leaders who came out to take a look at Project Convergence were Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy, Chief of Staff of the Army General James McConville and other 2-, 3- and 4-star Army generals. Those leaders were able to see the first fruits of a campaign of learning that will ensure the Army, as part of the Joint force, can rapidly converge effects across all domains — air, land, maritime, space and cyberspace.

"This is the first step in a long journey to achieve convergence on the battlefield," said Brig. Gen. Ross Coffman, director of Project Convergence 20 and director of the Next Generation Combat Vehicle

Cross Functional Team. "Project Convergence 20 will garner many lessons learned, will prove technology. Some technologies will not work, and we'll apply those lessons to Project Convergence 21, and then 22 and 23. Convergence is a key tenet of Multi-Domain Operations, and we're going to make sure that our technologies are in the hands of Soldiers, so that we can see the enemy first, we can make decisions faster and commanders can be victorious on future battlefields."

During the distinguished visitor days, Army senior leaders were able to view a live demonstration of the nascent ability to link any sensor to any shooter through the appropriate command and control node.

"Here at Yuma, we're proving that ground can talk to ground, that air can talk to air, and now we've proven that air can talk to ground in a meshed network," Coffman said. "This network allows near-simultaneous

situational awareness by all parties, and this can be done not only in the Army, but in the Joint force. We've shown that we can talk to F-35s, we can talk to artillery pieces, mortars, direct-fire systems, with everyone having common understanding of the situation on the battlefield."

Project Convergence brought together AFC's Cross-Functional Teams (CFT), as well as its Combat Capabilities Development Center labs, to make sure all the teams are communicating and working together toward the Army goal of being Multi-Domain Operations-capable by 2035. The weeks in the desert allowed the teams to experiment in converging effects across the five domains to decisively overmatch adversaries. The AFC's CFT are: Long-Range Precision Fires, Next Generation Combat Vehicle, Air and Missile Defense, Future Vertical Lift, Army Network, Air and Missile Defense, and Soldier Lethality. Additional CFTs lead the Army's efforts in Synthetic Training Environment and Assured Position, Navigation, and Timing.

Coffman said bringing the teams and labs together for Project Convergence was the first step in proving the Army Modernization Enterprise is on the right path.

"That's probably the biggest success story coming out of Yuma Proving Ground is that the CFTs and CCDC labs are unified on a common goal," Coffman said. "It was impressive to see these hundreds and hundreds of people coming from disparate locations arriving here in the harshest conditions known to man, with 120-degree heat, aircraft tires melting, water boiling over, fuel at near record temperatures. We're here in the dirt, doing what we're saying — this isn't a PowerPoint chart — this is scientists, engineers and Soldiers putting their



PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

Brig. Gen. Ross Coffman, director of Project Convergence 20 and director of the Next Generation Combat Vehicle Cross Functional Team, speaks to Army leaders during a Project Convergence distinguished visitor day on Sept. 21, 2020, at Yuma Proving Ground.

hands on equipment and solving tough problems.”

Both Murray and Coffman noted the Army’s modernization effort is necessitated by the fact that, while the United States has been fighting two wars, both Russia and China have modernized their military and moved ahead technologically. Project Convergence is meant to return the U.S. military to a position of overmatch on future battlefields.

As the Army continuously tests and demonstrates capabilities in the areas of people, weapons systems, information, command and control, and terrain, Project Convergence centers on delivering data and cloud technologies and focuses on the need to reduce the time needed to link sensor to shooter and make combat decisions.

Brig. Gen. Walter Rugen, director of the Future Vertical Lift Cross-Functional Team, said the efforts of the people at Project Convergence is making a difference in speeding up those combat decisions.

“We’re showing a level of interoperability across all of our modernization efforts that hasn’t been done for a very long time,” Rugen said. “Ultimately what that does is, it’s going to bring transformational lethality, and a transformational way to refine our kill chains down to seconds — not minutes, not hours — seconds.”

As Project Convergence moves forward in 2021, the Joint force will become more involved, and in 2022, coalition partners will participate in the effort. That will lead to a joint, combined force that can work together to combine effects across all five domains.

“The interoperability creates synergy,” Rugen said. “And it’s a synergy that’s not linear; we are going to see exponential capability growth because we are synergistic and interoperable across all the modernization efforts. That is really what the Soldiers on future battlefields are going to need. We owe that to the Army of the future.”

NETWORK

FROM PAGE 1

The network underpins everything at PC20, a campaign of learning designed to advance and integrate the Army’s contribution to Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control. It does this by establishing the Army’s ability to use artificial intelligence and networked lethality technologies that augment human sensing and decision making in order to improve the warfighter’s lethality and pace of battle. In the context of this event, the network successfully demonstrated how it can leverage all sensors to deliver data, enabling the best shooter to use the right command and control to achieve the objective.

Maj. Steve Kirchhoff, the N-CFT Project Convergence lead, spoke on the Army modernization priorities, and how they require a network to integrate weapons and command control systems to provide the Army the ability to act faster and more effectively than the adversary.

“The network we operate touches every modernization effort across the Army, achieving networked lethality and capitalizing on AI and machine learning capabilities to speed decision making and effects on a target,” Kirchhoff said. “To decision makers, both human and AI, the movement of data from sensors provides precise orders to the right shooter for the right and timely affect.”

Having a network that can keep pace with information demands will also require flexibility and resiliency to rapidly integrate new technologies, as our adversaries continue to adjust to our capabilities. To prevent enemy forces from matching our capabilities, network-enabled Multi-Domain Operations will rely on full end-to-end connectivity in support of mission requirements across all land, air, sea, space and cyberspace domains.

As the director of PC20 at YPG, Brig. Gen. Ross Coffman, who is also the director of the Next Generation Combat Vehicle Cross Functional Team, spoke on how these networks provide troops with a common



Operators in the network operations cell manage the mesh network and troubleshoot challenges as they arise during the live Project Convergence 20 demonstration on Sept. 20, 2020, at Yuma Proving Ground.

understanding of the situation on battlefield.

“Here at YPG, we’re proving that ground can talk to ground, that air can talk to air, and now we’ve proven that air can talk to ground in a mesh network,” Coffman said. “This network allows near-simultaneous situational awareness by all parties, not only in the Army, but in a Joint Force.” To modernize the network and keep pace with industry advancements, the Army is fielding Capability Sets (CS) in two-year increments, starting in FY2021. Each CS builds off the previous and is informed by Soldier-led experimentation.

Utilizing currently fielded radio and networking capabilities to stitch together emerging science and technology capabilities, the Army benchmarked the current capabilities of network infrastructure. The network used at Yuma for PC20 won’t

necessarily look like the network supporting these capabilities in 2035. But by using what is available now to experiment with concepts in the emerging fields of AI and machine learning, the Army can gain a better understanding of the information exchanges between sensors and shooters the future fight will require.

For the Army Futures Command N-CFT, having the platform to build on lessons learned from Multi-Domain Operations testing like at PC20 continues to strengthen future network approaches as the barriers of technology continue to transform.

“The network can collect from lessons learned to guide design decisions and investments earlier in product development cycles,” Kirchhoff said. “In doing so, we can deliver the right network at the right time, to enhance effective and precise Multi-Domain Operations we require in the future for modernized warfare.”

PHOTO BY JUSTINE RUGGIO / NETWORK CFT

Project Convergence 20 brings 'generational improvements' to FOB

By Mark Schauer

When Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) was slated to host Project Convergence (PC), the campaign of learning meant to ensure that the U.S. Army stays ahead of emerging challenges to national security, it was clear that the post's Training and Exercise Management Office (TEMO) would be an important factor in a successful event.

"I am very happy that TEMO got tasked to support Project Convergence," said Luis Arroyo, TEMO chief. "Our primary mission is to support testing — the reason we support training is to hone our skills and keep relevant with the Warfighters."

YPG's major mission is testing equipment for troops, but in recent years well over 100 units have utilized the installation for training purposes, including multi-week stays in the proving ground's elaborate Forward Operating Base (FOB). Training under real-world conditions, these troops usually spend their days at YPG's firing ranges and undergoing simulated missions, and then are FOB-bound by night. When it became clear that Project Convergence's hundreds of support personnel would need operating space independent of YPG's other activities to maintain a 'bubble' of protection as a COVID-19



LOANED PHOTO

YPG's Training and Exercise Management Office (TEMO) lead the preparation of YPG's forward operation base (FOB) for Project Convergence's hundreds of support personnel. The operating space is independent of YPG's other activities to maintain a 'bubble' of protection as a COVID-19 mitigation measure.

mitigation measure, the FOB seemed like an ideal choice.

"TEMO does this all the time with training units, at scales from small units of 10-20 people up to battalions of 1,500 people," said Arroyo. "The scope of work required was not outside what our capabilities are."

While space was not an issue, significant changes were needed to provide office space, electricity, and real-time data access from demonstrations occurring at multiple positions across YPG's vast ranges.

"Shelters, network access, and power have all seen a generational

improvement at FOB Laguna," said Arroyo. "This is an added value to the Yuma Test Center mission and future training units who come here."

The unexpected and unprecedented menace of the COVID-19 pandemic hung over every aspect of planning for the major event. For the TEMO office, the additional requirements related to preparing for PC were somewhat mitigated by a reduced training workload in the months leading up to the event.

"The pandemic actually gave us time," said Arroyo. "Some of the cancellations and postponements for training that we had allowed us to devote more focus to this task."

Nonetheless, YPG's support of training from military units continued as the pandemic spread across the world. The large annual Weapons and Tactics Instructor (WTI) course staged in Yuma twice a year for Marine Corps aviators, ground combat planners, and support personnel was held simultaneously with Project Convergence, and as usual some of these elements utilized YPG.

TEMO had originally planned to begin erecting house-sized tents and arranging for air conditioning and power generators one month prior to the first contingent of PC personnel's arrival, an effort that required dozens of workers from YPG's support shops. The alarming rise in COVID cases in Yuma County in late spring and early summer led the office to begin an additional month earlier.

"I thought COVID would affect the workforce much more than it did," said Arroyo. "I wanted to make sure this was completed to avoid having to compete with each other for human capital."

The most significant improvement to the FOB was in the area of network capability. The parameters of the unprecedented simultaneous demonstration of equipment from five of the Army Futures Command's Cross-Functional Teams meant real-time imagery and data from the various points on YPG's ranges was expected by both support personnel working from the FOB and the dozens of high-level Army leaders expected to visit during the capstone week. This requirement meant trenching and laying fiber optic cable across the FOB, which YPG's Network Enterprise Center (NEC) accomplished with great speed.

"I am very impressed at the speed and diligence of NEC," said Arroyo. "They staged supplies a week and a half before we were cleared to start working in order to begin immediately."

All told, the improvements took the combined efforts of scores of YPG personnel.

"It didn't work out in the wash," said Arroyo. "It worked out from diligent planning and modifying the plan only when it was really necessary."

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Chaplain's Corner

Finding
comfort

By Chaplain Maj. Ronald Beltz

John Killinger tells a wonderful story about a former student of his named Barry Howard who is a pastor in Pensacola, Florid. Howard is writing a book about his experiences with people who were dying. One story featured in this book is about a man in his late 70's who had been in the hospital several days awaiting death. In the middle of the night, Howard's phone rang. It was the man's wife. They had just called her from the hospital to say that the end was near. Would he please come by and pick her up and go with her?

The article in the book goes on to tell what happened:

"In the hospital room, her son and daughter were already by the bedside. Her husband lay there, his eyes shut and an oxygen mask on his face. Once or twice, he seemed to be struggling with the mask, and his son reached out and straightened it and moved his hand away. The third or fourth time, Howard said, 'Wait a minute. Maybe he wants it off so he can say something.'

He did want to say something. 'Hold my hand,' he murmured huskily to his wife. She took his hand and stood by the bed. The mask was restored, and this time he lay quietly, content to be holding his wife's hand. Then, very gently and soothingly, the wife began to sing. It was an old hymn called 'Victory in Jesus.' Before she had sung very much, her daughter joined in and sang alto. Then the son, who had been crying, began to sing tenor. When they finished that song, they sang 'Great Is Thy Faithfulness.' When they finished that, they began singing 'Amazing Grace.'

They were on the last verse of 'Amazing Grace' when we've been there 10,000 years, bright shining as the sun when the life line on the bedside monitor went flat and the man was gone. 'It was an amazing experience,' said Howard. When they entered the room, there had been pain and suffering and tension. But now, when the man died to the strains of those familiar old hymns, there was joy and composure and even thanksgiving. Everything was good, life, death, everything."

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Garrison says farewell to manager in virtual ceremony



PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

Garrison personnel hosted a virtual retirement ceremony for Rogers on Sept. 30 at YPG while Rogers tuned in live from Fort Lee, Virginia. Several members of the workforce presented gifts and shared stories about Rogers.



PHOTO BY CASEY GARCIA

Retired Garrison Manager Gordon Rogers and Garrison Deputy Manager, Ronny James are pictured having a laugh in February at the Garrison Safety Streamer awards ceremony.

YPG bade farewell to Garrison Manager Gordon Rogers in a virtual retirement ceremony Sept. 30. With a combined 44 years of service in uniform and as a Department of the Army civilian, Rogers served as garrison manger since 2014, and was deputy garrison manager for more than two years prior to that.

In his role as garrison manager, Rogers sought to sustain the garrison's longstanding tradition of excellence and worked assiduously to ensure that YPG Garrison employees were recognized for the outstanding service they deliver to post residents and workers. During his tenure, YPG held the two largest public open house events in the post's 77 year history, the larger of which drew nearly 23,000 people.

In remarks, Rogers expressed his pride in the workforce's efforts to adapt to the COVID-19 environment and his gratitude for their continuous excellence in carrying out the mission.



YPG FILE PHOTO

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Four years ago, Yuma Regional Medical Center's volunteer Board of Directors made a bold decision to advance health care in Yuma. After years of doing the same things, we set out on a new path to innovate and deliver better care – even if it meant overcoming resistance to change. We are passionately committed to providing better care close to home. This means improving emergency care, enhancing clinical expertise and service, while also increasing access to doctors and reducing the overall cost of care.

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YPG brings awareness to Domestic Violence

Child and Youth Services staff Paula Alarcon, Sommer Cloinger and Shannon Schmidgall showed their support by picking up a mask from the domestic violence information booth and taking a selfie with their masks. It's one of the many ways people can show support for victims of abuse.

LOANED PHOTO

YPG resident, Joanna Provines stops by the Domestic Violence Awareness display to pick up a mask. Lori Bell, YPG's Family Advocacy Program manager is hosting a variety of information events throughout the month.

PHOTO BY LORI BELL



Yuma Proving Ground celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month



PHOTOS BY ANA HENDERSON

Hispanic Heritage month is observed between Sept. 15 and Oct. 15. This year's theme is "Honoring Hispanic Americans: Essential to the Blueprint of Our Nation." The YPG Hispanic Heritage Month committee honored the month by setting up displays around the installation and sharing information about Hispanic/Latinos who helped shape America. The committee, made up of Melissa Rossi-Schultz and Stefanie Jacobs, also coordinated weekly lunch special featuring food originating from Latin America.



Price School welcomes back students



PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

YPG's Price Elementary School welcomed students back to school on Sept. 8. It's the first in-person classes since March. Much is different — social distancing, masks, and the other anti-COVID mitigations we have all adopted the past seven months — but strong communities make challenging times easier to cope with and overcome.

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Hybrid: school shirt

Remote: favorite sports team

TUESDAY

Hybrid: Halloween costume

Remote: pajamas

WEDNESDAY

Hybrid: wear red

Remote: wear red

THURSDAY

Hybrid: school shirt

Remote: favorite sports team

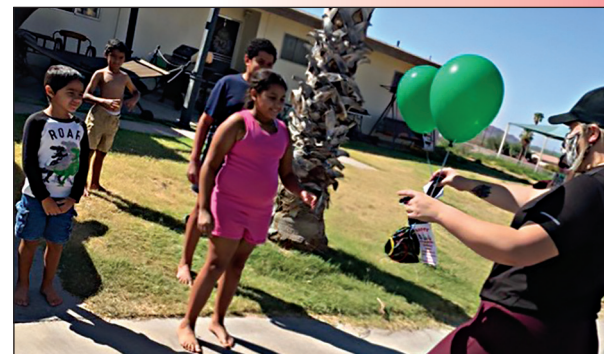
FRIDAY

Hybrid: Halloween costume

Remote: pajamas



YPG Birthday Parade



PHOTOS LOANED BY CYS STAFF

The YPG community came together to celebrate kids who have birthdays between July and September. After the parade, Child and Youth Services Director Sommer Cloinger said, "We miss you all and we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did! We loved seeing all of your smiling faces - it was exciting and it's what keeps us going in such an uncertain times!" She also gives a huge thank you to the YPG Youth Services CYPAs: Mr. Kyle, Ms. Kassie and Ms. Agnes! YPG Police Department and McGruff, YPG Fire Department and Sparky, and YPG ACS Division Chief Mardy Clark. Cloinger says, "This couldn't have been possible without some major YPG community support and my Youth Service team! They assisted with the coordination and execution of the Parade for the community, and to make this event memorable for our kiddos on post!"