



# The Outpost

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

VOLUME 72 NO. 5 FEBRUARY 27, 2023

## U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground tests cutting edge parachute system

By Mark Schauer

In a combat theater, ground troops in the most isolated areas depend on airlifts for resupply. In the worst conditions, time can be a matter of

life or death.

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) is home to all manner of parachute testing, with spacious and instrumented ranges large enough

to accommodate even the world's largest cargo parachutes.

YPG has long been on the cutting edge of developmental and operational testing of new airdrop capabilities, including the Rapid Rigging De-Rigging Airdrop System (RRDAS), which promises to get Soldiers out of a drop zone and into the fight with the equipment they need faster than ever.

Conventional cargo payloads are typically cushioned with a honeycomb-like cardboard material between the vehicle or other heavy item and the steel palette that carries it from an aircraft to the ground. Even with good cargo parachutes and a perfect landing, multiple layers of the honeycomb



In a combat theater, ground troops in the most isolated areas depend on airlifts for resupply. In the worst conditions, time can be a matter of life or death. The Rapid Rigging De-Rigging Airdrop System, testing at Yuma Proving Ground, promises to get Soldiers out of a drop zone and into the fight with the equipment they need faster than ever. (U.S. Army photo)

## YPG Commander keynotes 27th annual Camp Bouse Memorial Ceremony



Turn to page 5 for more about the annual ceremony in La Paz County.

SEE **PARACHUTE** page 8

Laguna Airfield  
undergoing  
upgrades  
/ Page 4



Yuma Proving  
Ground's  
Org Day  
/ Page 6



Engineer sisters show  
Yuma can provide  
complete education  
/ Page 7



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## Mission employee receives praise



Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Shane Dering presented Michael Naso with a Certificate of Appreciation on the morning of Feb. 8 during a division safety meeting. Naso is being recognized for this work in during the end of 2022 on the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle with Combat Automotive Systems Division. The award citation reads, "Mr. Naso's efficiency, expediency, efficacy, productivity and quality he put forth have been outstanding." Before handing him, the award Dering said, "You contributed for the success of the mission and the customers." (Photo by Ana Henderson)

## Program Analyst receives coin from 37th Vice Chief of the Army



Ground Combat Director Eddy Patchet awarded Rebekah Babb with a coin on behalf of the 37th Vice Chief of the U.S. Army Gen. Joseph M. Martin for as Patchet described during the presentation, "Being a key part of helping the test mission." Babb works as a program analyst for the Ground Combat Directive and worked on the Covid task team during the height of the pandemic. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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## Civilian Achievement medal recipients



Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Patrick McFall presented Matthew Hostetler, Yadira Calderas, Derek Ochoa with a prestigious Civilian Service Commendation Medal. The three mechanical engineers volunteered for a two-month short notice assignment to support an operational test in late 2022. They provided around the clock coverage during the 24-hour test providing test incident reports and Soldiers surveys. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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# Arizona@Work at Yuma Proving Ground

By Mark Schauer

Young adults participating in Arizona@Work's Youth Services program visited U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) on Feb. 16.

The group learned about YPG's mission and talked with multiple members of the workforce before getting an up-close look at some of the aircraft used to support developmental testing daily.

"I've never really seen anything like this-- seeing it up close gives

me a shock a little bit," said Jose Garcia. "It definitely opens up your eyes to potential careers."

The students enjoyed their visit. "They were really excited," said Norma Avila, Program Development Coordinator for Arizona@Work. "The staff here made them feel so comfortable and gave them good advice about what they need to do to get a position here."

"These young people are the

future," added YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall. "We need them

to take over this critical mission to protect our national security."



Students enrolled with Arizona@Work visited U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Feb. 16. While there they toured an aviation hangar and learned how the equipment works, why it's needed and various careers at YPG. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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# YPG's Laguna Airfield undergoing expansion and improvements

By Ana Henderson

With 2,000 square miles of restricted airspace, it's safe to say, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) sees a lot of air traffic.

That volume of activity causes degradation on the runways.

"This used to have edge markings and it used to have a centerline and all sorts of markings," pointed out Jim Walk, Laguna Airfield manager, as he points at the marks on the runway, "That was all rubber from the planes landing and you couldn't even see the centerline, because it was obscured by the rubber."

YPG supports the Airborne Test Force, Military Free Fall, Flight Detachment and Yuma Test Center's Aviation Systems among various other developmental and operational testing.

To better serve those entities, Laguna Airfield is undergoing improvements. All the pavements are being resurfaced in one way depending on their needs. Cracks are being filled and fog sealed on the runways, taxiways, and aprons. A portion of a taxiway was milled and three inches of asphalt was applied. New markings will also be added.

In early February an additional runway, which had not been used for four years, is now back in service after flashing light were installed to warn vehicle traffic of an approaching aircraft. That runway was the first finished in January and the difference



Laguna Airfield is undergoing improvements. All the pavements are being resurfaced in one way depending on their needs. Cracks are being filled and fog sealed on the runways, taxiways, and aprons. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

is evident. The sleek black asphalt has pristine white markings.

Adding to these improvements, in December of 2021, the construction of a hanger for the Flight Detachment got underway. It will include a new ramp and taxiway from the hanger to the runway.

With all the construction taking place, Flight Services Division Chief

Patrick Franklin, commends those who are actively working behind the scenes to make it run smoothly.

"There's a tremendous amount of coordination going on to make sure that all the two different construction contractors are talking to each other, DPW [Directorate of Public Works] and the Corps of Engineers are working closely together. We are

working with the Mission folks to make sure all their imperatives are still met."

That involves weekly coordination meetings that have been on-going since October.

Walk said, "We went from A, to B, to C, we had to keep something open all the time, we're playing a shell game of keeping everything going."

At times, contractors would stop construction and move out of the way to allow missions to continue.

During construction regular mission activities and large-scale exercises including Project Convergence Technology Gateway Demonstration, Weapons and Tactics and Instruction course better known as WTI and other training and exercise activities proceeded uninterrupted.

The groundwork on the airfield is expected to be complete by April or May.



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## Yuma Proving Ground installs solar chargers for government electric vehicles only



U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground installed three solar-powered chargers for electric vehicles on post. These chargers are to be utilized by government vehicles only, per the Army's Installation Management Command guidance. (Photo by Reinhard Brenneis)

By Reinhard Brenneis

U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground has stood up three solar-powered chargers for electric vehicles on post, paving the road for Garrison's mandated switch to electric vehicles.

The charging stations are located at buildings 308, 402 and 204 on Howard Cantonment Area. These chargers are to be utilized by government vehicles only, per the

Army's Installation Management Command guidance.

The stations feature solar panels that charge batteries, these solar panels use a GPS device to determine the location of the sun and move accordingly to maximize the amount of sunlight received by the panels.

Additionally, a software is provided that allows online monitoring of the stations to see

when they are currently in use as well as monitor the amount of power currently being stored.

As guidance is provided for the electric vehicle master plan, which requires the Department of Defense to transition it's nontactical vehicles to a 100% zero-emission fleet, we expect an influx in the number of electric vehicles on post and charging stations with a focus on Type 2 and Type 3 where needed.





Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Patrick McFall served as keynote speakers at the 27th annual Camp Bouse Memorial Ceremony on Feb. 11, 2023. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

## YPG Commander serves as keynote speaker at the 27th annual Camp Bouse

By Mark Schauer

YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall served as keynote speaker at the 27th annual Camp Bouse Commemoration Ceremony in the La Paz County town of Bouse on Saturday, Feb. 11.

The modern-day mission of

YPG has a direct lineage with the Soldiers of the 'Greatest Generation' who tested the Canal Defense Light, a 13 million candlepower arc searchlight mounted in the turret of an M3 tank at Camp Bouse during World War II. The system was never

fielded, but at the time the project constituted the second-most secret Army program after the Manhattan Project.

YPG is the last active Army installation within the World War II-era California-Arizona Desert Maneuver Area, of which Camp

Bouse was a part.

"I am proud of the way Yuma Proving Ground carries on the legacy of the Soldiers of Camp Bouse," said McFall. "Their spirit lives on at Yuma Proving Ground in what we still do to secure our country's peace and prosperity."

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# Team building fun at Yuma Proving Ground's Org Day

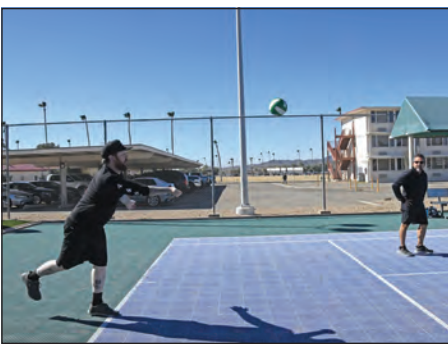
U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) employees rolled up their sleeves for fun and physically demanding team building activities in the first Organizational Day since 2019, due to the pandemic. YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall said during opening remarks, "The only task for today is fun, comradery, Esprit de Corps...this is for you."



After opening ceremonies, employees gathered for a photo to commemorate YPG's 80-year anniversary. (Photo by Brian Michael)



Aviation Systems and Electronic Test Division were the overall winners of the Commander's Cup trophy. Instrumentation placed second and Munitions and Weapons third. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



## • • • Team placements • • •

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Closest to the pin  
Drunk cart obstacle course  
Sandbag buddy relay  
Ping Pong  
Free throw shoot

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Ammo  
CASD  
MW  
MW  
ID

Counter Strikes  
Chippy (Adrian Fernandez)  
CASD Team 8  
MW 1  
Pong 1 (Luong Nguyen)  
TKO1

HMMWV pull  
Land Ski  
Corn Hole  
Tug-o-War  
Wacky Relay

CASD  
CASD  
MW  
MW  
ASET  
CASD Team 11  
CASD Team 7  
MW #2  
MW  
Air Delivery



# Engineer sisters show Yuma can provide complete education

By Ana Henderson

Yuma, Ariz. is a small city, and many believe they need to go elsewhere to achieve their educational aspirations.

Daniela and Maria Villegas, sisters, and engineers at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), prove that is not always the case.

The sisters were able to attend community college and university in Yuma County and both feel there are perks of not leaving town.

"We didn't have to move or pay for rent in a different city," explained Maria. "Not everyone has the means to do that. For us it was great. It was a wonderful option."

"We are close to our family we like to stay close to them and see them often," said Daniela.

The sisters, who are 14 months apart in age, lived their early childhood in Mexico, then moved to San Luis, Ariz. a small border community south of Yuma. From early on their father focused on teaching them math.

"I remember he bought us a small board and markers and he put that in our room. He would teach us addition, multiplication and all those things before we learned them at school," recalls Maria.

That instilled a foundation of understanding of math and helped

them excel in the subject, which is a gateway to engineering.

"I guess that's what we really like about the subject, because engineering uses a lot of math," said Maria.

By the time Maria, the older sister, reached high school she become interested in industrial engineering, then decided to focus on systems engineering. Daniela first had an interest in architecture but soon came around to the idea of engineering.

Maria and Daniela were able to take most of their engineering classes at Arizona Western College and the University of Arizona-Yuma together.

"Being a university student is overwhelming because most of the time you are doing homework, studying, and preparing yourself," said Daniela "So having someone that totally gets it is helpful."

"She was like my roomie that was going through the same things that I was going through," added Maria, "We were helping each other."

The sisters earned a Systems Engineering degree from the University of Arizona-Yuma and are thriving as engineers in the Instrumentation Division at YPG. Both work in the Engineering Support Branch: Daniela in optics and Maria in the tracking radar section.

The Villegas sisters hope they can inspire other students to push past obstacles and pursue their path.

Daniela says, "Don't give up. I know it gets hard, I know it's a struggle. But don't give up. Give your best: at the end, it will be really worth it."

Maria advises, "Keep your final goal in mind, keep working towards

that. It's going to get hard, but it's not going to be hard all the time."



Listen to the Villegas sister's interview by scanning this QR code.



Maria and Daniela were able to take most of their engineering classes at Arizona Western College and the University of Arizona-Yuma together. "Being a university student is overwhelming because most of the time you are doing homework, studying, and preparing yourself," said Daniela "So having someone that totally gets it is helpful."



Maria and Daniela Villegas, sisters, and engineers at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground earned a Systems Engineering degree from the University of Arizona-Yuma and are thriving as engineers in the Instrumentation Division at YPG. They are pictured presenting to ATEC's Command Sgt. Maj. Bryan Otero. (Photos by Gene Garcia)



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# PARACHUTE

FROM PAGE 1

will collapse upon impact with the ground. RRDAS, however, dramatically reduces the amount of honeycomb necessary to dissipate the force of impact with 10 reusable airbag modules. The self-inflating airbags can be utilized as low as 750 feet above ground level and carry loads from between 5,000 and 22,000 pounds.

“When it flies through the air, ambient air pressurizes all of the fabric-based airbags,” said Maj. Matthew Rohe, Assistant Product Manager for Cargo Aerial Delivery at the U.S. Army Program Executive Office Combat Support and Combat Service Support. “When it hits the ground, the airbag modules cushion the payload, so we don’t need as much honeycomb as in the current design.”

The reduced use of honeycomb should lower rigging time by 25%, but testers are particularly excited about reducing de-rigging time by

40%, which gets Soldiers out of harm’s way faster.

“The end state is that it will reduce the de-rigging time by about two and a half hours primarily through the reduction of the use of honeycomb so Soldiers on the drop zone won’t have to use axes, shovels, and picks,” said David Emond, operations manager for Product Manager Force Sustainment Systems. “Currently, once the vehicle crushes the honeycomb Soldiers have to cut out all the honeycomb around the vehicle’s tires to be able to drive it off.”

The system also boasts features to ensure an airdropped vehicle will land upright.

“The system has deployable outriggers on it,” said Rohe. “If it is a high center of gravity load with a chance of tipping over when it hits the ground, these outriggers kick out and will stop it from flipping over.”

Though developmental testing of RRDAS is scheduled to end later this year and full fielding of the system to troops is expected in Fiscal Year 2025, intermittent testing



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground has been testing the Rapid Rigging De-Rigging Airdrop System which promises to get Soldiers out of a drop zone and into the fight with the equipment they need faster than ever. The reduced use of honeycomb should lower rigging time by 25%, but testers are particularly excited about reducing de-rigging time by 40%, which gets Soldiers out of harm’s way faster. (U.S. Army photos)



Conventional cargo payloads are typically cushioned with a honeycomb-like cardboard material. RRDAS, dramatically reduces the amount of honeycomb necessary to dissipate the force of impact with 10 reusable airbag modules. The self-inflating airbags can be utilized as low as 750 feet above ground level and carry loads from between 5,000 and 22,000 pounds.

at YPG based on feedback from operational testing at Fort Bragg, North Carolina should continue for two years after that.

“We will be able to increase the load of the payload and the length of the platform so we can drop heavier and longer items,” said Rohe. “We’ll be testing on and off at Yuma for several years to come.”

YPG is the Army’s primary personnel and cargo parachute tester, with decades of institutional knowledge in both rigging and

evaluating these complex airdrop systems, as well as coordinating multiple sorties safely. The post’s nearly 2,000 square miles of restricted airspace and favorable weather make it an ideal location for air drop testing.

“We always use YPG because of the test assets available,” said Emond. “It is safer and cheaper to conduct developmental testing here: it is the most reliable and dependable place to get the aircraft that we need to fly test missions.”

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# Antiterrorism Awareness Corner

## Antiterrorism and the advancement of Bluetooth devices

**A TEC Mission  
Antiterrorism  
Officer**  
Alfonzo Brown



Have you considered the harm your Bluetooth devices may cause to classified testing or information? Have you allowed Bluetooth devices in classified testing facilities? Have you asked yourself what can be transmitted through a Bluetooth device, such as earpieces, watches, cameras, or eyeglasses?

From an antiterrorism perspective, Bluetooth device can be considered a method of spying or data collection. Knowing they are commonly used devices tends to lend thinking that they are safe and not a threat to the mission at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). When used in the wrong testing environment or in a classified facility they are a threat.

A Bluetooth device is a short-range wireless technology, that is used for exchanging data between fixed and mobile devices over short distances and building personal area networks. In the most widely used mode, transmission power is limited to 2.5 milliwatts, giving it a short range of 10 meters or 32 feet. However, there are devices that have far greater range depth.

Bluetooth devices should not be worn or used inside classified testing facilities. One example of a potential threat is Bluetooth eyeglasses. Once the eyeglasses are in Bluetooth mode you never know who or what is being viewed or recorded through the eyeglasses. The capability to record or allow another person to view through the Bluetooth eyeglasses

is where the threat lies from an antiterrorism perspective.

Posting warning signs and adding reminders about Bluetooth devices to briefings prior to testing in classified areas are deterrents. The first line of defense and best one is the vigilant employee. YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall encourages all of us to stay vigilant and do our part in protecting testing from adversaries who may use Bluetooth devices.

Contact your ATEC ATO for more information: Alfonzo D. Brown, [Alfonzo.d.brown.civ@army.mil](mailto:Alfonzo.d.brown.civ@army.mil) or 928-328-6498.

## Cold Regions demonstrates test capabilities

Brig. Gen. Christopher Schneider from the Program Executive Office (PEO) Soldier visited Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC) Feb. 13. Schneider's visit focused on identifying the full gamut of CRTC's test capabilities in preparation for potential PEO Soldier requests for CRTC to support future test events. He received a mission overview and capabilities tour and had the chance to release a weather balloon which outputs real-time meteorological data. (Photos by CRTC)



## FREE YPG STEM Camp GEMS

(Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science)



Yuma Proving Ground will be  
hosting (2) – 1 week STEM Camps

### Camp Dates:

Week 1: 05-08 June 2023  
Week 2: 12-15 June 2023

Applicants must be entering 6<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade in '23-'24 school year (currently in 5<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> grade)  
\*military association not required\*

Hands-on STEM Labs taught by YPG Engineers and Scientists

Transportation is provided to and from YPG.  
Pick-up locations: Wk 1: Foothill's School – TBD; Wk 2: In Town School -- TBD

Student Application deadline is 13 April --  
Only 80 applicants will be accepted



### AEOP Info Page:

<https://www.usaeop.com/program/yuma/>

### Important Dates:

#### APRIL

Student Applications due no later than April 13, 2023

Selected Students will be notified no later than April 27, 2023.

#### MAY

Parent Meetings will be held on May 9, 2023 and May 17, 2023 – for selected applicants.

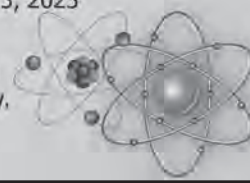
#### JUNE

June 05-08, 2023  
June 12-15, 2023

### What is YPG GEMS?

Our program provides STEM exposure utilizing hands-on activities led by YPG engineer and scientists. Activities focus on age and grade-appropriate labs in areas such as science, robotics and coding, engineering, mathematics, environmental sciences, chemistry, and biology. We are looking forward to hosting another great year of GEMS for the students of Yuma County.

For more information: <https://www.usaeop.com/program/yuma/>





## Kids dress up for Valentine's Day



Children from the Yuma Proving Ground Child Development Center dawned pink, red, hearts and even dinosaurs holding hearts in celebration of Valentine's Day. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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**WED, MARCH 22**

**SEMINAR: 6:30-8:30PM**

For Married, Dating, and Singles  
Business Casual Dress Suggested

### Timeline

**5:30-6:25pm:** Meet-and-greet Mark Gungor and  
Social Hour (snacks provided)

**5:30-6:25pm:** Free childcare drop-off: across the  
street at the Community Center

**6:30-8:30pm:** Seminar



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