

The Outpost

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

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U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground hosts EDGE 23

By Mark Schauer

During intense natural environment experimentation with over 80 new technologies, the Experimental Demonstration Gateway Event (EDGE) 23 blended developmental and operational testing for what may be key elements of the future force.

The Army Futures Command's (AFC) Future Vertical Lift (FVL) Cross-Functional Team (CFT) held the annual demonstration at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) over the course of four weeks in April and May.

The FVL CFT is aggressively testing most every facet of the Army's Future Attack Reconnaissance Aircraft (FARA) and FVL, as well as advancing knowledge on electronic warfare. Unmanned aircraft, launched effects, and all manner of ancillary technologies to expand



UH-60s from A Co, 5th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade conduct operations during the Future Vertical Lift Cross Functional Team's Experimental Demonstration Gateway Event (EDGE) 23 at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground on May 18, 2023. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

communications capabilities and Soldier survivability were all being tested simultaneously here during the demonstration, which included participation from 32 inter-service organizations, 10 international partners, and multiple private industry companies.

"It's really about getting after transformational capabilities and building the integrated deterrence capability that supports our national defense strategy," said Col. Jason Fryman, Chief of Staff for FVL CFT. "These are not completed programs—these are mature-enough technologies for us to test out in the natural environment. It's to try to find what makes the most sense that is suited to the future concepts we are looking at and the way we need those technologies to mature and

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YPG's Chaplain gets unique opportunity to attend Freefall School

By Ana Henderson

At the crack of dawn on March 20, Chaplain Ryan Pearse walked up to the Military Freefall School (MFFS) located at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground.

He walked up to the school two times prior hoping to be accepted as a walk-on student for the freefall parachutist course, also called the freefall basic course.

"I went in not knowing if I was going to go to school because I did not have a reserved spot," said Pearse.

Not anyone can walk into the school and attend. Pearse's paperwork and pre-requisites were met. He was airborne qualified, had his flight physical, and HAPS training. He just didn't have a spot unless another enrolled student did not show up. That morning, luck was on his side, and he was allowed in as a walk-on.

"If I was given the green light to go, there was no way I was going to say no, because it's hard to get a slot over there. So, no matter what, I was going to say yes," remarked Pearse.

As the Garrison Chaplain of



U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground Chaplain Ryan Pearse recently attended the Military Freefall School based at YPG and part of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. He said, "I want to continue to jump because I want to get to know the Soldiers and cadre here better and I think the best way to do that is to do what they do." (Loaned photo)

YPG, Pearse knew he had many commitments and events planned at the chapel. He was able to attend

evening and weekend commitments yet relied heavily on his two Non-Commissioned Officers, Staff Sgt. Nicole Covington and Sgt. D.J. Suggs, to handle the day-to-day tasks.

Pearse said, "They did an amazing job!"

So that day he started his four weeks as a student in the parachutist course at the MFF school.

He recalls, "It was a jammed packed, fast moving four weeks." Pearse tells, "It starts right at 4 a.m."

Day one he was learning to pack his own parachute and was in the wind tunnel by the afternoon. There was class instruction time for parachute packing, vertical wind tunnel training, hand and arm signals for communicating in the air, proper body movements, plus emergency procedures training, among other things. By Friday he was jumping out of an aircraft. He jumped three times that day before the clock struck noon.

"I had a calm about jumping out the first time. I knew the instructors are so well-trained and when you jump

out you have a one- on-one instructor with you. They are so highly trained that I trust them, and I trust their training so jumping out by myself, I was not as scared or nervous as you would think."

He adds, "Later in the course when you jump out with no instructor that is more nerve wracking, than the first jump."

Pearse has the highest respect for the team at the MFFS.

"To the MFF leadership thank you for allowing me the opportunity to go. To the cadre I want to highlight their expertise, the instructors, the support staff, riggers, the flight crew. They are at the top of their game and experts at what they do."

While Pearse learned to be a freefall parachutist this experience also taught him life lessons.

"You learn humility because you realize how dangerous of a thing you are doing and how you can't take anything for granted and you can't cut corners. If you want to cut corners when you are packing your own parachute be prepared for some troubles."

Ultimately, those serving our country don't always know what their next assignment will be or where their career path will take them but for Pearse this experience gives him a better understanding of the war fighters training at YPG.

"I want to use what I have been trained in to continue to jump with Freefall and ATF [Airborne Test Force] Soldiers. Because over half of the Soldiers over there are freefall qualified, I want to continue to jump because I want to get to know the Soldiers and cadre here better and I think the best way to do that is to do what they do."

During his short time at YPG, Pearse has revitalize the Post Chapel, bringing back a strong congregation, Vacation Bible School (VBS), and volunteers. The Chapel team is gearing up for VBS in July and hoping to have a full house of kids and volunteers.

The Outpost

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Commander thanks employees for role in 80th anniversary



Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Command Col. Patrick McFall recognized personnel who supported the recent YPG 80th Anniversary celebration. McFall presented each with a Commander's Coin. (Left to right) Col. McFall, Ramon Ramirez, Adan Valverde, Victor Figueroa, Phil Hansen, and Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill. (Photos by Eugene Garcia)





Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Shane Dering is pictured later in the week recognizing John Delgado and Seth Kenny for their efforts with YPG's 80th Anniversary event.

Ground Combat personnel recognized







Ground Combat Systems Director, Eddy Patchet nominated the following eight Maintenance Division personnel for a Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commanders Coin for their instrumental contributions supporting YPG/ Yuma Test Center, Army Test and **Evaluation Com**mand Material Readiness Review compliance. Amber Barstow, Annette Silva, Toney Brooks, Kimberly Butler, William Sanchez, Robert Rodriguez, Jason Ferguson, and Rusty Young. (Photos by

Eugene Garcia)

Hot weather with winter rains is a recipe for wildfires

By Ron Van Why

With the monsoons last summer and the winter rains we had, there is a lot of light vegetation and grasses out on the range, drying out now. This increases our risk of wildfire catching and spreading downrange.

An uncontrolled wildfire on the range has the potential to burn into the Kofa Wildlife Refuge and cause significant damage.

YPG's Wildlife Biologist, Daniel Steward shares these tips for the workforce.

 Open burning is not allowed anywhere on YPG outside of specifically approved locations.

• No hot work, which includes any operation that produces sparks, without a permit.

• The very common cause of fine fuel fires is catalytic converters. Do not park over grasses or brush.

If you see overgrown trees or shrubbery, call the Directorate of Public Works or the Housing Department, depending on the area, to report it so they can remove the fire danger.

If you see a fire starting on the range immediately report it to Range Control.



Dry vegetation can easily catch fire such as the one at Hidden Shores in 2020. YPG's Safety and Environmental teams urge the workforce to immediately report fires seen on the range to Range Control. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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hours. For more information call 928-328-3350. (Photos courtesy of ACS staff)

March. Those interested in volunteering should enroll in the YPG's Army Volunteer Program to get credit for their volunteer







The semi-formal Volunteer Appreciation Dinner included hors d'oeuvres, dinner, and chocolate fountains for dessert, (Loaned photos)

YPG appreciates volunteers, hopes to inspire more

By Ana Henderson

Army Community Services (ACS) and the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Chapel combined efforts to give thanks to the many volunteers

On the evening of March 30, the Cactus Café was transformed into a banquet hall and guests dressed to the nine made their way to celebrate the many volunteers who gave their time and effort the.

YPG Chaplain Capt. Ryan Pearse had more than 20 volunteers help with various duties at the chapel and ACS thanked two volunteers.

The semi-formal Volunteer Appreciation Dinner included hors d'oeuvres, dinner, and chocolate

fountains for dessert. Both YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall and Garrison Manager Ken Musselwhite provided opening remarks and Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill was the guest speaker and was recognized as a Chapel volunteer.

After dinner, the formal portion of the ceremony got underway where the volunteers were called up and recognized.

"These are all amazing volunteers, and they would do it even if they were not recognized but I think it's very important to recognized volunteers. It shows appreciation, and it creates and fosters a community of volunteerism," explained Pearse.

This event was the first of its kind at YPG however both Pearse and ACS Volunteer Coordinator Gisela Robles hope it continues. Robles is educating those interested in volunteering about the process of enrolling and tracking their hours.

Robles explains the benefits of making it official, "They get a certificate with the total number hours they have volunteered for the year and they can used that to add the experience on their resume."

Those interested in volunteering can go directly to the facility they would like to volunteer at for example to teach a class at the Fitness Center or Post Library or Travel Camp. The Organization

Point of Contact (OPOC) there will assist from that point with enrolling the individual.

To qualify as a volunteer a person must be a minimum of 14 years old. Current employees can be volunteers, but volunteer hours must be outside of their regular work schedule.

If someone wants to volunteer but not sure where they can contact Robles at extension 3350 and she can speak with the OPOCs to see where help is needed. Individuals interested can also visit the volunteer website at https:ymis.armyfamilywebportal. com.

Per Army regulations, volunteers on the installation must be registered.

Yuma Test Center thanks employees for years of service

Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Shane Dering visited employees on the Kofa Cantonment to thank them for their years of service. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



20 years Carlos Anaya



15 years **Chandron Mitchell**



15 years Frank Aguilar



15 years **James Choate**



10 years Jose Ortiz

Memorial Day: In remembrance of the fallen











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. For more than 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. As usual, on Memorial Day 2023, a color guard from U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground was front and center. (Photos by Mark Schauer)





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EDGE 23

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advance into programs of record."

Over multiple use cases involving Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division and international participants, more than 600 fire missions were conducted, roughly half of which were fully digital. The simulated air assaults involved manned and unmanned aircraft and so-called launched effects from the air and ground.

"What we did with the use cases was have a multinational air assault operation sending troops into 'territory' previously held by the enemy," said Maj. Gen. Walter Rugen, FVL CFT Director, in remarks at a media roundtable with multiple national and international media representatives held at YPG at the conclusion of the demonstration. "The payloads and some of the advanced tactics were where I really saw innovation. I am very pleased with the pace of launched effects."

The planning for the event took more than six months, and involved at least some participation from more than 500 YPG personnel.

"YPG is very dynamic: We embrace change and our culture is not to say no, but to get to a yes," said Justin Croutch, YPG's FVL CFT integrator. "We initiated conversations months and months ago, but we knew that the initial concept would evolve. We want to make sure we provide the right support needed and posture everyone for success."

The proving ground's clear, stable air and extremely dry climate combined with an ability to control



"YPG is a literal crown jewel that can replicate a battlefield very, very well," said Maj. Gen. Walter Rugen, FVL CFT Director. Adding, "The land, air, and spectrum that the facility offers is undeniably indispensable to our success. The team's professionalism is outstanding, and we will be back to Yuma," during remarks at a media roundtable with multiple national and international media representatives held at YPG at the conclusion of the demonstration. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

a large swath of the radio frequency spectrum makes it a desired location for the type of testing EDGE was interested in: counter-unmanned aircraft solutions, extending network access, and flying autonomous and semi-autonomous aircraft. YPG's wealth of other infrastructure meant for other sectors of the post's test mission were utilized to support the aviation evaluations: YPG is home to things like technical and tactical targets, as well as generator and combined maintenance shops. YPG's deep institutional knowledge allowed the extremely complex test scenarios that involved dozens of aircraft conducting simulated operational missions and even live fires. To accommodate all of this activity safely, YPG's personnel had to identify flight routes and boxes in advance, and ensure that during execution appropriate personnel were on the ground in landing zones

where mock assaults took place. As they were in progress, test personnel were able to monitor the activity in real time.

"YPG has a pretty rigorous and efficient safety process in place," said Croutch. "Every technology out here was looked at with respect to safety as far as what hazards are associated with those technologies. Working with the FVL team, we were able to choreograph where in time and space things would happen to avoid any significant conflict."

Though the event saw such firsts as autonomous landings and resupply and first-ever autonomous landings in a desert environment of a Bell 412 airframe brought to the event by Canada, the principals were particularly impressed with advances that were made in advancing the reach and range of interconnected architectures.

"Our theater linkage with Northern

EDGE at Fort Wainwright 4,000 kilometers away really replicated our theater geometry," said Rugen. "My focus is on getting that information quickly to the tactical edge."

The FVL CFT's top leadership were pleased with the support they received by upwards of 300 range personnel from YPG.

"YPG is a literal crown jewel that can replicate a battlefield very, very well," said Rugen. "The land, air, and spectrum that the facility offers is undeniably indispensable to our success. The team's professionalism is outstanding, and we will be back to Yuma."

"At this point, as our third major event in three years, I don't think we saw anything that we wouldn't have expected," said Croutch. "There was certainly a lot going on in a very concise, tight window, but the operations were pretty typical for what YPG does."



Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Commander's 24/7 Hotline (443) 910-1680





75th Innovation Command brings their unique skills to EDGE

By Ana Henderson

The 75th Innovation Command (IC), based in Houston, Texas, employs reservist Soldiers who have been recruited from the civilian world because of their sought-after technical skills and expertise.

The 75th IC team also bring decades of combined military experience with countless deployments under their belts.

"We are here because we are engineers, we are scientists, we all have STEM degrees and backgrounds, so it's easy for us to talk the talk with these developers and innovators," explained Chief Warrant Officer 3 Steven Dixon, an innovation technician with the 75th IC.

"I can see where these technologies could be applied on the battlefield, because we have been there. All of us," added Dixon, who has been deployed six times.

Lt. Col. Martin Plumlee, officer in charge for 75th IC from the Huntsville Innovation Detachment said, "That's sort of the beauty and secret sauce of the 75th. We are looking for those people who have those unique skills and abilities who can help the Army when they are wearing this suit [Army uniform] and still help the Army when they are wearing a different suit."

So, who better to provide Soldier feedback during the aviation-centric Experimentation Demonstration Gateway Event, better known as EDGE, that took place at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) in late April through mid-May than the 75th IC?

The three-week event brought Army Futures Command's Future Vertical Lift (FVL) Cross-Functional Team and industry and international partners to the Yuma desert to work through network connectivity, frequency communication and flying maneuvers. The event culminated with a live capabilities demonstration for senior leaders and members of Congress.

"Our job here is to integrate and to



ing Ground, Ariz. The event is hosted annually by the Future Vertical Lift Cross-Functional Team. (U.S. Army photo)

be embedded with FVL to support all levels of their mission," Plumlee explained.

That meant boots on the ground at YPG for the duration of the exercise to assess the technology and provide feedback. The 75th IC Soldier feedback in some instances provided the missing link to get a system just right

Capt. Eric McClure, an Innovation Officer with the 75th and UH-60 Blackhawk pilot by trade, said there were several moments with technology creators where the collaboration led them to think, "Oh, I never really thought about this" or "The feedback you just provided will help us go back and fix a software error or bug we saw, or potentially help improve a system to make it more user friendly."

EDGE provided the unique ability to gather creators, engineers and software developers with Soldiers for their instant assessment and recommendations.

"Failure is a gift" is a term
McClure said someone coined
during EDGE. He went on to
explain, "It's a great learning
moment, so they can take that back
and improve their system. You
can see there is care in the eyes of
these industry partners to fix those
problems, and some have been doing
that rapidly on the fly. They have

their engineers and their software coders on site. They experience a problem one day, they immediately go back and try to fix it."

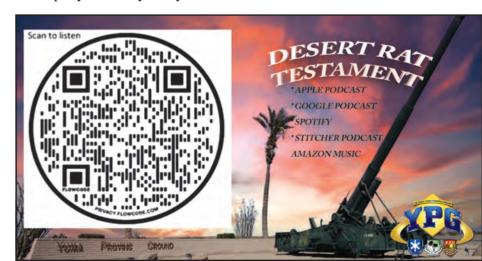
EDGE's location in the hot Arizona desert made for a perfect training ground. Yuma Test Center at YPG provides unrestricted airspace to allow for air and ground testing.

"You can design something, but if you don't know how it's integrated, if the person who is putting in the equipment, or the crew members landing, don't interact on true missions, or mock missions where they are actually flying the aircraft in the dust with sweaty hands using the equipment, it makes a huge difference," explained Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gerrit Jenniskens, a tech scout with the 75th IC.

"You see where the failure points are here in a test experimental environment. So, when they get out in the desert or mountain or wherever they are going to be operational, those variable points are reduced. Let's get it right in the experimental phase," Jenniskens added.

And that's ultimately the goal of EDGE — looking to see if the presented systems will be effective solutions and useful for the Army of the future.

"We want to win and bring all our men and women home," remarked Plumlee.



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Yuma Proving Ground's Flight Services Division recognized for safety

By Ana Henderson

Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) Flight Services Division was recognized for its top-notch safety during the last 12 months.

U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC) Maj. Gen. James Gallivan awarded the YPG Flight Division with an Award of Accomplishment in Safety from The Department of the Army's U.S. Army Safety Program. The award citation from Gallivan states the accomplishment is due in part to "outstanding dedication to maintaining a culture of safety."

The team conducted missions without any Class A, B or C mishaps. Gallivan calls that a "Truly remarkable feat!"

Class A, B or C mishaps encompass property damage up to 2-million dollars and injuries ranging from minor requiring one day off work to as severe as a fatality.

YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall, Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Shane Dering, Command Sgt. Major Herbert Gill, and Technical Director Larry Bracamonte visited the team to recognize and thank them.

McFall told the team, "You run a very dangerous business. Your mishaps aren't mishaps they are catastrophic in the aircraft business. So, to get this award, is to me a huge feat."

Gill echoed the sentiment saying, "To have this honor in safety is a big



Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Patrick McFall, Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Shane Dering, Command Sgt. Major Herbert Gill, and Technical Director Larry Bracamonte visited the team at Flight Services to recognize them for earning Award of Accomplishment in Safety from The Department of the Army's U.S. Army Safety Program. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



deal. Especially with the aviation hours you have."

The Flight Services Division is made up of 11 members including seven pilots, Airfield Manager,

Airfield Electronics Technician, Airfield Quality Assurance Inspector and Equipment Manager. They are augmented by 31 personnel from LOGMET, LLC, the Aviation Services Support contractor providing many other functions including two maintenance pilots, crew chiefs, air traffic control, airfield operations, production and quality control, avionics, aviation maintenance, supply, ground support equipment and aviation life support. Every member shares in helping maintain aviation safety. The seasoned pilots collectively have more than 44,100 flight hours total, and aviation service varies from two decades to over 40 years.

Fight Services Division Chief Patrick Franklin, Standardization Instructor Pilot Leland Tingey and Logmet Program Manager/ Maintenance Pilot Roy Queipo are recipients of The Order of Saint Michael Bronze Award which recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to the promotion of Army Aviation through a lifetime of service to the Aviation Branch.

Franklin received the recent safety award on behalf of the Flight Services team and told the group, "It's always a pleasure and a privilege to come to work and be able to work with such professionals from the leadership down to everyone in this room."

Technical Director Larry
Bracamonte holds the team of
professionals in high regards. The
told them, "You are the best pilots
in the Army, and I truly believe that.
This is an award well deserved so
thank you!"

Many words of appreciation went around. Franklin thanked the team from Logmet for their contribution.

"They perform functions at our facility that at some of the other ATEC organizations are performed by civilians. Tower, ops, every function including flying is conducted by Logmet augmenting us. We would not be able to function without their support," explained Franklin.

He made sure everyone in the room knew they played a role in earning the recognition for the work they do day in and out following procedures.

"This safety award represents the mechanics that keep the aircraft flying, the production control people that keep the flow of things, the supply folks, the aviation life support equipment specialists, operations, every aspect is very synergistic and dependent on everything else."

"It has to be noted that we share this with Logmet and we couldn't do it without them."

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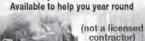
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Chaplain's Corner

Rule #4, Compare yourself to who you were yesterday, not to who someone else is today

Chaplain's Corner Chaplain Capt. Ryan Pearse



Rule #4 in Dr. Jordan Peterson's book, "12 Rules for Life: An Antidote to Chaos" is "Compare yourself to who you were vesterday, not to who someone else is today."

The idea for rule #4 is to improve yourself a little bit every day. It is not wise or fair to compare vourself against someone else. All people are created differently with different gifts, talents, and abilities. Use what God has given you,

regardless of what others around you are doing. When we compare ourselves against someone else, we are essentially coveting our neighbor which is not conducive or helpful to anyone involved.

Jordan notes that even if you compare yourself against someone else and it appears they, "have it better than you," they probably don't. It is human nature to hide our weaknesses and only let people see the good in us. If we fully knew the struggles of the person we are comparing ourselves with, we would probably be shocked.

Interestingly, Jordan discusses

research that proves students who grew up in small high schools are far more successful. per capita, than students who attend large high schools. Why? Because they have less people to compare themselves with. Students in small high schools win more and therefore enjoy higher levels of serotonin-fueled confidence. This creates a compound interest of serotonin which causes more confidence and more wins.

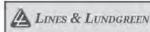
2 Corinthians tells us, "Those who compare themselves against others are not wise. Focus on improving yourself, not comparing yourself with others."



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Arizona Science Center visits YPG



The Phoenix-based Arizona Science Center visited the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Fitness Center on May 24 to conduct table-top science activities for the youngsters of the YPG community and their families. Patrons participated in fun and educational hands-on science experiments related to Arizona, from insects to geology. (Photos by Eugene Garcia)







James D. Price Elementary School celebrates









Teachers, parents, siblings, and other loved ones gathered to watch as kindergarten and fifth grade students graduated. The seven fifth graders graduated out of James D. Price Elementary School as they move on the middle school next school year. The 11 kindergarteners graduated from their first year in school. There were many smiles and cheers shared. Class president Adriana Soto spoke at the ceremony and wished the kids well. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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