The Outpost

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

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(Right) YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall, his wife Heidi and their children along with (Left) Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill, his wife Amanda and their children wish the YPG family a happy holiday and New Year. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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New U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Command Sgt. Maj. ready to lead

By Mark Schauer

Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill assumed the highest enlisted leadership position at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) on Nov. 19 in a change of responsibility ceremony presided over by YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall.

Hailing to YPG from Fort Hood, Texas, Gill stressed the vital importance of YPG's test mission to the warfighter in remarks following the ceremony. He also pledged to foster the same camaraderie between the military and civilian workforce that outgoing Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson was widely praised for.

"I'm here to help you with everything you need from me," he said. "Don't hesitate to ask anything you need of me or my family."

In remarks to the audience, McFall praised Nelson for his service as a valued advisor during the first four months of his command, which included the proving ground hosting Project Convergence 20, the Army's

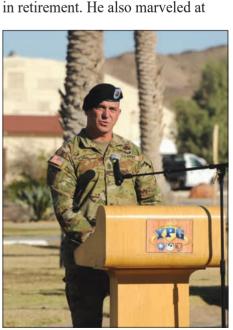


Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill assumed the highest enlisted leadership position at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground on Nov. 19 in a change of responsibility ceremony presided over by YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

largest demonstration project of the year, amidst the ever-present risk of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"A change of responsibility means you are losing a friend and a family, but also gaining a friend and family," McFall said. "It is both a sad and grateful day."

For his part, Nelson thanked YPG's Soldiers and workforce for their efforts during his tenure. He also expressed special appreciation for local military support groups such as the Yuma 50 and the military affairs committee of the Yuma County Chamber of Commerce, describing Yuma as the most military-friendly place he had encountered during his career, which influenced his decision to stay in the community



"I'm here to help you with everything you need from me. Don't hesitate to ask anything you need of me or my family," said Gill during his welcome speech.

YPG's ascent to the forefront of Army modernization efforts.

"YPG is on the map for several things. It isn't because of anything anyone said, it is because of the work YPG does."

McFall stressed that YPG's role in Army modernization efforts is vital to the success of the Soldiers who risk their lives to protect the United States Constitution and deter potential adversaries.

"This command is now your responsibility along with mine," he said. "We have a great responsibility before us, and I look forward to serving with you."

Gill said he was enthused about the new position and YPG's highly skilled personnel, and thanked the YPG community for their warm welcome.

"Thank you for making us a part of your family. So far to date, this is the most inviting place I have ever been."

Gill, a 24-year veteran of the Army, has deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan twice. His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star with four oak leaf clusters and the Purple Heart.



Gill thanked the YPG community for their warm welcome. "Thank you for making us a part of your family. So far to date, this is the most inviting place I have ever been." Following the ceremony Gill and wife Amanda were greeted by Yuma Mayor Douglas Nicholls.

The Outpost

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Trespassing on YPG is dangerous, illegal

By Mark Schauer

It's not a jungle out there, but trespassing on YPG's vast desert ranges is dangerous enough.

Unauthorized entry into any military installation is a crime, but the proving ground has a host of hazards that are as unique as its mission testing virtually every piece of equipment in the ground combat arsenal in a natural environment.

After 77 years of existence and plenty of posted no trespass signs, you might think people would steer clear of these areas.

But you would be wrong. And instances of trespassing, even vandalism, have increased in recent years, necessitating a vigorous enforcement response from the YPG Police Department.

"The off highway vehicle (OHV) population is pretty prevalent," said Sgt. David Nieto, range conservation officer for the YPG Police Department. "They've been using one of the BLM roads, driving around our restricted area signs, and establishing a new road across our boundary."

In addition to the possibility of unexploded ordnance from the proving ground's distant history as a World War II training facility, YPG's 1,300 square mile ranges accommodate the surface danger zones for test fires of powerful long-range artillery shells and airdrops of cargo parachutes carrying multi-ton pallets of equipment or military vehicles. The testing of laser targeting technology in the area also carries the risk of causing serious eye injuries to unwitting persons traipsing in areas that they do not belong.

"I try to stress to them that there are so many dangers to trespassing within our boundaries, especially not knowing what is being dropped or shot," said Nieto. "The people I encounter are mostly harmless and have no malicious intent, but that won't protect them from these hazards."



Three years ago, trespassers built and used for several months a makeshift clubhouse several miles inside of YPG's boundary. The responsible individuals were cited for multiple offenses and their creation was demolished at their expense. A citation for a first offense carries a \$280 fine, and fines for repeat or particularly egregious violations can run into the thousands of dollars. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

A citation for a first offense carries a \$280 fine, and fines for repeat or particularly egregious violations can run into the thousands of dollars. Three years ago, trespassers built and used for several months a makeshift clubhouse several miles inside of YPG's boundary. YPG Police identified the culprits easily, for they had scrawled their names and a unique internet hashtag onto a picnic bench they brought to the site. The responsible individuals were cited for multiple offenses and their creation was demolished at their expense.

"They had shade structures and lights, even a skeet shooting range," said Nieto.

The dangers to life and limb are bad enough, but trespassing within YPG's borders can also degrade the proving ground's range conservation efforts and mission readiness.

"We want to preserve wildlife habitat, but the larger objective is supporting our test mission," said Daniel Steward, YPG wildlife biologist. "These ranges are our natural laboratory and we try to keep them as pristine as possible."

Steward says that federal law

allows for some public access to military installations, an obligation the proving ground takes seriously.

"We provide for some limited

public access where it's not interfering with our mission," he said.

"We permit hunting in very specific areas and with our range controllers notified of where it is taking place to keep people safe. If we have unauthorized access and range control is not aware of it, it puts people in danger and affects our test mission."

Steward believes that some members of the public may conflate YPG with the Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR), a training range jointly controlled by the Marine Corps and Air Force southeast of YPG that allows significant public access to people who apply for and obtain a permit. Such a liberal policy is not possible at YPG, however.

"Our mission is so much different than that of BMGR," explained Steward. "They're not doing as intensive work on the ground as we do at YPG. Also, the experimental nature of YPG's mission has a lot

SEE TRESPASSING page 4















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more safety and security concerns than theirs."

Steward doesn't anticipate any significant changes to this policy, either.

"The areas we do allow hunting in are very remote and with a volume of visitors we can sustain without impacting our test mission," he said. "There is a huge demand for OHV recreation, and we just couldn't sustain allowing unlimited public access."

YPG's successful wildlife conservation efforts have sustained a variety of creatures that are imperiled in many other places of the American West, from bighorn sheep and Sonoran pronghorn to fringe-toed lizards and the Sonoran desert tortoise. They have also provided ample habitat for numerous species of bats in several abandoned mines that predate the proving ground's existence. The mines, however, also attract trespassers, which can wreak havoc on fragile roosting locations for the bats, natural predators of all manner of pesky insects.

"When there is a bat breeding colony in a mine, one entry is all it takes to wipe out an entire reproduction season for those bats," said Steward. "A lot of bat species are very high conservation concern because of the lack of habitat availability."



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Additionally, Steward adds, isolated abandoned mines are extremely dangerous places for people to visit.

"Mines are flat-out hazardous,"

Steward said. "They have bad air, unstable ground and ceilings, and deep, sometimes flooded shafts. They are real death traps. Stay out and stay alive."

YPG employs comprehensive vetting system

Submitted by Chief Donnie Lucas

A change has come to U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground (USAG-YPG) to further bolster our already strong security posture. Many of USAG-YPG's customers, employees, and visitors are already familiar with our screening process both at the Visitor Control Center (VCC) and at all the access control points (ACP). Our former system was a temporary solution for proof vetting and fitness determination until the Army fielded the Automated Installation Entry (AIE) system. This systems is now installed and operational.

To most, this system will seem very similar to our former vetting program, since it's basically a handheld identification (ID) scanner. The major difference is its capabilities. Based on regulatory and statutory requirements, all who enter a military installation must be vetted in order to establish their fitness to enter the installation. By that we, the Protection Division, responsible for access control, must verify that all who enter must meet specific criteria mandated by Department of Defense and Army directives.

The new system gives law enforcement the capability to scan all ID cards such as: common access cards (CAC) cards, dependent ID cards, retiree ID cards and driver's licenses through multiple Federal Bureau of Investigation, Homeland Security, law enforcement and Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System databases. This process through a scan is almost instantaneous, but some ID cards

may take a little longer than others so we ask for your patience when we do these scans. All occupants of a vehicle must show a form of ID to enter and all will be scanned. Due to our ever present COVID-19 pandemic we ask that you follow the instruction, at the ACP. When a vehicle with multiple occupants stops at the ACP, all occupants will pass their ID Card to the driver, driver please hold up each ID Card so that the scanner can read the barcode on the back of the card. The Trusted Traveler program is currently on hold by senior leadership. Once it is reactivated all CAC card/dependent ID card holders scanned will be automatically enrolled through the scanner.

Some issues may arise once scanned and you may be asked to resolve them at the VCC rather than at the ACP. Please follow the instructions provided to you by our staff at the gates and VCC to make this process go smoothly.

The VCC will be issuing visitors a new badge that resembles a CAC card but will have the capabilities to be scanned at the gates. The requirements have not changed for the badge which will only be issued for a stay longer to two weeks and up to one year (the maximum). Anything short of two weeks, visitors will still receive a paper pass.

For any questions or concerns please reach out to the Protection Division, Chief Physical Security Branch Vince Avanzini at (928) 328-2216 or at vincenzo.g.avanzini. civ@mail.mil.

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Pegasus flies — and drives — at Yuma Proving Ground

By Mark Schauer

During Project Convergence 20, the Army Futures Command's capstone exercise of an ambitious project of learning, multiple examples of the most cutting-edge military technology were put through their paces on YPG's vast ranges.

Among the most futuristic of these systems was the Pegasus, a family of tactical autonomous systems that blur conventional notions of ground and air systems.

"These vehicles fit a new category of robotic systems," said Alberto Lacaze, President of Robotic Research. "They aren't quite ground vehicles, they're not quite aerial vehicles—they're somewhere in between."

The Pegasus Mini folds into the size of a football, the intermediate Pegasus II weighs about 15 pounds, and the larger Pegasus III, colloquially dubbed "Megasus", is robust enough to tote a machine gun with free range of motion or other similarly-sized payload. What all three have in common is the ability to be used as either an airborne unmanned aerial system (UAS), a ground-roving tracked vehicle, or both, in service of simple surveillance or to create richly detailed 3D maps of an area. When the vehicle is shifted from groundbased to air-based mode, its ground tracks rotate up to become propeller guards. The potential uses for Soldiers are numerous.

"When they walk into an urban area, they are very exposed, especially



The Pegasus is a family of tactical autonomous systems that blur conventional notions of ground and air systems. Alberto Lacaze, President of Robotic Research said, "They aren't quite ground vehicles, they're not quite aerial vehicles—they're somewhere in between."

if there is no place for a vehicle to go," said Lacaze. "The advantage of this system is that it could go to a location and perch to maintain oversight."

Soldiers could use multiple craft to fly into a building through an upperstory window, land them inside, and then operate them as a ground rover to inspect or surveil other portions of the building, flying over staircases and obstacles wherever needed.

"Soldiers are not always sure if a building they want to enter is structurally sound after a fight," said Lacaze. "This can provide a set of eyes in a dangerous location."

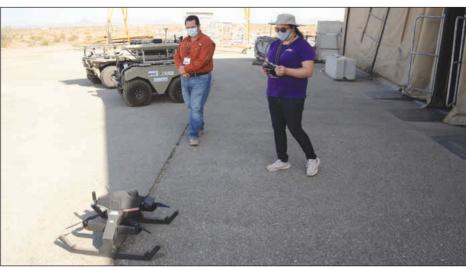
Robotic Research is also developing a hybrid Pegasus that will powered primarily by gasoline, which means it can stay aloft for hours longer than a system powered only by batteries. It will also boast artificial intelligence that can work with other craft in tandem to produce intricate maps of an area as it roves along, even in a GPS-denied environment. If an area is suspected to be contaminated by biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons, a Pegasus outfitted with detection equipment could survey it while its human operators are a safe distance away.

"All of this can be done without GPS," said Lacaze.

During Project Convergence, the Pegasus systems were engaging in three simulated missions per day as testers gathered data about their performance. One human controller could utilize multiple Pegasus to characterize portions of YPG's rugged ranges by air and ground and have maps displayed to them in near real-



When the vehicle is shifted from ground-based to air-based mode, its ground tracks rotate up to become propeller guards.



All three Pegasus models have the ability to be used as either an airborne unmanned aerial system a ground-roving tracked vehicle, or both, in service of simple surveillance or to create richly detailed 3D maps of an area (Photos by Mark Schauer)

time.

"We mapped a large area and did laser designations from the ground and the air," said Lacaze.

The intense conditions, most notably the unrelenting summer heat that saw nine days of record-breaking temperatures, gave the testers insights into the system's performance in the world's harshest conditions. Lacaze expects the Pegasus will see additional testing at YPG in the future.

"The support we've gotten from YPG has been very good," said Lacaze. "We will keep refining the system and learning more."

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A look back at 2020: a year of growth, success and perseverance

By Ana Henderson

For many, the year 2020 will go down in infamy. It was the year that the world stopped because of the global pandemic. For Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) it will go down as the year our workforce set

a new standard of excellence and professionalism. YPG managed to pull off two of the largest events in its history. In February, YPG hosted the YPG 2020 open house and community celebration and seven months later the installation

hosted Project Convergence 20 (PC20). YPG 2020 brought in a record breaking 23,000 community members, and PC20 brought in the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff, three and four star generals, and hundreds of support

personnel. As we all know, in between those seven months is when COVID-19 reared its ugly head. YPG couldn't put its mission to support the Warfighter on hold, and it didn't.

Here is a look back at 2020 in the eyes of the Outpost.

Record breaking attendance at YPG 2020



Nearly 23,000 people flocked to YPG for the YPG 2020 open house and community celebration on Cox Field, Feb. 15. The event was a way for YPG to showcase its work plus to thank the community for their support throughout the years. The legendary Grand Funk Railroad band headlined the event while local bands played throughout the day. The Military Freefall School kicked off the celebration with a flag jump, followed by a flyover. Entertainment included; the Gila Ridge marching band and the military working dogs demonstration, plus a field full of static displays. (Photos by YPG's Public Affairs Office staff)





ERCA demo drew top brass to YPG

In early March, YPG demonstrated a dramatic stride in achieving the Army's goal of accurately firing at targets 100 kilometers away by 2023. The demonstration attended by some of the Army's highest-ranking officials, as well as members of the local and national media who watched both in person and via video feeds at the Pentagon and Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Among the numerous officials who travelled to YPG to witness the test.

The visitors witnessed two separate test fires of both the Excalibur precision guided munition and the XM1113 rocket-assisted high explosive projectile from a Prototype 0 XM 1299 self-propelled howitzer. Both Excalibur projectiles achieved a 65 kilometer precision hit, and both XM 1113 projectiles achieved a 65 kilometer range. The performance of the XM 1299, outfitted with a 58 caliber tube on a PIM chassis with loader assist, was the centerpiece of the test.



Yuma Proving Ground and the Cold Regions Test Center welcomed new commanders





Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) and Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC) welcomed new commanders.

ABOVE LEFT: Col. Patrick McFall took command of the Army's premier test center in a virtual ceremony on July 8 from outgoing YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger. (Photo by Ana Henderson) ABOVE RIGHT: Lt. Col. Ina Jackson took command of CRTC from outgoing Lt. Col. Loren Todd on June 30. Due to COVID both change of command ceremonies were significantly scaled down and many had to watch via social media. (Photo by Sebastian Zaarloos)

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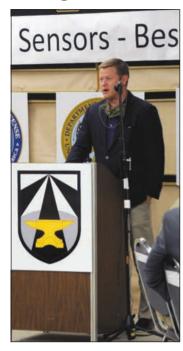
Army senior leaders gathered at YPG to witness Project Convergence 20

The Army's senior civilian and uniformed leaders visited U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) on Sep. 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 YPG as one that will have substantial impact on the Army for decades to come.

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.

YPG Training and Exercise Management Office worked to modernize the FOB to accommodate the hundreds of people who would be needing shelters, network access, and power. With hundreds of support personnel arriving from all over the Department of the Army to support the exercise, safely in-processing the visitors took the efforts of multiple personnel within YPG, including the YPG Health Clinic and the YPG Police Department. Upon arrival, the visitors were queued for a COVID screening and received their access badges without having to leave their car, temperature checks and COVID tests were conducted as well. (Photos by Mark Schauer)









YPG continued mission despite COVID

When the coronavirus showed the world it was a real and deadly threat, YPG's mission continued without pause because halting testing equipment for the Warfighter was not an option.

YPG leadership had to get creative on how to continue testing while keeping the Soldiers, the workforce, and customers safe. Some of those solutions included equipping test sites with live streaming video to allow customers to oversee work while the travel restrictions were in place. Leadership began weekly "Conversation about COVID" videos where they answered questions from the workforce. Employees who could telework did and those who could not followed increased hygiene and social distancing measures.

When masks became mandatory, Soldiers with the Airborne Test force began sewing mask for Soldiers and the civilian workforce who had to work on site, and YPG community members sewed masks by the hundreds for community members. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

YPG welcomes Command Sgt. Maj. Gill

After successfully completing his tenure at U.S. Yuma Proving Ground, Command Sat. Mai. Jamathon Nelson transferred responsibility to his successor, Command Sqt. Maj. Herbert Gill, during a traditional ceremony at the proving ground on Nov. 19th. The Command Sqt. Maj. is the highest-ranking enlisted person at the proving ground, serving as a leader and advocate for Soldiers and their families, and is a close advisor to the base commander. (Photo by Mark Schauer)



Spread some holiday cheer! Join in our annual Holiday Tree Decorating Contest!

Trees are available (while supply lasts) for pick up from the Fitness Center (Bldg. 519) beginning 25 November 2020.

This year's theme is "Army Strong"

To be considered for the contest, all trees must be set up on Cox Field and ready to be judged NLT 1600 on 9 December 2020.

The Winning unit will receive five Large Pizzas courtesy of Coyote Lanes.



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YPG community creates meaningful mural

By Ana Henderson

What better way to capture the thoughts and feelings of Military families living at Yuma Proving Ground then by having them express them in the form of art?

Family Advocacy Program
Manager Lori Bell explained, "I
wanted a way to recognize Military
families on their month in a way that
was creative but also safe and get
the community involved at their own
time."

In the beginning of November, which is Month of the Military Family, Bell placed a blank canvas outside on Cox Field and invited families to decorate the canvas with something that expresses their Military family experience.

The canvas was set out for the entire month and each morning Bell would check on the mural and sanitize the markers.

"The first day I went out there to see if I had to clean any markers,

and there was a little kid's handwriting that said 'they protect us.' I thought that was so sweet. It was the first thing written."

Throughout November she saw the canvas fill up with words and pictures depicting Families' feeling of being protected and thankful for the Military and also their journeys. "There is one where someone drew an ocean and a palm tree then an arrow to a cactus," presumably showing a move from the beach to the desert.

Bell is hoping to find an area large enough to display the canvas and thanks everyone for their participation.



In the beginning of November which is Month of the Military Family, Bell placed a blank canvas outside on Cox Field and invited families to decorate the canvas with something that expresses their military family experience. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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This pandemic has reminded us that we truly are stronger together. As a community, we are braver and more courageous than ever. Many Yumans put their lives and their health needs on hold. As we adjust to this new normal, you can trust that YRMC stands ready to continue caring for you and your family. With rigorous safety measures in place, our healthcare heroes are ready to get your health back on track.

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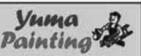
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Be someone's angel

The angels for the Annual YPG Angel Tree Program are now displayed in trees at the Exchange, the ROC Garden Café, and the Roadrunner Café. Each angel lists the age and gender of an at-need child of a Soldier at YPG. To participate pick an angel, purchase a gift, wrap the gift and return it with the angle attached. Gifts can be placed under the trees or dropped off at the ACS, Bldg. 309 by noon on 10 December.



CDC COVID-19 SAFETY GUIDANCE WILL BE FOLLOWED. SOCIAL DISTANCING MUST BE PRACTICED AND PROTECTIVE CLOTH FACE MASKS MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES.

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Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary for us to make a number of temporary changes to the traditional YPG Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony. These changes have been made out of an abundance of caution in an effort to safeguard the community's health and safety. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation during this

difficult period.

Please bring a lawn chair!

Join us in welcoming Santa and his Elves!

Holiday Tree Lighting

Persons of all faiths and denominations are welcome and encouraged to attend!





OUTPOST DECEMBER 7, 2020 11

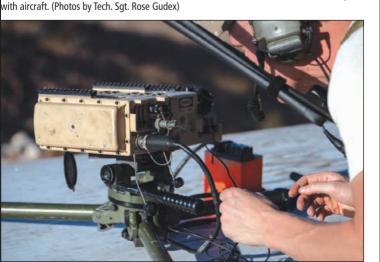
Right on target

Special Operations Terminal Attack Controllers Course (SOTACC) is a 5-week course, hosted by the 24th Special Operations Wing, which allows special operations members from all branches conduct CAS missions and receive their Joint Terminal Attack Controller certification. The JTAC course is the only one in the Department of Defense specifically designed for special operations members.

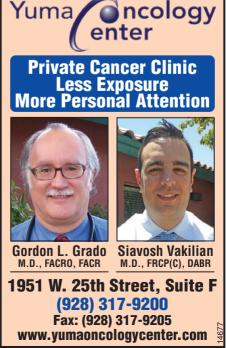












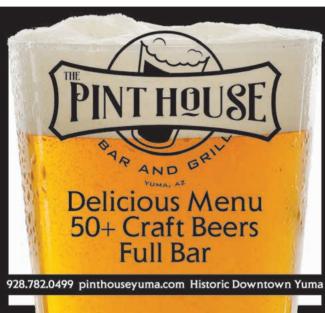
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Military family fun



McGruff the Crime Dog and Sparky made a guest appearance at the Military Family fun night and helped Lori Bell, Family Advocacy Program manager, with the cake cutting.



The event featured jumbo yard games which were a hit with the children.



Army Community Services and Child and Youth Services joined forces to host a Month of the Military Family: family game night on Nov. 18. Organizers wanted to bring families together for some fun plus have some community resources displayed so families could learn about programs at YPG or in the community. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

Chaplain's Corner Always keep a loving heart

By Chaplain Maj. Ronald Beltz

J. Christy Wilson was a missionary-educator in Afghanistan in the 1950s. During this time, there was a near wipeout of Afghanistan's leading industry, sheep breeding. A fatal disease had entered the flocks and stubbornly resisted efforts to eradicate it. With the entire sheep industry in danger of extinction, it meant that there was a loss of wool for clothing, leather for commercial products, and food to eat. In a country already suffering mass poverty, the potential losses were catastrophic.

Wilson understands prayer better than most people. "What can I do?" he prayed. The answer came: "Write to your friends in the United States and ask them to send you some Long Island ducks." So this is what Wilson did. Not long afterwards two dozen duck eggs were shipped air freight from New York. But they didn't reach Afghanistan directly! The shipment was side-tracked and spent many hot days in a

warehouse in Calcutta. When the package finally arrived in Kabul, Afghanistan, some of the eggs were cracked and smelled rotten. He prayed again, "Lord, let at least two eggs hatch out, and let one of them be male and the other female."

Twenty-two eggs proved to be rotten and infertile. Only two hatched. One was male and the other female. In a matter of months they were reproducing, and the offspring multiplied. Then the miracle happened! The ducks began to devour the snails that crawled along the watering holes where the sheep went to drink. Amazingly, the fatal sheep disease disappeared! For the snails proved to be the carriers of the disease.

Life can be full of unexpected things, either happy or sad but no matter what things may happen, always keep a loving heart, a wise mind and a strong faith in God. God promise to us is that we will never have to go through life alone.