



The Outpost

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

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YPG conducts groundbreaking munition test

By Mark Schauer

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) position at the forefront of Army modernization efforts is well-known and extends far beyond the developmental testing of things like Extended Range Canon Artillery.

One recent example of YPG testing shaping the future force is the XM204 interim top attack munition.

The XM204 is part of a new generation of terrain-shaping obstacles able to target and deter tracked vehicles operated by a near-peer adversary in open terrain, eliminating the old method of emplacing land mines. In the case of a small element of Soldiers facing the threat of being outnumbered and outmaneuvered by a mounted adversary with tracked vehicles, the portable and easily emplaced



The XM204 is part of a new generation of terrain-shaping obstacles able to target and deter tracked vehicles operated by a near-peer adversary in open terrain, eliminating the old method of emplacing land mines. Yuma Proving Ground's wide-open ranges far from any populated areas, decades of institutional knowledge, and full complement of realistic threat target vehicles make it an ideal place to test this system. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

XM204 can help them hold their own until reinforcements arrive.

The launcher module bears four top attack munitions that, when triggered, fire an armor-piercing munition, aiming for the top of a tracked vehicle rather than the more heavily armored lower sections. The ruggedized launcher module has an easy-to-see bubble level and a safety switch that is both color-coded and bearing abbreviations that leave no doubt whether the system is armed. It also has a self-destruct switch with different timed settings to prevent the possibility of the system lying dormant and dangerous years or decades after the end of a conflict, as happened with land mines.

The Army ultimately intends to use legacy systems such as the 'bottom attack' Volcano mine

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THIS IS MY SQUAD

Soldier spotlight

By Ana Henderson

Staff Sgt. Nicole Covington currently serves as the Religious Support Office Non-commissioned Officer in Charge at Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) community Chapel.

She's been enlisted in the Army for 12 years and when asked what's her hometown she'll say, "Depends on the year."

The mom of two boys, Jeremiah 10, and Wyatt 4, has a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and enjoys being crafty, singing in the car, dancing in the kitchen, keeping plants alive, and befriending animals.

Covington also enjoys being involved in the community you'll find her participating in fun runs, s'more nights at the Chapel and recently she was awarded Best Actress for the 2022 YPG Murder Mystery Dinner.

One could say she's a people



ABOVE: Staff Sgt. Nicole Covington currently serves as the Religious Support Office Non-commissioned Officer in Charge at Yuma Proving Ground's community Chapel. (Photo by Ana Henderson) LEFT: Staff Sgt. Nicole Covington is the mom of two boys, Jeremiah 10, and Wyatt 4. She enjoys being crafty, singing in the car, dancing in the kitchen, keeping plants alive, and befriending animals. (Loaned photo)

person, and that's partly why she knew working in a chapel was her calling.

"Believe it or not, Religious Affairs Specialist was my first choice when joining

the Army. This MOS [military occupational specialty] allows for my natural gifts to shine. I enjoy working with people and planning events. Most of all I love providing hope and bringing people closer to their personal faith."

The Outpost

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Women's History Month

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Yuma Test Center's first female commander



Lt. Col. Michelle Stoleson (ret), made Yuma Test Center (YTC) history by serving as the first female commander between 2000 and 2003. In episode 7 of Desert Rat Testament Stoleson, who earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from California's Harvey Mudd College and a master's degree in engineering from Claremont Graduate University and received her Army commission in 1981 talks about her career at YTC. She was an aviation test officer at the proving ground from 1991 to 1995. After concluding her active-duty career in 2004, she served as an executive for the proving ground's largest private contractor until retiring in 2018. Hear more about Stoleson's career by scanning the QR code.



IMCOM director visits YPG



Brenda McCullough, director of U.S. Army Installation Management Command Directorate-Readiness, visited Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) the last week of February. She toured facilities such as the post's Child Development Center and Youth Services building, remarking on the robustness of the facilities' programs relative to the size of YPG's population. "Ms. McCullough regularly comments on the programming that our MWR does and how widespread it is," said Ken Musselwhite, YPG Garrison Manager. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Nutrition Corner Fuel for the future

By Lt. Raenette Neidhardt

Happy National Nutrition Month! As a registered dietitian nutritionist, National Nutrition Month is one of my favorite times of the year! The entire month of March is dedicated to teaching others about healthy eating and ways to improve their nutrition and health while considering our environment.

The theme this year is "Fuel for the Future." To some, this may mean fueling your own future one, five, or 10 years down the road. For others, you might be thinking about teaching your children or grandchildren healthy eating habits to ensure that they have a bright and healthy future. A few of you may be thinking about how you can improve your current eating habits to aid the future of our environment and the Earth. You all would be right! When we start to view our food choices as a method to enhance or improve our health, we tend to make better choices overall. As a result, we can also make better decisions that help

our environment.

Here are a few tips or ideas to help get you started on celebrating National Nutrition Month and practicing fueling for the future:

1. Utilize leftovers in fun and unique ways; add them to salads or use them to make soup.
2. Use a plate to aid in portion control and reduce waste by not using a to-go container.
3. Try "Meatless Mondays." Choose a meat-free dish to serve on Mondays and substitute using items like beans, tofu, or tempeh.
4. Include more fruits and vegetables. Clean or cut them and place them in clear, reusable containers in your refrigerator for an easy snack idea.

Whatever way you decide to celebrate National Nutrition Month, focus on including whole foods, lean protein sources, a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats to provide your body the fuel it needs to move into the future, happy and healthy!

Military Spouses Club of Yuma offers student scholarships

By Ana Henderson

The Military Spouses Club of Yuma gives military spouses a place to belong which can bring comfort especially when first arriving at their duty station.

"Everyone struggles...at every rank, everyone is adjusting, learning the area, making new friends," shared Heidi McFall, wife of Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commander Col. Patrick McFall. She's been a member of the local club and honoree president for two years.

"The comradery, the friendships that I have made with MCAS [Marine Corps Air Station] Yuma spouses is incredible. It's amazing how they all come together in a short amount of time."

Yet, while spouses have found a mutual bond over their situations, the tightknit club with just under 50 members is not only a social club,



Melanie Dudik and Heidi McFall, honorary presidents of the Military Spouses Club stop for a photo while attending a fundraising event. (Loaned photo)

they are also philanthropic and give back to the military community.

Of course, they make raising

money fun. From themed night outs, raffles, and smaller fund-raising events they collect money to support

their causes. McFall's role is to reach out to the business community such as the Chamber of Commerce and local business to seek donations. The funds go towards helping military families purchase food and a yearly student scholarship.

Applications are currently open for their scholarship benefiting military dependents living in Yuma.


"I sit on the board for that, and I help make a decision on who gets what."

Last year the club received 10 applicants. Of those, five recipients were selected and 10-thousand dollars was distributed between them — each received between \$2,500-1,000 scholarships. McFall urges students to apply and hopes this year there will be a recipient from YPG.

"It's worthwhile and you never know what can happen."

The application deadline is April 15. Check the Military Spouses Club of Yuma website <https://www.msycyuma.org/scholarships> for details.


*Disclaimer: This information is provided to help the YPG community. Any mention of a non-federal entity is only for these purposes and is not intended as an endorsement, stated, or implied, of any non-federal entity.



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 6th-8th grade in '23-'24 school year (currently in 5th-7th 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


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/>


AEOP Info Page: 

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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

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





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Black History Month education



In celebration of Black History Month, Library Technician Bianca Carpenter read "I am Ruby Bridges" during story time on Feb. 23 at the Yuma Proving Ground. Nearly 30 children from the Child Development Center, James D. Price Elementary School, and children from the community attended the reading to learn about Ruby Bridges who was the first African American child to integrate into an all-white school in 1960. Following story time, the children worked on an art project to show their artistic version of unity. Later that day, Carpenter visited James D. Price Elementary School during library time to teach them fifth graders about individuals who broke barriers in the African American community like Ella Fitzgerald and Kenny Washington. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

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Garrison Employee Recognition Ceremony



Civilian of the 3rd quarter
Cheryl Reinert



Civilian of the 4th quarter
Michael Morris
Morris received a Civilian Service Achievement Medal and Civilian Service Commendation Medal.



Civilian Service Achievement Medal
Annette Branch



Civilian Service Achievement Medal
Christopher Spolski



Civilian Service Achievement Medal
Danielle Compton



Civilian Service Achievement Medal
Sandy LaLonde



Civilian Service Achievement Medal
Scott Zaehler



Length of Service 40 years
Joe Lopez



Length of Service 25 Years
Gilberto Urrutia and Tarnell Pritchett. Christopher Jones not pictured.

U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground recognized their employees in a ceremony Feb. 23. They were celebrated for their 220 total combined years of service plus for individual accomplishments.

(Photos by Ana Henderson)

Length of Service

20 Years
Donnett Brown
Daniel DeCarlo
Michael Lutz

15 Years
Brian Hoon

10 Years
Cheryl Avery
Matthew Kelly

5 Years
Jonathan Eddington
Leticia Leon
Warren Putt, Sr.
Brian Rochester
Francisco Pacheco

Upward mobility: Marine Corps veteran finds variety, rewards working at Yuma Proving Ground

By Mark Schauer

Now in his 36th year at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), Marine Corps Veteran Jose Ramos has spent decades testing for the best.

Born in Lisbon, Portugal, Ramos' family came to the United States when he was 11 years old.

He loved his new country and thrilled at John Wayne movies: he says they inspired him to enlist in the Marine Corps when he came of age. After basic training at Camp Lejune, he was stationed at New River, then South Korea, and finally Marine Corps Air Station-Yuma. During his time active duty, he was only vaguely aware of YPG's existence.

"Sometimes I used to like to drive and listen to music, so I would take Highway 95 and I would stop at the big guns. I never made that left turn into YPG."

He married his wife Tammy in 1985, and when his enlistment was up they moved back to New Jersey and had two children. There stay was brief, however.

"I came back because my wife is from Yuma and her family was here. She didn't like the cold."

In 1987, his wife's brother, Rick Douglas, a longtime test officer at the proving ground, told him about a job opening in the conditioning chambers section.

"Within two weeks we'd packed everything up, sold our house, and moved down here."

After three years at YPG, he was working in the proving ground's motor pool, delivering scores of



Marine Corps Veteran Jose Ramos has spent decades testing for the best at Yuma Proving Ground. His career started in 1987, in chambers and he's worked as test driver, test lead, and test coordinator and now as a range control specialist. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

different test items to points across the proving ground's vast test ranges and beyond. The tools of the motor pool's trade are a variety of tractor trailers and flat beds, and tactical wreckers to transport towed howitzers. Ramos' experience over the next dozen years made him an ideal candidate to become a test vehicle operator.

"I had acquired all of these licenses because I used to have to take all of the tanks and artillery pieces downrange for the gunners."

Over the next dozen years, he became known for his specialized experience driving M1 Abrams Main Battle Tanks.

"I love the M1s—they're near to

my heart because I've done a lot of work with them. As test driver, test lead, and test coordinator."

Prior to the first Gulf War in the early 1990s, the life-expectancy of the tracks used to propel an M1 Abrams Main Battle Tank along the ground was measured in the hundreds of miles. After extensive testing at U.S. Army YPG, today's tank treads last for thousands of miles. Proving out the upgrades was hard labor driving along hundreds of miles of desert road courses in the intense Yuma heat.

"My back hurts a little bit. It took a bit out of me."

His knowledge of the system also led him to support tests in places like

Dugway Proving Ground and YPG's Cold Regions Test Center, where he spent most of six months driving the M1 in the intense Alaskan cold, with only a two-week break around Christmas time.

"When we left it was -35, when we got back the first week in January it got down to -49.8. It was a good experience."

He became a test coordinator for M1s for two years until a job as a range control specialist became available.

"I like challenges—that's why I keep moving."

Most divisions at YPG are fast paced, but few rival the Range Operations and Training Division in terms of the sheer scope of responsibility and volume of work. Responsible for coordinating safe operations of numerous inherently dangerous test activities in a geographic area that is larger than the state of Rhode Island, every

individual and group heading out to test on YPG's ranges must get clearance from the range controllers before they can proceed to their destination. On a busy day, this can mean upwards of 250 phone calls for range clearances, with an equal number of calls to cancel them at the conclusion of the day.

Seven years into his current role, Ramos still derives great satisfaction from working on behalf of the warfighter.

"This is my adopted country and I wanted to give back. That's why I joined the Marine Corps when I was young, and I think I'm still giving back."

MUNITION

FROM PAGE 1

dispensed from a XM343 SAVO (Stand-off Activated Volcano Obstacle) base plate dispenser to both complement the XM204 and be used in a networked munition system that will allow Soldiers to arm and disarm the obstacle fields remotely to allow friendly forces to pass. The first test of both systems working together recently took place at YPG.

“This test integrates the top attack munition with the bottom attack munition, which uses existing Volcano M87A1 canisters,” said Steve Patane, YPG test officer.

“The purpose of the test is to verify the XM204 capability to initiating the full complement of XM343 base plates to deploy the Volcano canisters to ensure that the self-destruct is happening in 48 hours,” added Jonny Clark, test



One of the test sites was recently re-instrumented with digital equipment, a significant enhancement that complements the decades of institutional knowledge YPG testers have. Concurrently with the XM 204 testing, other items within Project Manager Close Combat Systems' portfolio such as the M58 Mine Clearing Line Charge and the Selectable Lightweight Attack Munition, were also under test here. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

officer.

Once the arming sequence was initiated, testers monitored both

items for 48 hours continuously to verify that the self-destruct mechanism worked as it was

supposed to. Concurrently, other items within Project Manager Close Combat Systems' portfolio, such as the M58 Mine Clearing Line Charge and the Selectable Lightweight Attack Munition, were also under test at the proving ground.

YPG is the ideal place to conduct rapid testing of this vitally important munition. In addition to having wide open spaces far from any populated areas, decades of institutional knowledge, and a full complement of realistic threat target vehicles at hand. One of the test sites was recently re-instrumented with digital equipment, a significant enhancement that complements the decades of institutional knowledge YPG testers have.

“We have a lot of infrastructure specifically for these types of tests that has been here for decades,” said Clark. “We have been the place people go to test these types of munitions.”



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Chaplain's Corner

Rule No. 1, stand up straight

Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain Capt.
Ryan Pearse



Dr. Jordan Peterson is a clinic psychologist and professor at the University of Toronto. Dr. Peterson recently published a book titled, "12 Rules for Life: An Antidote to Chaos."

Let's agree on one thing: the world is chaotic. What is the antidote to this chaos? Dr. Peterson offers up 12 rules to help answer this question.

Rule No. 1: stand up straight with

your shoulders back. Jordan studied the brain chemistry and social interactions of lobsters and noticed many similarities that are found in humans. First off, when lobsters "win" conflicts among other lobsters or sea creatures, the high levels of serotonin predict that the posture of lobsters will improve. Because of this, they will be more likely to win and not back down from future conflicts.

This cycle is oftentimes regarded as a positive feedback loop. Standing up physically also implies, invokes, and demands standing up metaphysically. You respond to a challenge, instead of bracing for a

catastrophe. To stand up straight with your shoulders back is to accept the responsibility of life. It means deciding to voluntarily transform the chaos of potential into the reality of habitable order.

In short, Rule No. 1 teaches us

to turn little wins into bigger wins. Don't be a victim, but a victor. Ephesians 6:13 tells us to, "Take up the whole armor of God so you may be able to stand firm against evil." Let's start by standing up straight with our shoulders back.

Airborne's first medic ends time at YPG



Members of YPG's Airborne Test Force (ATF) bid farewell to Staff Sgt. Patrick Healy (center) with a potluck luncheon on March 2 as he prepared for a permanent change of station. The first medic assigned to ATF in the unit's history, the ATF expressed their appreciation for his skill and tireless volunteering to support YPG's public events as wife Simone (left) looked on. "It's an inherently dangerous mission that we have," said Staff Sgt. Ahmed Elinbabi (right). "Having the right experience in place prevents injuries from being exacerbated down the road." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

YPG CHAPEL PRESENTS

LAUGH YOUR WAY
TO A BETTER
MARRIAGE



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



LED BY
**MARK
GUNGOR**

WORLD-RENOWNED
AUTHOR AND SPEAKER
LIVE AND IN
PERSON

RSVP required (Limited Childcare):
<https://www.jotform.com/223153540960148>

Scan to listen



**DESERT RAT
TESTAMENT**

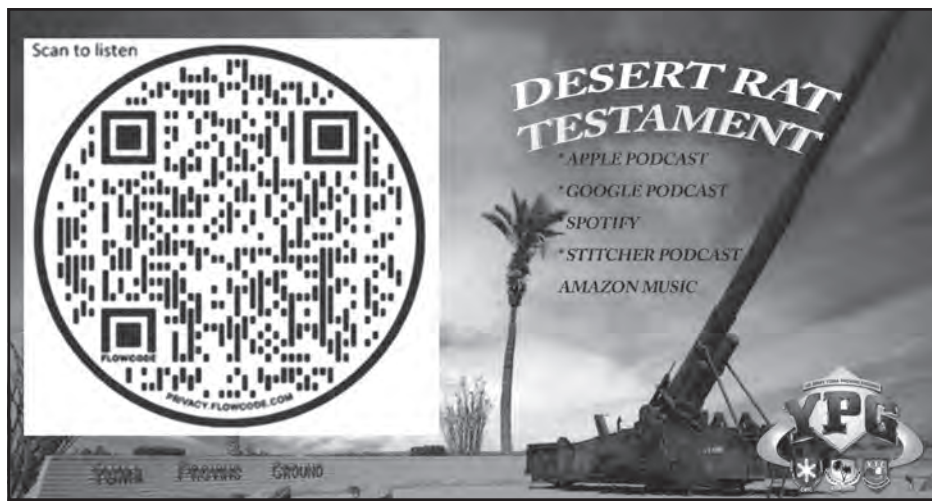
* APPLE PODCAST

* GOOGLE PODCAST

* SPOTIFY

* STITCHER PODCAST

* AMAZON MUSIC



Price students celebrate Read Across America



National Read Across America Day celebrates the life of Dr. Suess. In honor of his birthday, kids in schools across the county dress up like characters from Dr. Suess books and have special guest read to them. Yuma Proving Ground Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill read to a class of first and second graders on March 2. (Photos courtesy of Price School)



Distinguished speaker series comes to an end



Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) final Distinguished Speakers series presentations of the season took place, Feb. 23 at both the Yuma County and Foothills Libraries. YPG's Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill is pictured presenting at the Yuma Foothills Library to an enthusiastic crowd. He provided attendees with an overview testing at YPG and its role in the Army's Modernization priorities. (Photo by Mark Schauer)



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