



# The Outpost

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

VOLUME 72 NO. 23 NOVEMBER 20, 2023

## YPG jumpers test parachute glide modification system

By James Gilbert

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) is home to all manner of parachute testing and the elite jumpers from its Airborne Test Force (ATF) recently completed the initial testing for a potential new glide modification system for the RA-1 military free fall parachute.

Sgt. 1st Class Cody Lavalla explained that the test was conducted under the direction of Combat Capabilities Development Command Soldier Center, which is part of the Army Futures Command and thus plays a role in the Army's modernization effort.

"The RA-1 military free fall parachute has been fielded for about six years now," said Lavalla, who is the air drop operations noncommissioned officer for ATF. "Like any item or piece of equipment in the Army, they are



Soldiers from the Airborne Test Force were testing a potential new glide modification system for the RA-1 military free fall parachute during a practice jump just before Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. John Nelson's change of command ceremony. The test, which began in May and ended in July, consisted of 228 jumps. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

always looking to improve it."

The test, which began in May and ended in July, consisted of 228 jumps, including the ones performed during both YPG Commander Col. John Nelson's change of command ceremony and Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Millare's change of responsibility ceremony.

"In that time frame we did all those jumps and provided feedback to the customer as to what our thoughts were on the system, how it performed and did it meet expectations," Lavalla said.

The potential modification being tested was a glide system that added another set of toggles that when pulled, instead of going forward, the jumper's parachute will come down vertically without collapsing the canopy.

"With a glide modulation you set

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## YPG Chaplain earns new rank



Congratulations are in order for U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Chaplain Ryan Pearse. A promotion ceremony was held Nov. 6 in the YPG Chapel as Pearse was promoted from the rank of Captain to Major. YPG Garrison Manager Kenneth Musslewhite told Pearse before swapping out his insignia, "Once you come into the field grade, we know you are experienced, and we expect a lot more."



During a short speech Pearse thanked God, his wife and kids and his noncommissioned officers for their support. He also thanked those in attendance including Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. John Nelson, Sgt. Maj. Mark Millare, Garrison's Manager, Deputy Garrison Manager Dan Carter and Chaplains from Marine Corps Air Station Yuma and Marine Aircraft Group 13. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

# The Outpost

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News may be submitted to:

The Editor, Outpost, Yuma Proving Ground, Yuma, AZ, 85365

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**Commander:** Col. John Nelson

**Public Affairs Officer:** Mark Schauer

**Public Affairs Specialist/Outpost Editor:** Ana Henderson

**Public Affairs Specialist:** James Gilbert

**Visual Information Manager:** Eugene Garcia

**Cold Regions Test Center Photographer:** Sebastian Saarloos



## YPG supports annual Veterans Day Parade

Yuma came out in force to honor America's veterans at Yuma's Veterans Day Parade on Nov. 11, and Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) personnel were front and center.



YPG Commander Col. John Nelson and his wife Gina rode in Trans Am convertible near the front of the parade followed by Soldiers from YPG's Airborne Test Force. (Photos by Mark Schauer and James Gilbert)



The YPG team had a great time mingling with the community.



YPG's Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year were among the parade's grand marshals.



Following the parade, Chaplain Maj. Ryan Pearse presided over the benediction at the 11th Hour Ceremony at American Legion Post 19.



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## Brazilian Military visits YPG



Members of the Brazilian Military visited U.S. Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) on Nov. 7 to learn about YPG's test capabilities and share their capabilities. Lt. Col. Luis Paulo Bastos Cardoso and Lt. Col. Carlos Cypriano Vallim Junior of the Evaluation of Defense Products at Brazilian Army Evaluations Centre toured various test support directorates including the Air Delivery facility pictured. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



## Command team makes local media visits

Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. John Nelson and Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Millare made visits to several local media outlets on Nov. 13.



Their first stop of the day was an appearance on the "Today in Yuma" radio program with Jennifer Blackwell and Theresa Straub. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



They proceeded to a tour of KYMA's studio from General Manger Dave Miller followed by an interview with KYMA TV reporter Valeria Rodriguez.



Next, they visited the offices of the Yuma Sun newspaper, where they sat down with the editorial board, followed by a tour of the Sun's Newseum from Editor Roxanne Molenaar.



# Watch out for wildlife

By Daniel Steward

After another long hot summer, we are all welcoming fall. As our day-length shortens and temperatures drop we will encounter a lot more wildlife on Yuma Proving Ground. Many of us are now commuting to work in the dark, and as we all know, the deer and burros can be a hazard along the highway. Especially in the dark! Also, as we will be out more near sunrise, we will also see more coyotes. The pups that were born in spring are nearly grown and are roaming around now. These youngsters still have a lot of lessons to learn. It takes time for them to find out what is dangerous, and that often gets them too close to people. We also don't want to teach them the wrong lessons by giving them a free meal from our garbage or pet food. If you see a coyote getting a little too friendly, give it a shout, make



Many of us are now commuting to work in the dark and, as we all know, deer and burros can be a hazard along the highway, especially in the dark. These burros were seen hanging out in the Kofa Cantonment area. (U.S. Army photo)

noise or anything to scare it away. Remember coyotes are wild animals so always keep your distance and

never feed them.

As we are getting a break from the high summer temperatures, so too

are the rattlesnakes. We always have an uptick in snake sightings in fall as they can be more active in daylight. Now that it's cooler in November, we will see less snakes as most will go dormant for winter. It is important to note that snakes don't truly hibernate. They enter a state called "brumation" which is a dormancy period with internment activity. So, it is possible for a snake to be out sunning on a warm day in December. The best way to protect yourself living in snake country is to be aware of your surroundings. Also removing clutter around the jobsite or at home will give snakes, and their prey, less places to hide.

**For more information you can visit Arizona Game and Fish's living with wildlife page by scanning the QR code.**



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The Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center also has some really great information on venomous creatures. Scan the QR code to find page.



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# Work development assignments provide growth opportunities

By Ana Henderson

The U.S. Army provides a variety of developmental and educational opportunities for enlisted personnel, civilians, and students.

Recent graduate, Rosina Bray is currently participating in an Army civilian sponsored internship program.

Bray, from Maryland, graduated with a Bachelor in Materials Science and Engineering from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio and began an internship program at the Army Evaluation Center (AEC) in August of 2022.

AEC, "Produces unbiased, independent safety and operational evaluations to enable the Army to dominate in the multi-domain operational environment," according to its website.

Bray spent the first year of her internship at AEC learning about acquisition. She explains the role of an evaluator.

"The purpose of AEC is to



Recent graduate, Rosina Bray is currently participating in an Army civilian sponsored internship program. Bray, from Maryland, graduated with a Bachelor in Materials Science and Engineering from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio and began an internship program at the Army Evaluation Center in August of 2022. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

evaluate the technology and materiel solutions that are coming into the

Army and making sure they meet specific requirements, ensuring that if they can fill a capabilities gap, which one do they fill, and if they don't fill it completely how much can they do," adding, "Generally, we make sure it's good quality and will help protect our Soldiers."

Now Bray is fulfilling another requirement of the program which calls for her to spend a six-month detail at a test center. That led her to Cold Regions Test Center at Fort Greely, Alaska in October. The test center falls under Yuma Proving Ground's umbrella of extreme

weather testing.

"I wanted to go to a test center because that's the other half that fits in very well with the stuff that AEC does. We make the recommendations and capability documents for what we need, in addition to getting some details of the general test plan laid out but it's a very basic overview of the testing."

Bray would like to dig deeper into the process outside of the paperwork AEC receives. She imagines she'll be assisting with test planning, spending some time in the field and other times in the office to make sure she's communicating about the progress and the importance of arctic testing.

"I want to see how the cold affects an item. Because it's not something that a lot of people have a lot of emphasis on, and I would like to take this knowledge back to help system acquisition. To make more of a case as to why cold weather testing is applicable to their systems, and why they really should do it. Especially if they are trying to operate in a cold weather environment."

On day one of Bray's time at CRTCC she was meeting the team she would be spending the next six months with learning from and working together.

"Everyone has been really nice and more than welcoming to help me get acclimated and started to get me onboarded to various projects."

## YPG leadership meets with Quechan Tribal Council



On Oct. 31, Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commander Col. John Nelson, Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Millare, Technical Director Larry Bracamonte, and other YPG personnel met with the Quechan Tribal Council. Pictured from left are Virgil Smith; Donald Medart Jr.; Gloria McGee; Nelson; Tribal President Jordan D. Joaquin; Millare; Zion C. White; Jonathan E. Koteen. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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# Air Force operator's career comes to an end at YPG

By James Gilbert

The 20-year, one month and four-day long career of U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Alexander Davis came to an end Nov. 2 during a retirement ceremony held inside the Air Delivery complex at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG).

"You were the perfect person for this job. You knocked it out of the park," said Lt.

Col. Dylan Bell, commander of the Air Mobility Command Test and Evaluation Squadron, based out of Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, in N.J. "Not a single moment over the past two years that I have been in this squadron have I ever had to worry about what is going on here in Yuma. I got nothing but good reports."

In addition to having admirably served as the Airborne Test Force's (ATF) liaison with the Air Force the past two years, Davis had operated on his own as a sole detachment at YPG as a MC-130H Instructor Loadmaster.

In presiding over the ceremony, Bell also noted the "absolute amount of experience" Davis had brought to the job and called him a consummate professional.

"The Air Force is going to miss you," Bell said. "I can't thank you enough for the job you have done out here. Congratulations on a career well done."

Davis led the first platform-delivered unmanned aerial system initiative, using his expertise to develop a system that enables swarm delivery of battlefield effects for the Joint Force.



A retirement ceremony was held for U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Alexander Davis (right) on Nov. 2 at the Air Delivery complex. During his two years at the U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground, Davis admirably served as the Airborne Test Force's liaison with the Air Force and had operated on his own as a sole detachment as a MC-130H Instructor Loadmaster. Lt. Col. Dylan Bell (left), commander of the Air Mobility Command Test and Evaluation Squadron, presided over the ceremony. (Photo by James Gilbert)

Furthermore, Davis improved airdrops across the entire aircraft fleet, developed new heavy air drop methods that worked for all platforms, came up with a safer towed jumper checklist, and rewrote the joint precision airdrop checklist for the C-130.

Finally, he led over 33 weeks of active testing for the Joint Force, NASA, and coalition partners, which earned him the command's Test and Evaluation Directorate Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter.

In his closing remarks Davis said YPG had been an incredible place to have been stationed and praised all the ATF Soldiers he had worked alongside of, saying that they all had been, "extraordinarily qualified at what they do."

"Just know that you are the best at what you do. You find all the stuff first and get it fixed before it goes out to the guys on the line," he told them. "That is a huge amount of trust. You forget because you do it every day. You forget you are important."

He ended by saying that he felt that he had an impactful career and that it was also one in which he could be extremely proud.

## Workforce appreciation ceremony held at Maintenance Shop

Yuma Test Center (YTC) Commander Lt. Col. Shane Dering stopped by the Maintenance Building on Nov. 7 to recognize several members

of the workforce for their contributions by presenting them with Certificates of Appreciation and Challenge Coins. (Photos by James Gilbert)

— Employee of the 4th Quarter (Fiscal Year 2023) —



Matthew Keddy

— Certificate of Appreciation & YTC Challenge Coin recipients —



Kimberly Butler



William Sanchez



Patrick Kelly



Krista Hughes



# GLIDE

FROM PAGE 1

yourself up on your final approach, and if you need to land closer than you would at full flight you pull down on the toggles lowering your forward drive and let up at approximately 100 feet above the ground before you land,” Lavalla said.

Having this type of capability will help jumpers increase accuracy, land in areas with tall obstacles such as trees or buildings and insert themselves into much smaller drop zones than is currently possible safely with the current RA-1.

The reason for doing test jumps during the two ceremonies, according to Lavalla, is that Cox Field is a much smaller area to land



A Soldier from the Airborne Test Force (ATF) lands at Cox Field during a practice jump held just before Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. John Nelson's change of command ceremony. The ATF was testing a potential new glide modification for the RA-1 military free fall parachute and used the ceremony for a jump during the testing. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

compared to the normal drop zones they use, and it was an opportunity to show off the glide motion capability.

“There were trees, buildings and other obstacles, which are things you normally wouldn't want in such close proximity to a drop zone,” Lavalla said. “The system provides the ability to avoid things you could potentially impact and still land accurately in a small area.”

ATF training instructor Jose Castillo added that the feedback provided by the jumpers is currently being evaluated and more testing will likely be required on the glide modification system before the Army makes a decision about it.

“This is just the initial stage of testing,” said Castillo. “There is more testing that will need to be done.”

## YPG's Meteorology team provides expertise during balloon festival



The Yuma Proving Ground Meteorological Team continued its longstanding support of the Annual Colorado River Crossing Balloon Festival held this year on the weekend of Nov. 11. YPG Chief Meteorologist Nickolas McColl aided the event by providing weather data to determine if it was safe for participants to launch the hot air balloons. This is McColl's sixteenth year taking part in the event and his family has enjoyed being by his side for the last 11. His daughters Eadith and Gemma are pictured. (Loaned photos)

## Marines train at YPG



U.S. Marines with the Combined Anti-Armor Team (CAAT), 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division fire a TOW missile from a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle during a range on U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Oct 21. CAAT utilizes various weapon systems to neutralize enemy armored assets. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Eric Dmochowski)



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## Ribbon cutting for remodeled preschool room



The Yuma Proving Ground Child Development Center's (CDC) preschool room received a ribbon cutting ceremony on Nov. 6. Garrison Manager Kenneth Musselwhite, Deputy Garrison Manager Dan Carter, members of the Child and Youth Services team and preschool students watched as teachers cut the ribbon for the new classroom. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

The classroom underwent a months-long renovation to bring the room up to current standards. Child and Youth Services Director Sommer Cloinger explained how the flooring was replaced, the structure in the middle of the room was removed, and new plumbing was added to relocate the bathrooms.



In addition to the preschool room the Strong Beginning classroom was spruced up with paint and new decor and furnishings.



A separate project at the CDC is providing a new parking lot next to the building.

## Travel Camp residents welcomed back to YPG

YPG's senior leadership welcomed back winter visitors who reside at Yuma Proving Ground's Desert Breeze Travel Camp with a BBQ luncheon on Nov. 7. Those

who took part got to enjoy burgers and brats while engaging in conversations and sharing stories with others who choose to spend their winters at the travel camp.



YPG Garrison Manager Kenneth Musselwhite addressed winter visitors prior to the start of a BBQ. (Photos by James Gilbert)



Winter visitors grabbed food while other Travel camp residents got to know each other prior to the BBQ.



Police Chief Donnie Lucas and Fire Chief Gerald Ball were there to welcome the temporary residents along with Chaplain Maj. Ryan Pearse who invited winter visitors to YPG's Chapel.

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# The benefits of getting the flu vaccine: protecting yourself and others

## By 1st Lt. Stephanie A. Birge

Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is a highly contagious respiratory illness that affects millions of people worldwide each year. One of the most effective ways to prevent the flu and its potential complications is by getting an annual flu vaccine. This article explores the numerous benefits of receiving the flu vaccine and highlights why it is crucial for individuals of all ages to prioritize their health and the well-being of their communities.

### 1. Protection against infection:

The primary benefit of getting the flu vaccine is the reduced risk of contracting the flu virus. The vaccine stimulates the body's immune response, enabling it to recognize and fight off the specific strains of influenza included in the vaccine. By receiving the flu shot, individuals significantly decrease their chances of becoming infected with the flu, thereby safeguarding their health, and minimizing the potential for severe illness.

### 2. Reduced severity of symptoms:

Even if a vaccinated individual does contract the flu, the vaccine can still provide substantial benefits. Research has consistently shown that individuals who have received

the flu vaccine and subsequently become infected experience milder symptoms compared to those who have not been vaccinated.

### 3. Protection for vulnerable populations:

Certain groups, such as the elderly, young children, pregnant women, and individuals with chronic health conditions, are at a higher risk of developing severe complications from the flu. By getting vaccinated, individuals in these vulnerable populations can significantly reduce their chances of falling ill and experiencing severe flu-related complications. Moreover, when more people in the community are vaccinated, it creates a protective barrier, known as herd immunity, which helps shield those who cannot receive the vaccine due to medical reasons or age.

### 4. Prevention of hospitalizations and deaths:

The flu can lead to severe complications, including pneumonia, bronchitis, and worsening of existing chronic conditions. By getting vaccinated, individuals can significantly reduce their risk of hospitalization due to flu-related complications. Additionally, studies have consistently shown that the flu vaccine reduces the risk of flu-related deaths, particularly among high-risk

populations.

### 5. Economic and social benefits:

The impact of the flu extends beyond individual health, affecting workplaces, schools, and communities as a whole. By reducing the spread of the flu through vaccination, individuals can help minimize absenteeism from work or school, resulting in increased productivity and reduced economic burden.

The flu vaccine offers numerous benefits, including protection against infection, reduced severity of symptoms, and prevention of severe complications, hospitalizations, and deaths. By getting vaccinated, individuals not only safeguard their own health but also contribute to the well-being of their communities. As the flu virus continues to evolve and pose a threat each year, it is essential for individuals of all ages to prioritize receiving the flu vaccine as a responsible and proactive measure to protect themselves and those around them.

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## Fall Fun at Cold Regions Test Center



ABOVE: Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC) employees enjoyed participating in Fort Greely's Garrison Fall Festival on Oct. 28. Several tenant units decorated spaces and handed out treats. CRTC's spookish spot was decorated by Merri Hall, CRTC Safety and Environmental Manager, and her husband Travis and son Conner.

RIGHT: A few days later, CRTC held an impromptu Halloween Howdy on the day of goblins and ghouls to bring the team together for a little bit of fun before an evening of handing out candy. Some decided to observe Halloween in full regalia. (Photos courtesy CRTC)

## Halloween fun at Yuma Proving Ground



The workforce at Yuma Proving Ground had fun dressing up on Halloween day. The Resource Management team went with an office-wide theme while others like the Mission and Installation Contracting Command had individual costumes. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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