

The Outpost

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

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CH-53K King Stallion tests its power at YPG



LOANED PHOTO

Brownouts are caused by rapidly blowing sand and dirt thrown into a vortex by the rotor blades of a helicopter, a brownout's swirling dust gives pilots the illusion they are moving even if they are hovering stationary. YPG's degraded visual environment course provides the same elements for testing.

By Mark Schauer

The CH-53 has been a potent member of the Marine Corps aviation community's fleet for over 40 years, but the newest version takes the platform to a whole new level.

Equipped with three 7,500 horsepower engines and built to carry a nearly 30,000 pound external load for over 100 miles, the CH-53K King Stallion boasts a 20% increase in heavy lift capability over its predecessors.

The most impressive new feature, though, is fly-by-wire technology that computerizes flight controls and represents a major advancement over hydraulic ones. In addition to making the craft lighter, the new controls assist pilots, particularly in degraded visual environments.

The CH-53K has undergone extensive developmental testing

that utilized YPG's degraded visual environment (DVE) test course for more than two years, most recently to verify software updates in the flight control software that have been made as a result of this testing.

"This iteration of testing is somewhat of a culmination exercise for the team," said Joshua Magana, test officer. "After this, the program will go into an initial operation test and evaluation training period that will train the pilots, air crew, and maintainers who support will support the initial operational testing next spring."

YPG's DVE course is highly coveted by helicopter testers seeking to protect flight crews from the potentially catastrophic consequences of brownouts. Caused by rapidly blowing sand and dirt thrown into

SEE CH-53K/5

Veterans Days, stories of the Special Operators at the Military Freefall School

By Maj. Derick Taylor, Military FreeFall School Commander

The sheer number of holidays celebrated in the United States (U.S.) can already be confusing, but to add to this, we celebrate both Veterans Day and Memorial Day. These two

holidays are commonly confused with one another, so let's start there! Veterans Day was originally known as "Armistice Day," established in 1918 to honor the end of World War (WW) I. Following WWII and The Korean War however, Congress felt it more prudent to recognize all

Veterans of U.S. wars, and adjusted the name to "Veterans Day" in 1954. The now Federal Holiday of Veterans Day is meant to celebrate both living and deceased Veterans who served honorably, in peacetime or war. In contrast, Memorial Day (observed in May) is dedicated to those who died

in service of the country.

Right here on Yuma Proving Ground we have an extraordinary amount of combat Veterans, many who served with distinction, and some who were combat wounded in service to the nation. The U.S.

SEE VETERANS DAY/6

YPG employees
share their
expertise/
Page 3



Year round
military
appreciation
display/ Page 6



Ammo lead
coaches student
athletes to
success/ Page 8



Soldier spotlight



PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

Specialist Kiley Keswick has been serving her country in the Army for three years and is currently stationed at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). She is originally from Fremont, California. Keswick works at the YPG Medical Clinic as a medic and lab technician. Her duties include screening patients, drawing blood, administering vaccines and assisting with other medical procedures. The Military Affairs Committee of the Yuma County Chamber of Commerce recently named Keswick Soldier of the Year.

FMWAR team bids farewell to Director



Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Director Ricky Bessett retired Oct. 29 after an 18 year career at YPG. Bessett's wife, daughters and sister joined him for the small ceremony where current and past co-workers recounted stories about him and described how much his leadership impacted their lives. YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall awarded Bessett with a Department of the Army Certificate of Appreciation and Ron Rodriguez presented the Meritorious Civilian Service Medal.

PHOTOS BY ANA HENDERSON



THE OUTPOST

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Employee spotlight

Meet Mallytza Ibarra. She is a Recreation Assistant at the YPG Fitness Center. Ibarra initially started as a life guard and water safety instructor and taught lessons at the YPG pool. She has since transferred over to the fitness center. Ibarra is a third year student at Regis College in Boston. She's attending virtually at the moment but does hope to return in person in January. She's studying Therapeutic Recreation and Psychology which is why she really enjoys her job at the fitness center. "It's been great. I get to meet different people every single day and my co-workers are like family."

PHOTO BY ANA HENDERSON



YPG employees travel around the world to share their expertise

By Ana Henderson

If you ask Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commander Col. Patrick McFall about the workforce he will tell you that people are YPG's "core capability."

YPG's workforce has world-renowned subject matter experts (SME) with decades of experience in radars, weapons operations, non-destructive testing, indirect firing, and other areas. This fact makes the workforce the go-to crew.

"There are many requests from other locations. The requests have a common theme of always revolving around the expertise of our workforce and not necessarily specific equipment," explains Lt. Col. Alicia Johnson Yuma Test Center (YTC) Commander.

Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), which houses YTC, has thousands of visitors per year, yet not everyone who requires YTC's expertise visits the installation. Almost weekly, YTC SMEs travel the world to fulfill a need. These trips are called safari operations.

"Whether it be semi-local like the Chocolate Mountains, a sister test range in a different state, or far away foreign nations, YTC employees are always on the go" says Johnson, adding, "From Eastern European locations including the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, all the way to the Middle-Eastern countries of Tunisia and Jordan. We even safari to places in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Rim like Guam, Hawaii, and the Philippines."

Earlier this year the Munitions and Weapons (M&W) Division sent a team of 18 to White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico to assist with a firing program. The team consisted of a test officer, a gun crew, and personnel from electronics, optics and instrumentation among others.

"The most effective way of supporting something like this is just bringing in the personnel who know how to operate the systems," says Steve Flores, M&W

Artillery Branch Chief.

During these operations it's not only the SMEs traveling, YTC also provides equipment when needed.

For the trip to White Sands M&W sent five howitzers, which included a test bed and platform plus the data collection instrumentation...in all it required eight trucks, "We loaded the trucks on a Thursday and headed to White Sands and our people left Sunday so they can be there on Monday and off-load the trucks" says Flores.

New Mexico is relatively close compared to other locations, which means sometimes the equipment is shipped by different methods.

"We move equipment by sea, land, and air. Barges, trucks, rail, and airplanes move our equipment from point to point when necessary," explains Johnson.

The stay for the teams and equipment can be anywhere from days to weeks. "They are expected to do some of the same tasks they do here but it's a different environment, a different schedule, a different tempo," explains Flores.

YPG is one of eight test centers under the Army Test and Evaluation Command. Each installation has a distinct mission yet they are ultimately have the same overall goal. "YTC is charged to help other test centers for the greater good of the Army. While there may occasionally be a dust up as to which test centers is authorized to conduct a specific test, in the end, we are all Americans wanting to assist the Warfighter. If we can help a Soldier, Sailor, or Airman by traveling to a different location to test a system allowing the system to get in the Warfighter's hands sooner, we are more than happy to assist."

Flores adds, "It's a concerted effort to execute an event like this. It show how committed we are to supporting test programs and events and that ATEC as a whole can provide all test service."



U.S. ARMY PHOTOS

Almost weekly, YTC SMEs travel the world to fulfill a need. These trips are called safari operations. "Whether it be semi-local like the Chocolate Mountains, a sister test range in a different state, or far away foreign nations, YTC employees are always on the go" says YTC Commander Lt. Col. Alicia Johnson.



YPG Commander meets Quechan President and council



PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER

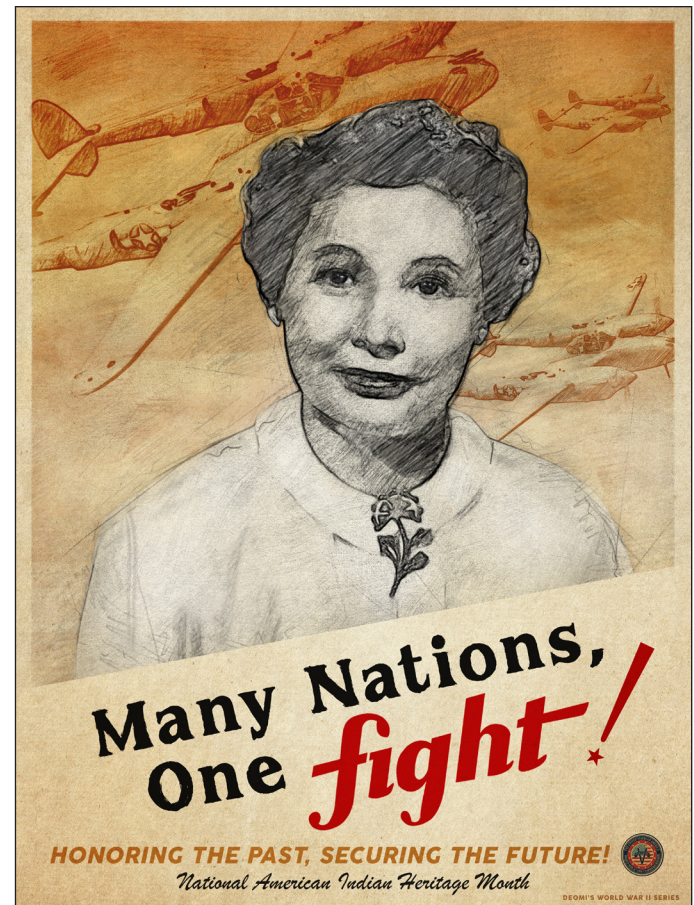
Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commander Col. Patrick McFall made his first visit to the Fort Yuma Reservation on Oct. 22, joining Technical Director Larry Bracamonte and other YPG personnel in visiting with Quechan President Jordan Joaquin, Vice President Virgil Smith, and other members of the tribal council. In addition to visits such as this, YPG and representatives from 14 different Arizona and California tribal nations engage in regular consultations about range use and the preservation of culturally significant sites at the proving ground.

YPG Commander meets military supporters



PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall visited with members of the Yuma County Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee at their monthly meeting on Oct. 28. Among other things, the MAC is the organizer of Yuma's annual Military Appreciation Day event.



National American Indian Heritage Month

Honoring the Past, Securing the Future!

By Joeann Bailey, EEO Director

In 1924, Congress enacted the Indian Citizenship Act. In 1986 Congress passed a law and President Ronald Reagan signed the proclamation authorizing American Indian Week. In 1990, President George H. W. Bush designated November as National American Indian Heritage Month. After 100 years of efforts to recognize American Indians, National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month is celebrated to recognize native cultures and educate the public about the heritage, history, art, and traditions of the American Indians and Alaskan Natives.

The observation of National American Indian Heritage Month has its roots in Public Law 99-471. Over several years the observance was moved to different months but in 1990 Public Law 101-343 set the month long observance in November. Each year the President issues a Proclamation in recognition of the observance. National American Indian Heritage Month is observed from 1-30 November of each year. The observance month recognizes American Indians for their respect for natural resources and the Earth, having served with valor in our nation's conflicts and for their many distinct and important contributions to the United States.

CH-53K

FROM PAGE 1

a vortex by the rotor blades of a helicopter, a brownout's swirling dust gives pilots the illusion they are moving even if they are hovering stationary. Hazardous in any situation, it is particularly risky when landing in a combat zone with multiple other aircraft, or in a situation where support personnel are on the ground below.

The risk is compounded when the aircraft is hauling an extremely heavy cargo load beneath it.

The extremely fine 'moon dust' on YPG's DVE course, tilled for maximum diffusion when a helicopter hovers overhead, was more than adequately harsh for the testers' purposes—YPG personnel prepared the site in such a way to ensure a variety of DVE conditions, dinking the dusty ground at depths of two and eight inches while leaving other areas of the site completely untilled.

"If they flew at one end of the course, it was as bad a DVE as it can possibly get," said Magana. "If they flew on the other end, it was significantly less severe."

The King Stallion's primary mission is Assault Support, and

testers put it through its paces at the DVE in extremely realistic scenarios that included support from Marine Wing Support Squadron 371 based at Marine Corps Air Station-Yuma. The Marines attached and unhooked massive blocks of standardized weights ranging between six and 13.5 tons as the CH-53K traversed the DVE course, day and night.

"It's meant to simulate everything from a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle to a Light Armored Vehicle," said Magana. "The aircraft is made to carry externally anything up to 36,000 pounds, unhook it, and get out of there."

Aircraft refueling at YPG typically is only done 'cold,' or with the aircraft's engines off and powered down, as a safety measure. To maintain maximum realism for test purposes and increase the efficiency of the test, however, a waiver was granted to allow for 'hot' refueling of the aircraft as it was put through its paces. MWSS 371 established a Forward Arming and Refueling Point (FARP) on an improved airstrip close to the DVE site.

"The customer wanted on-site hot refueling because using an operationally representative FARP was



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a test point," said Magana.

MWSS 371 successfully treated the ground beneath the FARP with dust abatement material: As the CH-53K is a developmental aircraft, they wanted to minimize the risk of foreign objects and debris being vertically propelled into the aircraft and damaging it. The weight blocks used in the testing were also staged here.

"The testers received test efficiency, and MWSS 371 received training on refueling this new aircraft in an operationally realistic environment," said Magana. "It was a win-win

that integrated training with our developmental test."

Remarkably, the large scale test that began its planning phase in early 2020 proceeded without delay despite the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic a mere weeks after formal coordination began.

"The program's schedule didn't slip at all," said Magana. "The customer had implemented strict COVID-19 procedures for their personnel prior to coming here and after arriving, and followed all of YPG's procedures once they were here."



LOANED PHOTOS

Equipped with three 7,500 horsepower engines and built to carry a nearly 30 ton external load for more than 100 miles, the CH-53K King Stallion is faster, stronger, lighter, and boasts a 20% increase in heavy lift capability over its predecessors.

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VETERANS DAY

FROM PAGE 1

Military Freefall School (MFFS) provides Special Operations Training for all four branches of the military, and home to approximately 70 Special Operators.

In pursuit of our national security, MFFS cadre have a combined 121 deployments to the combat theatre. These deployments include notable operations and missions such as Operation Urgent Fury (Grenada), Operations Heavy Shadow (the Hunt for Pablo Escobar), Operation Gothic Serpent (Somalia), Operation Anaconda (Afghanistan), and Operation Phantom Fury (Fallujah).

More recently, Active Duty Joint Special Operators now assigned to the MFFS have seen combat action in Iraq, Afghanistan, North Africa, and Syria. Among the many notable achievements of these Service Members are the numerous Combat awards, to include

- 6 Purple Heart Medals
- 2 Silver Stars (3rd highest award in the U.S. military)
- 8 Bronze Stars with Valor
- 1 Joint Service Medal with Valor
- 10 Army Commendation with Valor
- Over 70 Combat Infantry / Action badges / Combat Action Ribbon (USMC)
- Over 70 Campaign Medals with Combat Device

Though these Special Operators now train the future generation on the tactical application of Freefall Parachuting, walking among them are proven Combat Soldiers from the Army's Special Forces and Rangers, the Air Force's Special Warfare Command, the Navy's SEAL and EOD teams, and the USMC Recon Community. As we celebrate our Veterans, we also celebrate their families, the sacrifices made by both, and their uniformed service to our country.

Year round Military Appreciation display



By Ana Henderson

Shearwater work order clerk, Almina Dewitt is proud to honor active duty and Veterans every day. She has dedicated three walls in her office in Bldg. 404 to photos of past and present command leaders as well as active duty and Veterans she's met throughout the years. She calls the wall her service member wall.

A co-worker had mentioned to her that he worked with a person who hung photos of Veterans every Veterans Day and it was nice. "I said, 'I am going to do better than that, I am going to have the board and I am going to have the Vets year around so we can celebrate them.'

"I feel why not celebrate our Vets. They protect us. They don't ask any questions. They put the uniform on and they fight for us."

Dewitt started the wall about five years ago and three years ago she dedicated a wall to those who have passed after her husband's his death.

"Number one, I am a military wife since I was 19 years old. So all my life that's all I know. I traveled all over the world. If it wasn't for him I wouldn't have known the places I have known."

Dewitt says military members current and past bring her photos for her wall. Those who see the wall are appreciative of her devotion to the military.

"They come in to do service orders and they completely forget about the service order." Adding, "They love it and say 'that is awesome.'"

She's also a volunteer for the American Legion which provides services for active duty and Veterans.

PHOTOS BY ANA HENDERSON

YPG provides great career opportunity for military veterans

By Ana Henderson

When the general public thinks of members of the armed forces they might automatically imagine them on the frontlines at war; however, there are many who have served in other capacities and are using those skills at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG).

Between 40 and 45% of YPG's workforce is former military. Perhaps this is in part because of the local presence of YPG and Marine Corps Air Station-Yuma, with many veterans deciding to make Yuma their home. While that might be the case, YPG employs veterans from all branches of service. Another reason may be because the Armed Forces instills a work ethic unlike no other and that's exactly the type of employees YPG is looking for to meet the demands of

all aspects of the developmental test world.

Retired Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 Huram Torres says while serving he learned, "Be all you can be. If you work hard enough you can accomplish any goal that you set for yourself. Know yourself. Seek self-improvement and always be on time ten minutes early!"

During his time in the Army, Torres started out as a tank mechanic then subsequently an automotive maintenance technician, then became a battalion maintenance officer. Torres now uses those skills at YPG as an Equipment Specialist at the Metrology and Simulation Division. He never worried if his skills would translate to the civilian workforce, "The Army taught me to be a mechanic and equipment maintenance manager. I

signed up right out of high school."

In addition to the testing side at YPG the installation supports a small community where active duty, retired military, civilians, contractors and their families reside. U.S. Army YPG Garrison provides amenities similar to a small town which includes a fire department, police department, health and fitness centers, as well as resources for financial and family well-being.

Retired Air Force Master Sgt. Arlene Gentry came to YPG following her retirement to work as the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator. In the Air Force she started as an information manager, working in administration and small computer maintenance then cross-trained and became an equal employment opportunity advisor until retirement. She like Torres said her

time serving prepared her for a career after the military. "I was in a career field that handled both military and civilian complaints. I was trained in both processes and knew I could transfer into either state or government positions with my background."

Both value their time in the military. "Joining the military and serving 21 years was one of the best decisions of my life. I would do it all over again in a heartbeat" said Gentry.

Just like the hundreds of other veterans working at YPG, they also enjoy serving their county in a different manner," Torres said. "It's been an honor and a pleasure to serve and assist other veterans"

Gentry adds, "I love being here at YPG, learning the Army way of life has been such a great experience for me."



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**Remembering
Their Sacrifice**



Ammo lead coaches student athletes to success

By Ana Henderson

When you meet Adrian Fernandez, he makes an impression.

He stands 6 feet 2 inches tall and is broad as a bear, hence his nickname Oso (bear in Spanish).

At U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), where Fernandez has worked since 2002, he is the Ammunition Plant Lead, but when the clock strikes five, he turns into Coach Fernandez.

He leaves work and drives straight to Cibola High School. "The schedule is pretty tight."

Fernandez is the defense line coach for the varsity Cibola football team. It's there on the field where Fernandez strives to make an impression.

"I know there are kids I have really helped."

Fernandez initially started coaching about eight years ago when his oldest son, 11 at the time, was in Pop Warner. He then helped coach his second son's team. As the years have passed his oldest children have graduated yet Fernandez continues coaching.

"It stuck, I liked it. I liked helping out."

Coaching makes for very long days-- he gets home just after eight and leaves his wife, Letty, to run the

household. "To be honest, I give Letty a lot of credit. She's always been very supportive."

For Fernandez, the sacrifice is rewarding. "When I coached them young and now I see them in high school and they are respectful those things are the rewarding for me. Just seeing develop into young men."

Fernandez himself was one of those young boys who used football as an outlet. He played football from the time he was nine years old all the way up until high school. After high school, Fernandez joined the Marines. After his service to the country he started playing football again. He played as a center for seven years for two semi-pro teams, the Yuma Blitz and the Arizona Night Hawks.

Now as a coach Fernandez hopes to provide the students with support.

"They are in a safe environment. I like seeing them succeed, not just on the field. Especially at the high school level, when you see them get the scholarships or graduate and go to college."

Fernandez is a father to six kids and started coaching to help his sons' teams. He would like to give this advice to parents of other student athletics.

"As parents if we can be more helpful to our kids when it comes to extra-curricular activities. It really benefits the kids. It doesn't mean necessarily coaching. I have seen situations where parents aren't committed and their kids don't show up to practice because they don't have a ride."



YPG Ammunition Plant Lead Adrian Fernandez is also the defense line coach for the varsity Cibola football team.



Adrian Fernandez initially started coaching about eight years ago when his oldest son, 11 at the time, was in Pop Warner. He then helped coach his second son's team. As the years have passed his oldest children have graduated yet Fernandez continues coaching.



Adrian Fernandez played as a center for seven years for two semi-pro teams, the Yuma Blitz and the Arizona Night Hawks.

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Chaplain's Corner

God will be with us

By Maj. Ronald Beltz

Dr. William Hinson recalls the time when his children were younger and one child's pet died. Dr. Hinson says that he practiced "replacement therapy." When one pet died it was replaced by another pet. One time his youngest daughter Cathy's cat died. Together they went to find another pet. Cathy selected a tiny peekapoo puppy. When they got home Dr. Hinson agreed to build a dog house for the new pet to live in. "The only kind of dog I knew very much about was a really big bird dog," he recalls, "So when I built the dog house, I built a very large house." In fact the house was too large for the small dog.

The size of the dog house scared the little peekapoo puppy. No matter what they did the little dog would not go near the dog house. They would put his food in there, and the dog would go hungry; they would put water in there, and the dog would not drink. "In exasperation," Dr. Hinson admits, "I would shove him in and hold my hands over the door; but the minute I would move, he would run out, unbelievably

frightened." Nothing worked. The little dog would not go into his dog house no matter what they did to entice him.

In disgust, Dr. Hinson went inside, and sat down in the den while his daughter, Cathy, stood outside crying over her dad's impatience and the refusal of her puppy to cooperate. After a while, Cathy got down on her hands and knees and crawled into the dog house herself. When she crawled into it something wonderful happened. That little puppy trotted right in beside her and stretched out on the dog house floor. Before too long the dog was taking a nap. All the shadows now stood still for him, and all the fear was taken out of the darkness, because the one whom he loved and trusted had preceded him into that dark and frightening place. It no longer caused him fear.

There's a lesson here for us. We can surrender our wills to God's will knowing that God loves us. Wherever God leads us, God will be with us. We don't have to enter the dark dog houses of life alone.

CYS passes out candy



PHOTO BY ANA HENDERSON

The Youth Services team started Halloween partying a bit early by hosting a drive - thru candy bag handout on Oct. 28th. Families with their smiling children drove up and grabbed a bag while maintaining a safe distance.

Commissary pumpkin contest winner



LOANED PHOTO

Dallas Rippy won big, a big pumpkin that is! The YPG Commissary hosted the weight guessing contest and Rippy guessed 65 pounds. In case you were wondering the pumpkin weighed a whopping 106 lbs.

Garrison Employee Recognition Ceremony Awards

Commander's Safety Awards

Chaplain Maj. Ronald Beltz,
Debbie Campbell, Terree Castello,
Phillip Duhart, Brad Grey, Richard Martin,
Mike Morris, Ron Van Why

Commander's Project Convergence Awards

Vince Avanzini, Cheryl Avery, Shawn Baker,
Charles Cornett, Rosemary Cortez,
Manuel Enriquez, Marko Evitch,
Susan Glatt, Joe Lopez, Chief Donnie Lucas,
Richard Martin, Sonja May, David Nieto,
Tarnell Pritchett, Beatrice Ramirez,
Edgar Ramirez, Kirk Steib, Clinton Stone,
Albert Wheaton, Anthony Williams

LTG Gabram's COVID-19 Recognition

Debbie Campbell, Janae Espinoza,
Jairo Magana, Mike Morris

Length of Service Awards

45 years – Carlos Generoso
35 years – Ellen Cunningham
30 years – Rodney Borgerding,
Paul Fletcher, Mark Hanley,

Bradford Henderson, John Staggs,
Beverly Williams

25 years – Daniel Goodwin, William Session

20 Years – Kevin Bulkeley, Debra Mercado,
Anthony Rios, Jeffrey Weisz

15 Years – David Nieto, Jr., Iselle Oquendo

10 years – Manuel Enriquez,
Michael Jonez, Cheryl Reinert

5 years – Monique Valencia

Certificate of Achievement

Kevin Bulkeley, Garret House, John Staggs,
Steven Lalonde, Keanu Nakasawa,
Joshua Onyan, Carlos Teran

Civilian Service Commendation Medal

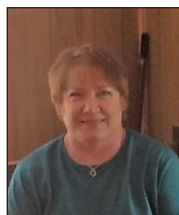
Alexander McNeely, Brad Gray

Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Reed Rider, Daniel Steward, Anette Branch,
Mindy Cordova, Martha Cota,
Debra Mercado, Monique Valencia,
Officer David Thompson, William Session,
Michael Lutz, Lt. Joe Lopez,
Lt. Alejandro Banda, Sgt. Shawn Baker



**Civilian of the
2nd Quarter**
Deborah Campbell



**Civilian of the
1st Quarter**
Susan Virgilio



PHOTO BY FMWR

FMWR hosts movie in the park

YPG's Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation department hosted a movies in the park for YPG residents. Families set out their blankets and chairs and enjoyed watching "The Nightmare Before Christmas" under the stars on Cox Field.

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Graves Jr. (Ret.)



Army Sgt. 1st Class
Vincenzo Avanzini (Ret.)



Army Sgt. 1st Class
Darin Meeks (Ret.)



Army Sgt. Jack Strickland



Marine Sgt. Adrian Fernandez



Navy Senior Chief Petty
Officer Joel Holsinger (Ret.)



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Chief Petty Officer Donna Peet (Ret.)



Navy Personnel Spc. 2nd Class
Christopher Jones (Ret.)

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