

The Outpost

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

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Cold Regions Test Center welcomes new commander

By Clara Zachgo

U.S. Army Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC) was entrusted to a new leader during a change of command ceremony held at Fort Greely on May 19. The CRTC workforce, along with family, friends, and colleagues welcomed incoming commander, Lt. Col. Jonathan Brown, and said farewell to outgoing commander, Lt. Col. Ina Jackson. Brown accepted the colors during the ceremony from Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Patrick McFall.

During this time-honored tradition that formally transfers total responsibility, authority, and accountability from one leader to

SEE **COMMANDER** page 6



U.S. Army Cold Regions Test Center welcomed a new leader, Lt. Col. Johnathan Brown, during the change of command ceremony held at Fort Greely on May 19. Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Patrick McFall is seeing passing the colors to Brown. (Photo by Sebastian Saarloos)

Concurrent jurisdiction will make YPG more secure

By Mark Schauer

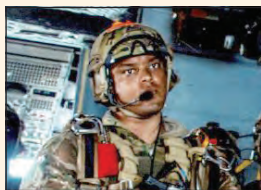
On March 24, Arizona Governor Douglas Ducey signed a bill authorizing concurrent criminal jurisdiction on U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG).

The change, which is expected to take full effect on July 1, was welcomed by YPG Police Chief Donnie Lucas.

"It allows us to work hand in hand with our community partners," said Lucas. "For us, we get the best of both worlds:

SEE **SECURE** page 4

Soldier
Spotlight
/Page 2



How Military Free-Fall at
YPG started with eight
/Page 3



Garrison Employee
Recognition Ceremony
/Page 8



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THIS IS MY SQUAD

Soldier spotlight

By Ana Henderson

U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Eric Danisa recently joined the Airborne Test Force at Yuma Proving Ground as a shop foreman and test jumper.

He hails from Johnson City, N.Y. and shortly after graduating high school he enlisted in the U. S. Army.

Danisa has been serving his country since 2006. During that time, he's earned several awards and decorations including, a Meritorious Service Ribbon, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Master Parachutist Badge, Military Freefall Parachutist Badge, and the Parachute Rigger Badge.

Outside of this career as a Soldier, Danisa can be found going to the gym, shooting, and attending outdoor activities with his family.



U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Eric Danisa recently joined the Airborne Test Force at Yuma Proving Ground as a Shop Foreman and Test Jumper. (Loaned photos)

The Outpost

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The Editor, Outpost, Yuma Proving Ground, Yuma, AZ, 85365
Phone: (928) 328-6149 or DSN 899
Visit our website at: www.yuma.army.mil
or email to: ana.c.henderson.civ@army.mil

Commander: Col. Patrick McFall
Public Affairs Officer: Mark Schauer
Public Affairs Specialist/Outpost Editor: Ana Henderson
Public Affairs Specialist: Brandon Mejia
Visual Information Manager: Eugene Garcia
Technical Editor, Cold Regions Test Center: Clara Zachgo



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How Military Free-Fall at YPG started with eight

By Brandon Mejia

The U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) centers its mission on testing the military's war-time capabilities to its fullest extent. Within those capabilities is the ability to free-fall out of the sky dropping into a select area at moment's notice in efforts to defeat the adversary.

But the Army's focus on jumping out of a plane first started with paratroopers attached to a fixed cord connected inside the aircraft that allowed the chute to deploy automatically after jumping out of the plane. That technique known as a static line jump, had been around for a while. But as the Army evolved so did its interest in free-fall.

Eight brave and courageous men that started as static line paratroopers would set off to be the original test team for the High Altitude, Low Opening (HALO) free-fall project for the Army Golden Master Program in 1958 at the proving grounds.

"They obviously had to have

nerves of steel because they were the first ones to jump out of a plane and just keep falling several thousand feet," said Bobby Williamson, the daughter of Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Joe Williamson, one of the first to be a part of the HALO team.

Bobby Joe was transferred from Ft. Lee Virginia as a paratrooper to YPG in the 1950's. He was the tallest amongst the group. He stood 6'8" making him the tallest man to have ever been in the Army Airborne during that time.

Back in that era each team member did it all, they were riggers, packers, and jumpers. They would even go to car junk yards, boat junk yards, anywhere they could to find altimeters and the equipment they needed because the military didn't have it yet, according to Williamson.

"They were jumping over 20,000 feet with football helmets on and jump boots, or in my dad's case Converse All Stars because he was six-foot-eight and wore a size 16 shoe, they didn't make jump boots that big yet."

Jumping anywhere from 10-15 times a day the team of eight was dedicated to learning the ways of the skies with accuracy and precision. "They could pretty much land on a dime," Williamson shared. "They were dedicated and did everything together."

The proving ground served as an ideal spot for a free-fall school as the skies surrounding the installation were almost always clear and restricted airspace

allowed for jumps year-round with jump zones clearing the way for free-fall.

It wasn't soon after 1958 that the first HALO team would branch out and start training others. "Specifically, the Army from Fort Lee, Fort Bragg, and Fort Campbell and from there it just kept getting bigger and now this is the premier free-fall school in the United States," said Williamson. "It must have been a successful program."

And that it was, the Military Free-Fall School (MFFS), a part of the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School has trained thousands of the military's most elite paratroopers for the last quarter of a century.

Since its inception the MFFS has expanded its focus on four courses.



Back in 1958 each member of the team did it all, they were riggers, packers, and jumpers. Pictured here is Sgt 1st Class Williamson preparing his chute for another free-fall exercise.



Pictured in 1958 these brave and courageous men were the first eight members of the High Altitude, Low Opening free-fall project for the Army Golden Master Program at the Yuma Proving Ground. (Loaned photos)

The Military Free-Fall Parachutist Course, Military Free-Fall Jump Master Course, Advanced Tactical Infiltration Course, and the Military Free-Fall Instructor Course.

The MFFS is also home to the world's largest vertical wind tunnel located at YPG and is currently constructing a two-bay hanger for the Special Operations Aviation Command flight detachment that has supported training operations of the MFFS for the past seven years.

"My dad just happened to be on the first group of eight men that came out here to do it," Williamson said as she reflected on his impact in what would become the premier MFFS in the United States. "It is satisfying to know my dad had a humongous part in that."

SECURE

FROM PAGE 1

We are here as a federal entity but have state support.”

Most military posts in the United States have either concurrent or exclusive police jurisdiction: YPG was one of only three that had proprietary jurisdiction. In its earliest days as Yuma Test Center, the proving ground had the reputation of being a remote and relaxed duty station. Stood up on the fly during World War II, closed for 18 months following that war, then reconstituted abruptly in the worst days of the Korean War, expedience neglected finer legal points such as police jurisdiction.

“There was never an agreement that expressed the type of jurisdiction this installation had,” said Lucas. “We could not locate a legal standing of jurisdiction. The law reads that having no standing automatically reverts to proprietary jurisdiction.”

Lucas says that the desire to be a good partner with other local law enforcement agencies was a driving force behind the move towards securing concurrent jurisdiction, particularly given the immense changes in both Yuma County and YPG since the earliest days of the post.

“Yuma County is growing significantly: The Yuma County Sheriff has to concentrate his forces where the preponderance of crime is committed in Yuma County, which is not here,” said Lucas. “Asking his deputies to come out and police this area is an unnecessary burden when YPG has a fully functional police force. The Army pays our officers to do a job, and this allows them to do it.”

The push to change to concurrent police jurisdiction at YPG began under former YPG commander Col. Ross Poppenberger and was also supported by current commander Col. Patrick McFall. Multiple levels of the Department of the Army and Department of Justice had to



The change to concurrent jurisdiction will change the way traffic violations, trespassing, and illegal dumping are punished. Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Police will be empowered to issue Central Violations Bureau citations, which do have financial penalties associated with them. Illegal dumping on YPG's ranges will also be subject to citations with financial penalties associated with them. (Photo by Brandon Mejia)

approve the switch prior to the bill's introduction in the State House. The change also required the support of and memorandum of understandings with the sheriffs of Yuma and La Paz County, the United States Attorney's office, and the federal magistrate to be feasible.

So far as the general public is concerned, the change to concurrent jurisdiction will change the way traffic violations, trespassing, and illegal dumping are punished.

Until now, YPG Police only had the authority to issue DD Form 1408s, which have no penalty or deterrence associated with them for individuals who are unaffiliated with the Department of Defense (DOD). Now, the YPG Police will be empowered to issue Central Violations Bureau (CVB) citations, which do have financial penalties associated with them.

“If some person is riding and inadvertently crosses within YPG's boundaries without an intent to do so and we've never written that person a ticket before, we will issue a warning citation,” said Lucas. “If it's a case of multiple violations, we will cite the individual and they will have to pay a fine or plead their case to a federal magistrate. It gives some teeth to

the bark to try to deter people from trespassing.”

Similarly, illegal dumping on YPG's ranges will also be subject to citations with financial penalties associated with them, albeit without the initial warning citation.

If someone committing a traffic violation on Highway 95 is completely unaffiliated with DOD, the YPG Police will hand the issue over to the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS). If the driver is DOD-affiliated, YPG Police will take jurisdiction over the incident. If it is a combination of both in a given incident, the respective agencies will determine jurisdiction on the scene.

The YPG Police are interested purely in the deterrent effect of the financial penalties and have no further motivation to collect fines.

“The fines are not set by us, they are set by the Central Violations Bureau,” said Lucas. “YPG receives none of the money associated with the fines.”

Individuals cited for a traffic infraction on post still face the possibility of their on-post driving privileges being suspended or revoked by the YPG commander in addition to facing the financial penalties associated with a citation.

Whether in a cantonment area, on Highway 95, or on Imperial Dam Road or Martinez Lake Road, there are two more significant differences under concurrent jurisdiction.

“Unlike with 1408s, if you get a Central Violations Bureau citation it will be reported to the Department of Motor Vehicles and your auto insurance company,” said Lucas.

Lucas says the new arrangement is a welcomed force multiplier for ensuring YPG's security. A variety of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies issue CVB citations. If a DPS or Yuma County Sheriff's Office patrolman observes suspicious activity on YPG land while patrolling Highway 95, for instance, the officer is now empowered to issue a trespassing citation that would be adjudicated by the federal magistrate.

“That allows Bureau of Land Management or Arizona Department of Game and Fish Rangers to come on this installation and write citations for us,” said Lucas. “The YPG Police's jurisdiction does not extend beyond the boundaries of YPG, but these other agencies' jurisdiction does. It allows us to work hand-in-glove with our other partners and gives us resources we didn't have before.”

Memorial Day: remember and honor

Since the birth of our nation, members of the Armed Forces have made the ultimate gift anyone can offer: themselves. Our liberty was purchased with their toil, sweat, and blood—and often their lives. All gave some, but some gave all.



For over 80 years, Yuma has paid a small part of this debt of gratitude with a solemn ceremony to remember the fallen at the Ocean to Ocean Bridge. On Memorial Day 2022 a color guard from U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's Airborne Test Force consisting of Sgt. Sean Finley, Sgt. 1st Class Justin DeVaul, Staff Sgt. Ahmed Elinbabi, and Staff Sgt. Billy Vang was front and center. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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COMMANDER

FROM PAGE 1

the next, McFall described Jackson's leadership as "a job well done" adding, "I am very proud of all you have accomplished."

Jackson was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Signal Corps in 2002 through Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Ga. As a signal officer, she held positions in Korea, Georgia, Kentucky, and Florida and was deployed to Qatar and Afghanistan. Jackson joined the Acquisition Corps in 2010.

During her remarks Jackson thanked her family, the Army Test and Evaluation Command community, and CRTC workforce for their support and guidance during her time in Command. "What an incredible opportunity and honor I had as the leader of the Cold Regions Test Center. To the workforce, your work here is truly significant. Your hard work and dedication did not go unnoticed. It is because of you and all that you do that this command was successful. What an honor and privilege it has been to be a part of your lives for the last two years."

McFall welcomed Brown and his wife Cynthia to the YPG



During her remarks Lt. Col. Ina Jackson thanked her family, the Army Test and Evaluation Command community, and CRTC workforce for their support and guidance during her time in Command.

family saying, "You have a lot of responsibility ahead of you and I am sure the Army made the right decision selecting you. You are taking over an awesome team and

you are lucky to have the team you do." McFall concluded by saying, "Welcome to Command and I want to wish you the best of luck!"

Brown enlisted in the Army in

1999, and after four years, was selected for Officer Candidate School and was subsequently commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Armor branch. He served Armor branch assignments at Fort Hood, Texas and Camp Hovey, South Korea. Brown attended the Army Acquisition Basic Course in 2011 and was then assigned to Operational Test Command at Fort Hood, Texas, where he worked on multiple test programs. His most recent assignment was Senior Military Acquisition Advisor, Contracting Operations, Army Contracting Command-Detroit Arsenal, Mich.

After taking command of CRTC, Brown spoke to the CRTC workforce for the first time as their new leader saying, "I want to thank the CRTC family for your warm reception. Your passion to our mission is evident and I look forward to earning your trust, as well as the proud title of Rugged Professional."



The CRTC workforce, along with family, friends, and colleagues welcomed incoming commander, Lt. Col. Jonathan Brown, and said farewell to outgoing commander, Lt. Col. Ina Jackson. Brown accepted the colors during the ceremony from Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Patrick McFall. (Photos by Sebastian Saarloos)

YPG Soldiers and engineers talk careers with local students



Sgt. 1st Class Drew Oliver and Staff Sgt. Ahmed Elinbabi of YPG's Airborne Test Force showed some of the tools of their daring trade, letting volunteers try on a parachute while wowing them with the ins and outs of their test mission. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



The four civilian engineers—brothers Carlos and Arturo Anaya, Steve Flores, and Joshua Magana—hail from Somerton and shared the facets of their job testing military equipment. They also talked about their first experiences hearing about YPG at career day events when they were the students' age.

YPG supports Law Enforcement Torch Run



Yuma Proving Ground Soldiers supported the Law Enforcement Torch Run Relay for Special Olympics of Arizona on the morning of May 25. Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill and Airborne Test Force Soldiers Master Sgt. Loreto Rivera, Staff Sgt. Cody Shew, Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Mezi, and Sgt. Efrain Laureano received the Flame of Hope at the intersection of Highway 95 and Co. 13. They carried the torch to Highway 95 and Co. 11 where they passed it to another agency. Together the agencies helped carry the torch to the Colorado River State Historic Park. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

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YPG preschoolers graduate



Congratulations are in order for the preschool students at the Yuma Proving Ground Child Development Center. The eight students passed the Strong Beginning preschool curriculum. They celebrated on May 26 with a ceremony decked in their caps and gowns. Afterwards they headed to the bowling alley on post for some fun. (Loaned photos)



The students were supported by Garrison leadership and Child and Youth Services staff including Kenneth Musselwhite, Iselle Oquendo, Lili Martinez, Skylar Walton, Sasha Monge, Shauna Nunn and Ron James.

Garrison Employee Recognition Ceremony



Feeling a return to normalcy, the Garrison Employee Recognition Ceremony hosted its first in-person award ceremony since things were halted due to COVID-19. Several employees were recognized for their length of service, hard work and determination. (Photos by Brandon Mejia)



In response to a recent full-scale exercise conducted at Yuma Proving Ground, (left) Benjamin Rix, Brad Gray, Shauna Nunn, Omar Silva and Capt. Travis Thomas were recognized for their outstanding efforts in responding to the exercise in a professional and responsible manner. Not pictured are Paula Alarcon, Robert Barocio, Jairo Magana, Michael Smith, and Ana Henderson.

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Chaplain's Corner

Chapel news

Submitted by Sgt. Justin Neubert

There are some changes the community should be aware of at the Chapel. Staff Sgt. Ricardo Luna retired after 10.5 years of service. Chaplain Jeffrey Crispin came down on short notice to

permanent change of station in late June. As a result, backfills will not arrive until mid-July and mid-August.

Because of these transitions there will be no community vacation bible school this summer.

For the time being the

Chapel staff cannot accept cash/check donations for the chapel tithes and offering fund. Sgt. Justin Neubert will be around to assist with the digital giving. Once the new team arrives, tithes and offering fund giving will go back to normal.

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Summer fun has begun at Yuma Proving Ground

By Ana Henderson

The kids are out of school so that means summer is officially here! Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) Family Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (FMWR) department is ready to make this a memorable summer.

In the recent months MWR has expended its services and variety of activities.

"We are trying to make sure our community is happy with what we are providing for them. We try to listen to what they are asking and provide it," explained FMWR Marketing Coordinator Maiko Black.

In the month of May, the Strong

B.A.N.D.S. program kicked off the series of new classes which included kid and adult fitness classes, nutrition classes, and read-and-do classes at the library. B.A.N.D.S. stands for Balance, Activity, Nutrition, Determination, and Strength and the classes reflected that.

Black notes, "We are trying to incorporate what bigger installations are doing here."

In June, the community can expect even more fun. With Child and Youth Service's summer camp starting back up and returning to a bit of pre-COVID fun. Each Tuesday the children will take a fieldtrip to



Yuma Proving Ground's Family Morale, Welfare, and Recreation department provided a variety of classes including weekly HITT class for adults and kid fit classes during May's Strong B.A.N.D.S. program which stands for Balance, Activity, Nutrition, Determination, and Strength. (Loaned photo)



The Yuma Proving Ground Library hosted a "Read & Do" as a part of the Strong B.A.N.D.S. fitness program. Patrons were given premade coloring books with different activities they could do to promote fitness. Staff and teachers from Child and Youth Services also joined in on the fun and showed off some of their best karate and dance moves. (Loaned photo)

the theater in town. The Kahuna Lagoon aka community pool will reopen and offer swim lessons, fitness classes and options to rent the pool for parties.

Making July even hotter this summer is the Staycation planned by FMWR. "It's hard going home especially during the summer months with the plane ticket prices," remarked Black, "We are trying to give the community something to do during that time."

Residents can expect activities overload during block leave in early July.

Black and the rest of the FMWR team just want to make life at YPG fun.

"We just want to make sure we are supporting our community."

She notes if any community partner would like to sponsor an event, to contact the FMWR marketing department at maiko.a.black.naf@army.mil.

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Your friends at Cocopah know that safety is top of mind. We hear you, we understand, and we care. We have taken necessary steps to make sure that when you visit us, you are in an environment where you feel safe and comfortable so you can worry less and have more fun. We require all guests wear masks, take no-contact temperature checks and frequently disinfect our facilities. Come visit us when you're ready. We're still just around the corner.



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For complete offer details please visit the Cocopah Reward's Club.