

The Outpost

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

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Groundbreaking ceremony for new hangar at Yuma Proving Ground

By Mark Schauer

Testing virtually every piece of equipment in the ground combat arsenal is U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) primary mission.

Yet for more than a quarter of a century, the Military Freefall School (MFFS), part of the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, has utilized the proving ground's vast ranges to train thousands of the military's most elite paratroopers.

Since the opening of one of the world's largest vertical wind tunnels here in 2014, the MFFS's mission has increased significantly. On the morning of Dec. 7, ground was broken for the construction of a two bay hangar for the Special

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Ground broke Dec. 7 for the construction of a two bay hangar for the Special Operations Aviation Command flight detachment that has supported training operations of the Military Free Fall School for the past seven years. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Army's newest 120mm Abrams round tested at YPG

By Maj. Michael P. Brabner

Deep in the desert here, two Ivy Division tank crews of the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team recently tested the Army's newest 120mm tactical service round.

Under 112 degree-plus heat, they simulated combat missions with full ready rack combat loads of the XM-1147 Advanced Multi-Purpose (AMP) round for their M1A2 Abrams Main Battle Tanks against a host of actual and simulated threat targets.

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THIS IS MY SQUAD

Soldier spotlight

By Ana Henderson

U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Minnis is currently serving as the Officer in-Charge of the Airborne Test Force at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). He was assigned to the position in late 2021.

Minnis had previously served at YPG as an enlisted parachute rigger. In total, he served at YPG and Fort Bragg for nine years as a rigger before attending Warrant Officer Candidate School. Upon completion of Warrant Officer training, Minnis served in Georgia, Germany and California in a variety of roles before returning back to Arizona.

In his free-time, Minnis enjoys skydiving, snowboarding, riding his motorcycle, spending time with his dogs, and discovering new local restaurants.



U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Minnis is currently serving as the Officer in-Charge of the Airborne Test Force at Yuma Proving Ground. (Loaned photos)



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YPG leadership visits Cold Regions



Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commander Col. Patrick McFall (middle left), along with Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill (left) toured Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC) during a nice snowfall on Dec. 8. CRTC Commander Lt. Col. Ina Jackson (middle right) and First Sgt. Garcia (right) hosted the command group from YPG.



Col. McFall presented Soldiers from U.S. Army Alaska Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson who are currently participating in new product testing - with coins for their excellent efforts at CRTC. (Photos by Sebastian Saarloos)

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A legacy of service: YPG contracting officer representative accepts appointment to local school board

By Mark Schauer

America was built by the service of generations of ordinary people who did extraordinary things.

Keith A. Ware, contracting officer representative at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), has lived this more than most. Representing the third consecutive generation of his family to serve in uniform, Ware is the grandson of Maj. Gen. Keith Lincoln Ware, one of the most distinguished Army officers of the last century.

Ware is continuing this legacy of service in a new off-duty role: he recently accepted an appointment to a vacancy on the Yuma Elementary School District #1 Board. His service will begin in January and last for at least the remaining year of his predecessor's unexpired term.

"My goals are to focus on the quality and availability of education for the children," Ware said. "I'm keeping that in the forefront of my mind. Shaping the children with their education is going to continue to grow our community: they are our future."

Ware credits his father-in-law, Danny Bryant, with inspiring him to apply for the vacancy.

"He's served on a number of community boards in Yuma. I've watched him influence and improve the quality of the Yuma community. He's been dedicated for decades, and I've observed the personal gratification of seeing the community grow and prosper based on his serving on boards."

Born in Yuma while his father served at YPG as an air traffic controller, Ware grew up here, graduated from Kofa High School, and worked on the range for a summer as a teenager prior to joining the Air Force in the early



Keith A. Ware, contracting officer representative at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground and recently accepted an appointment to a vacancy on the Yuma Elementary School District #1 Board. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

1990s. He expects these roots to deepen.

"I've raised my children here. I have a grandson that's going to grow up here."

Ware's grandfather, the first Officer Candidate School graduate to become a general officer, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor during World War II, served as the Army's Chief of Information, and was killed in action in Vietnam while commanding the 1st Infantry Division. Numerous buildings, a school, and a parade ground at Army posts across the nation have been named in his honor, as have the Army's prestigious award for journalism and other public affairs activities.

"My grandfather has been the core of my commitment in my service in the Air Force. I never met him, but the legacy he left behind for our family and the nation has been amazing. To this day, I run into people who served under him or had family members who did, and every one of them has had something positive to say."

Commemorating Pearl Harbor



Commemorating the attack on Pearl Harbor 80 years later, Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Heritage Center Curator Bill Heidner, reflected while serving as keynote speaker at American Legion Post 19's annual Pearl Harbor Day Memorial Breakfast Dec. 7. YPG is the last active Army installation within the massive Desert Maneuver Area stood up in the wake of American entry into the war. (Photo by Brandon Mejia)

Commander chats with Yuma Chamber



Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commander Col. Patrick McFall visited with Yuma Chamber of Commerce Director Kimberly Kahl on the Dec. 8 episode of "Chamber Chatter" on KBLU 560 AM. McFall discussed Project Convergence 21, YPG's position on the national stage, and why YPG's can-do culture assures the post's continued success. If you missed the broadcast, the audio is available by scanning this QR code. (Photo by Mark Schauer)



Yuma Proving Ground Medical Clinic lab receives a 99% on national accreditation

By Ana Henderson

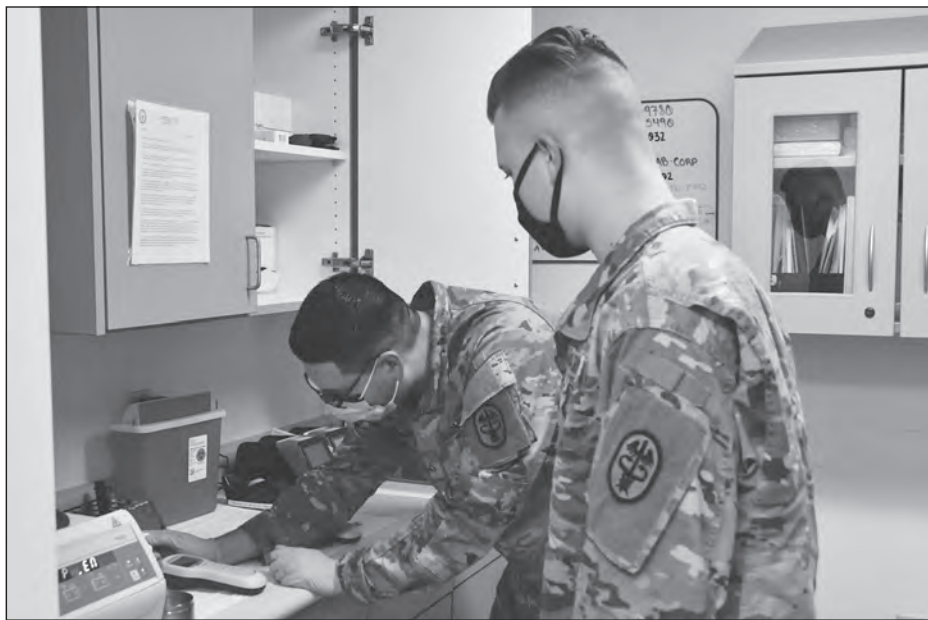
Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) laboratories at the YPG Medical Clinic passed the College of American Pathologists' (CAP) inspections Nov. 9 with a score of 99% compliance.

The CAP's website describes the accreditation as the "most rigorous choice for accreditation, strengthening each laboratory's ability to deliver high-quality service to ensure the best patient care possible."

The CAP accreditation process takes place over several months and includes a checklist specific to the laboratory, waived testing that is conducted hands-on by testing specimens and concludes with an in person inspection.

Because YPG's Medical Clinic laboratory recently transitioned under the Defense Health Agency they are required to complete the inspection.

The work of Pfc. Zachary Jones



The work of Pfc. Zachary Jones and Pfc. Jonathan Martinez was put under the microscope during the accreditation process. Their work representing the YPG laboratory passed the College of American Pathologists inspections with a score of 99% compliance (Photo by Brandon Mejia)

and Pfc. Jonathan Martinez, who are both healthcare specialist/ combat medics, was put under the microscope during the accreditation process. They are responsible for

gathering and testing specimens at the YPG Medical Clinic. They use on-site diagnostic tools that can test

for a variety of ailments.


"It tests for influenza, RSV, strep, pregnancy test," explained Martinez.

Part of the accreditation program involves on-going monthly spot checking by CAP.

"They will send us samples and we test them, provide our results and return the sample. They let us know if we tested it correctly. We have been at 100% compliance," explains Martinez.

These quality control tests translate to "safety" for the YPG community said Maj. Ashley Aiton the clinic's officer-in-charge. They provide peace of mind that their lab results are always handled with care and accuracy.

"The biggest thing is safety and with productivity as far as sending labs out and getting results back. They can do it in a timely manner. It makes the providers job in house a lot easier," added Aiton.








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Mr. and Mrs. Claus visit library



Mr. and Mrs. Claus visited the Yuma Proving Ground Library on the morning of Dec. 11. Dozens of families showed up to meet the pair. Mrs. Claus sat down for story time with the children and read "Who will pull Santa's sleigh?" Each child got to take a copy of the book home as a special gift. Afterwards snacks were provided. (Loaned photos)



YPG Auto Skills Center is open for business

By: Brandon Mejia

Getting to know your car, that is the goal for the new Automotive Skills Manager and mechanic, Ray Lichtenberg.

“I want to create a simple suggestion for most people who don’t know their car, let’s get to know your car,” Lichtenberg said. “We got the door open.”

The Auto Skills shop is operating again at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). The shop is open Tuesday through Thursday 8 a.m. – 4:30 a.m. for services, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturdays, and closed Sunday and Monday.

Whether its mechanical advice or a tune-up, Lichtenberg’s roots run deep in the automotive industry.

He got his first taste living at Robinson Barracks Stuttgart Germany. As his father served overseas in the late 70s, “I had the opportunity to go to the skills center and help at that time,” Lichtenberg said. “I wanted to learn everything.”

He would later join the military and was stationed at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. “I bought my

first car in the military,” he said. He would also use the base’s auto skills center for maintenance and repairs. It’s something he said he hopes to see from young military personnel living at YPG.

Lichtenberg would go on to pursue his passion for cars. After leaving the military he went back into the private sector to become a full-time mechanic. Before coming to YPG, Lichtenberg ran his own auto-shop for eight years in Minnesota.

Not only did he work on cars, he also built them from the ground up. Some of his work was even featured in what’s known as the ‘Super bowl’ of car shows.

“I have been able to create a complete vehicle that has been showcased at SEMA, to be honored like that, to have one of my builds not once, but twice at this arena is just phenomenal,” he shared. “You don’t just show up to these, you get invited.”

Having achieved the pinnacle, and wanting warmer weather, Lichtenberg jumped back into the government taking the new position



Mechanic Ray Lichtenberg (right) helps one of the first people to come back to the Auto Skills shop for work on their vehicle after its reopening.

at YPG as the Automotive Skills manager and mechanic.

“Being able to payback what I’ve

learned, to offer to service members and their families, it feels like it’s a great reward,” he said.



The Auto Skill Center opens for services Tuesday through Thursday 8 a.m. – 6:30 p.m., 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturdays. (Photos by Brandon Mejia)

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ROUND

FROM PAGE 1

Tank Crew 1 commanded by 2nd Lt. Jake Hall, with Gunner Sgt. Spencer Vanderbilt, loader Pvt. Dalton Diserio, and driver Pvt. Justin Jones, not only knows what it feels like to roll out in a fully combat loaded tank on an operationally-realistic simulated mission, but they have witnessed the firepower the AMP round brings to the fight.

“This round is not something to be taken lightly,” said Vanderbilt, of Charlie Company “Crazy Horse,” 1st Battalion “Fighting Eagles” of the 8th Infantry Regiment.

“Being able to see and then destroy anti-tank guided missile targets beyond 2,000 meters and then transition immediately to breaching walls or obstacles is an incredibly powerful feeling!”

“We now know what it feels like to roll out in a fully combat loaded tank on operationally realistic combat missions and recognize how important the AMP round will be to U.S. Army ABCT fighting forces in the fights yet to be fought,” added Hall.

Tank Crew 2, commanded by



Soldiers assigned to Crazy Horse Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division test the XM-1147 Advanced Multi-Purpose round. (Photo by Capt. Tobias Cukale)

Staff Sgt. Nicholas Smearman, with Gunner Sgt. Juan Segura, loader Spc. Blake Phillips, and driver Pvt. Adam

Allwine, also unleashed AMP fury on the same host of targets in the Yuma desert.

Phillips, said he was amazed by

the AMP round’s performance and awesome power.

“The Abrams Tank’s lethality has been revamped!” he said.



A U.S. Army M1A2 Abrams Main Battle Tank with an almost complete combat load of 120mm XM1147 Advanced Multi-Purpose tactical service rounds before an operational test combat mission. (Photo by Maj. Michael P. Brabner)



An XM-1147 Advanced Multi-Purpose (AMP) round test shot showing effectiveness against a reinforced concrete wall. (U.S. Army)

Capabilities of the AMP round included the new airburst mode and breaching double reinforced concrete walls.

After shooting over 90 AMP rounds at anti-tank guided missile teams, massed infantry, infantry fighting vehicles and bunker targets, the Crazy Horse armored crews unanimously agreed training conducted during the test was the best in their careers.

The tankers pushed each other hard, testing the AMP round in what evolved into a competitive shooting competition in the Yuma desert, both day and night.

Test Team Master Gunner Vehicle Crew Evaluator Master Sgt. Joel Ramirez, of the Fort Hood, Texas-based U.S. Army Operational Test Command said the purpose of the operational testing is to collect performance data and Soldier feedback to inform the Army's procurement decision regarding the AMP round.

"We do this by having the tank crews employ the tactical service round in a manner and in an environment that closely mimics combat conditions," said Ramirez.

He went on to explain how the 3rd ABCT tank crews shot over eight complex modified tank gunnery combat scenarios during the four-day record test.

"Despite extreme desert heat, dust storms and rain squalls, the Crazy Horse crews really impressed me with their level of motivation and drive to test the AMP round," said Kent Evans, the Maneuver Requirements Division Soldier and Capability representative from Fort Benning, Georgia.

The XM-1147 AMP round was designed to enhance a tank crew's ability to perform missions with greater lethality and survivability, according to Jeff McNaboe, lead project engineer, Program Manager for Maneuver Ammunition Systems. Developed by engineers from Picatinny Arsenal, New Jersey, the AMP round is a replacement for four legacy service rounds.

CEREMONY

FROM PAGE 1

Operations Aviation Command flight detachment that has supported training operations of the MFFS for the past seven years.

"The C27 that will be housed in this hangar is nearly perfect for the MFFS mission," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 David Jones, the detachment's commander. "I'm excited for this hangar. I can't think of a better way to really solidify the future of this USASOC flight detachment than the construction of this hangar."

The flight detachment maintains and flies the C27J, formerly used as a niche cargo plane to supplement the larger C-130. The aircraft was extensively tested at YPG prior to being fielded and is regarded by many as a high performance aircraft. It achieves altitude more quickly than the aircraft formerly used to support the MFFS prior to the creation of the flight detachment, and also accommodates two to three times as many jumpers at a time, which has also contributed to a significant expansion of MFFS training opportunities in recent years.

"This is a symphony," said Maj. Nicholas Garver, MFFS commander. "We could not do it without the world class knowledge and expertise the flight detachment brings every day. This hangar will make the symphony even more efficient."

The hangar is the first of three new buildings that that will ultimately bring all of the MFFS' activities into one campus.

"What we do here every day is very dynamic in nature," said Garver. "Having everyone consolidated in one area helps with efficiency and with a sense of community. As we transition to great power competition, these facilities will help us reach the goal of providing a greater capability for the Army enterprise."

"Everything we do here is tied to time and efficiency," added Sgt. Maj. Christopher Bauer. "After nearly 30 years here on the ground at Yuma Proving Ground, we've gotten pretty efficient, but this new construction will give us a place of our own and increase our efficiency."

The hangar, built by Harper Construction, is scheduled for completion in 2023.

"Any time we add facilities to our installations, we have to think further down the road," said Ron James, YPG Garrison manager. "Sustainment goes into the planning process. It's not just breaking some ground and the great people putting up these



"I'm excited for this hangar. I can't think of a better way to really solidify the future of this USASOC flight detachment than the construction of this hangar," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 David Jones.

buildings, it's the sustainment of the buildings and the extra effort that goes into our support of it."

The remaining two buildings that will constitute the MFFS campus, along with the construction of access aprons and improved taxiways, are expected to be finished by 2026.

"Our largest Soldier population is the Military Freefall School," said James. "We're thankful that the Special Operations community brought this construction to YPG to enhance their mission. It's a real demonstration of commitment."



The new hangar that is being constructed by Harper is scheduled for completion sometime in 2023. The remaining two buildings that will constitute the MFFS campus, along with the construction of access aprons and improved taxiways, are expected to be finished by 2026. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

Wreaths Across America Day



Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Patrick McFall his wife Heidi and children, along with Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill and his son attended Yuma's annual commemoration of National Wreaths Across America Day at Sunset Vista Cemetery Dec. 18. Col. McFall served as this year's keynote speaker. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



Trees for Troops

Soldiers and their Families welcomed the fresh smell of Douglas Fir Christmas Trees into their homes Dec. 7 thanks to the Trees for Troops donation at Yuma Proving Ground. 33 Soldiers were able to get a tree. The left over trees were donated to the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion Post 19. (Photos by Brandon Mejia)



Holiday Tree Lighting



Despite the cold and a little bit of drizzle, the Yuma Proving Ground community gathered for the annual Holiday Tree Lighting Dec. 9 at Cox Field. Those in attendance got a special visit from Mr. and Mrs. Claus. (Photos by Brandon Mejia)



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Chaplain's Corner

Rule of life

Chaplain's Corner
Chaplain Maj.
Jeffrey Crispin



Happy New Year YPG Family, I'm not a big fan of New Year's Resolutions. I've read statistics that most of the ones people set don't hold up to the realities of our schedules and simply create stress and even self-condemnation.

Instead, I am trying to select a theme or message for the year that I want to reflect on regularly and see where I can apply it to the things that are already going on. I want to invite you to join me.

Saint Benedict developed a "rule of life." It was a short statement that encapsulated priorities in life. I learned more about it in school, but it's been a while. For some people it is a list of the top 3-5 priorities and if something doesn't help those priorities, it makes it easier to set it aside or "just say no!" An example might be: God, family, country/church, friends... then if you want to go high speed, turn it into an acronym that means something to you: GFC2F and you can write it places you look regularly as a reminder: a post it on the bathroom mirror, someplace at your workspace, set a recurring note on your phone, etc.

I'm a big fan of the less is more school of thought. That's why being a Chaplain is a great fit for me. There's even an acronym for it: Keep It Simple Soldier, KISS.

My theme for 2022 is something that I've been reflecting on quite a bit lately and it needs to be better incorporated into my life.

FAITH FEAR

It is a graphic representation. FAITH over fear. It's my reminder that I need to keep first things first, with faith in God, my spouse, my family etc. as bigger in my eyes than whatever fears from life circumstances may come my way this year.

In the New Living Translation of Proverbs 3:21-23 it says: "My child, don't lose sight of good planning and insight. Hang on to them, for they fill you with life and bring you honor and respect. They keep you safe on your way and keep your feet from stumbling."

That's my encouragement to you as we begin 2022. We don't know what the year will hold, but we'll plan the best we can, lean into our faith for insight, persevere through whatever comes and look to God for life, safety, honor, respect and motivation to keep moving forward.

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Holiday bazaar



The Cactus Café transformed into a Holiday Bazaar where vendors sold craft and baked goods while enjoying coffee and burritos at the annual Holiday bazaar inside the Cactus Café on Dec. 5. Children in attendance got to enjoy and indulge in the goods. (Loaned photo)

Fitness fun run



Staying fit amid the Holidays? More than 20 Soldiers, Civilians and Family members made it their mission as they took part in the Dec. 9, two-mile Fun Run outside the YPG Fitness Center. (Photos by Brandon Mejia)



Community gives back to YPG active duty families



Army Community Services distributed food baskets and holiday gifts Dec. 20 for active duty families at Yuma Proving Ground thanks to its annual Angel Tree donations. (Photos by Brandon Mejia)



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