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Body armor saves lives, but only after thorough testing

By Mark Schauer

American Soldiers deployed to the world's worst combat zones depend on body armor to keep them safe.

Countless veterans of action in Iraq and Afghanistan can testify to the lifesaving utility of their armor.

Likewise, Soldiers count on body armor to fit and function well and not leave them permanently injured from body strain once they have returned to civilian life. U.S. Army Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC), located near Delta Junction, Alaska, recently tested a new modular body armor system that can be scaled up or back in four tiers, depending on the severity of the mission. The tiers consist of a range of soft and hard plates, and the highest tier includes a combat shirt with integrated soft armor and groin

SEE **BODY ARMOR** page 8



U.S. Army Cold Regions Test Center recently tested a new modular body armor system, subjecting it to hard use in an extreme Alaskan winter. Among other things, Soldiers from Fort Wainwright's 25th Infantry Division fired over 2,400 rounds conducting marksmanship training in the armor.

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Permanent military support group forms in Yuma

By Chuck Wullenjohn

Yuma is a town of fervent military supporters, and it's been that way for a long, long time

Dating back in history to 1850 when the Army first established a permanent local presence at Fort Yuma, a heritage that continues at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground today, the military has played a

significant role in molding and forming the Yuma community. In today's economy, the combined over one billion dollars of annual spending by Yuma's two bases makes the military's economic impact the second largest component of the Yuma economy, after agriculture. By itself, YPG is the largest single employer of civilians

in Yuma County.

Both bases boast positive two-way relations with local elected officials and community leaders. Members of the community banded together in the past whenever necessary to support the local installations, such as during the base realignment and closure (BRAC) process that closed or reduced in size

many installations around the nation during the late 1980's through the mid-1990's.

Recently, local leaders decided to formalize the military support process by creating a permanent local organization much like many other communities have formed.

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Kids savor "cool stuff" at YPG /Page 2



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Forging ties among Syrian refugees /Page 6



Kids savor "cool stuff" at YPG

By Mark Schauer

All children are interested in what their parents do for a living, but some parents have jobs more attractive to young people than others. Over one dozen children between the ages of five and 11 learned this firsthand when they spent a recent morning with their parents at YPG's electronic warfare branch.

For more than 20 years, the fourth Thursday in April has been National Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day. Having brought his own children to work several years ago after hearing about the national event from his wife, Todd Hudson, electronic warfare branch chief, witnessed firsthand the benefits of the program and decided to do something about it.

"This year I expanded it to the electronic warfare branch as a larger pilot program to see if we can expand it to all of Yuma Test Center or YPG in subsequent years," said Hudson.

Testing conducted by the electronic warfare branch is extraordinarily specialized and often concerns itself with the radio frequency 'background noise' present in a given location, which includes everything

Electronics warfare branch team lead Pete Schaffer (right) shows a young visitor an RG-31 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle. "It is often an abstract thought to kids when you say you work at YPG," he said. "To actually get them hands-on with some of our instrumentation is a great learning experience."

in the electromagnetic spectrum, from radio and television signals to radiation emitted from microwave ovens. A realistic radio frequency background environment is critical when testing electronic jamming systems and many feel YPG's ability to reproduce electronic environments from around the world is the best in the Department of Defense.

"They got to actually view test equipment and see that we can replicate signals in the radio frequency environment," said Hudson. "Kids understand handheld radio, walkie-talkies, and cell phones—they understand that we mimic whatever radiofrequency environment we need and replay it

SEE COOL STUFF page 3

Soldiers carry the torch



YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Sean Ward (right) hands off a torch to Special Olympian Santiago Lomeli as Airborne Test Force Chief Warrant Officer Brian Perinon (left) cheers him on. Lomeli, a Special Olympian for three years, ran with 15 YPG Soldiers for more than a mile as the torch passed through Yuma County in early May. "That was awesome," said Ward after the run. "It was great having one of the Olympians with us-- I think it motivated everyone. It's a big thing to the Olympians, and supporting them is a big thing to us."

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THEOUTPOST

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(PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER)

COOL STUFF

for our testing."

On display were such tools of the trade as an oscilloscope, a spectrum analyzer, and a signal generator, all of which enthralled the young minds.

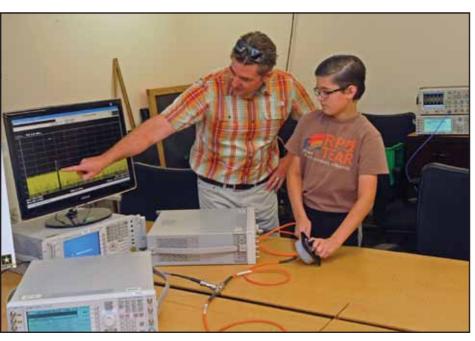
"It is often an abstract thought to kids when you say you work at YPG," said Pete Schaffer, team lead. "They don't know what that really means, so to actually get them handson with some of our instrumentation and show them radio frequencies is a great learning experience."

The children also got an up-close and personal look at a High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle

and two Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle variants.

"It's an opportunity for young people to learn, grow, and develop as they think about what they want to do in the future," said Lance Kerestes, team lead. "It's great for them to expand their surroundings and environment and to see what real life is like."

The kids enjoyed the event, too. "I like the machines and the trucks a lot," said Elend Hudson, a fifth grader who says he wants to be an engineer when he grows up. "I liked the RG-31 MRAP most."



Electronic warfare branch chief Todd Hudson points out a sine wave to son Elend as he uses an oscilloscope during the event. The children also got hands on with a spectrum analyzer and a signal generator during their visit.

(PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER)

Next Outpost deadline is noon May 19th

Sexual Assault Hotline: 920-3104

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Seen Around YPG













Clockwise, from top left: The concluding event of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention month, a "fun run," took place in late April during the early morning hours and attracted a large crowd of runners and walkers as seen in the first photo. YPG commander Col. Randy Murray leads the runners through a gauntlet of excited Child Development Center students. Sexual Assault Response Coordinator Dina Mabry (center) was recognized as YPG's Military Spouse of the Year by Col. Randy Murray (left) and Garrison Manager Gordon Rogers during the post's annual Military Spouse Appreciation Breakfast. The breakfast highlighted the contributions of all military Spouses who support our country's Warfighters, and was attended by more than 50 YPG Spouses and Family Members, as seen in the next photo. "There are approximately 320 million people in the United States, and 1% serve in uniform," said Col. Randy Murray, YPG commander in remarks at the ceremony. "We're the ones who keep this nation safe, and you're the ones helping us keep this nation safe. We truly appreciate everything you do, and can't say it enough." Former YPG Commander Col. Thomas Payne (ret.) no longer wears a uniform but continues to play a vital role in the U.S. Department of Defense. A program manager for the Missile Defense Agency, he recently returned to the proving ground to present awards to a host of YPG employees who provided critical support to past agency test programs.

(PHOTOS BY PAO STAFF)



Nearly 150 people gathered to show their support for Yuma's two military installations, as well as to enjoy a fine dinner. A formal affair, most men wore business suits while women sported cocktail attire.

(PHOTOS BY CHUCK WULLENJOHN)

SUPPORT GROUP

The new organization, called the Yuma 50, held a gala kick-off dinner in a hangar at Yuma International Airport late last month to get the group off the ground.

"We are a non-profit organization formed specifically to support military operations in Yuma County," said Ken Rosevear, chairman of the Yuma 50. "Our purpose is to pursue issues that support our bases and oppose those that are detrimental, whatever they

may be." He explains the group as a community outreach and education organization bringing together a broad group of community and civic

leaders, businesses, organizations, military support groups, and private citizens across all political affiliations.







A cocktail hour occurred before dinner, when attendees could relax, engage in small talk and quietly view military hardware on display. YPG's photo exhibit and table display of replica small arms, helmets used by Army troops during 20th century conflicts, field rations, and more, were hits of the evening.

Rosevear says the group hopes to organize 300 to 400 people in the local community and have them ready to respond when an issue comes up deemed negative to either Yuma Proving Ground or Marine Corps Air Station Yuma. These include threats such as proposed budget cuts, sequestration, encroachment issues, and much more. Members will make phone calls, send email messages, write letters, or even visit congressmen to state their opinions and positions.

The new organization has joined forces with the Southern Arizona Defense Alliance, which has operated in Tucson and Sierra Vista for several years, to magnify and focus its impact.

"A study was conducted by

the alliance a couple years ago that showed strong military support by 83 percent of the citizens of Yuma County," said Rosevear proudly. "Anybody who lives in Yuma knows this is a military town."

He strongly believes the work being accomplished at YPG and MCAS Yuma deserves protection because of its importance to the national defense. "The mission of the two bases, one for training and the other for testing, is critical to the military," he said. "This is serious business and we don't want the mission of either base to be interrupted."

For further information on the Yuma 50 and to learn how to become a member, visit the organization's website at: www.Yuma50.org.

OPPOSITE PAGE:

Bill Gresser (right), former owner of Papa San restaurant, listens to Col. Randy Murray, YPG commander, as he discusses activities at the proving ground. Held within a hangar at Yuma International Airport, the wide hangar doors stood open so everyone could enjoy the mild evening air.

-VIEWPOINTS

Not many people work on military equipment for a living, but it is common here at YPG. For this viewpoint, we asked electronic integrated systems mechanics what led them into their unique occupation.



Chris Scott

I served in the Army as an M1A1 tank mechanic for four years, and when I got out I began looking for employment in the private sector. My first civil service job was at Red River Army Depot as a heavy equipment mechanic and then I applied and got the job at YPG. One of the most interesting and enjoyable aspects of my job is that we really never know what's next: we may be pulling a turret off of an M1 tank one day, and shooting AK-47s in support of some other type of test the next.

Dave Estrada

I served in the Army on active duty for 16 years as an armament maintenance supervisor. I returned to Yuma in 1999 as a civilian and started my employment at YPG as an artillery tester, then moved to the Systems Test Branch in 2003. The thing I like best about my job is the vast diversity we have between projects from systems testing to weapons firing. I love working on the Bradley the most due to all the electronics.





Gabe Arzola

I served in the Army as an armor crewman on an M1A2 tank. I started here in 2007 and support the multiple integrated fire control systems on systems like the M1A2 tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicles, as well as firing on board on the vehicles. I also maintain and repair 120 mm and 105 mm cannon hard stands used at some gun positions.



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Forging ties among Syrian refugees

Improving lives through blacksmithing

by Mark Schauer

James Schremp is devoted to people and service.

A 25-year veteran of the proving ground and former Marine, he works in the aircraft armament section and devotes much of his spare time to blacksmithing, an avocation he took up about a decade ago when he took the first of three classes in the art at Arizona Western College.

"I was always interested in it," he recalled. "I remember the night before the first class I couldn't sleep-I was that stoked about it."

In January, Schremp's life took a

dramatic turn with a three-week stint in the nation of Jordan, where he joined other members of his church providing relief supplies to refugees fleeing civil war in Syria.

"It was an eye opener for me," he said.

After five long years of unrest, around 6,000,000 Syrians have fled their country. Neighboring Jordan, a nation of less than 10,000,000 people, has taken in more than 1,000,000 of them.

In a true act of volunteerism, Schremp paid for his travel and all associated costs for the journey.



Aircraft armament specialist James Schremp (left), an avid blacksmith, teaches the art to a student at his church this past winter. Schremp intends to teach blacksmithing to Syrian refugees on a return trip to Jordan this autumn. "Making things blacksmithing would mean a little bit of an income and keeping the mind busy with something to do," he said.

a student at his church this past winter. Schrem refugees on a return trip to Jordan this autumn little bit of an income and keeping the mind bu

The long trip- a flight to Chicago, followed by 12 hours in the air to Amman, Jordan-- was the result of even longer reflection, sparked by the testimony of a member of his church who had just returned from one of several stints doing missionary work amongst the refugees in Jordan.

"I was in church and the lady was

"I was in church and the lady was up speaking about her trip and I thought, 'that's fine. I'm not going,'" he recalled with a smile. "Before I knew it, though, my inner voice started working on me. Every time she went over there, it seemed like things were getting worse."

The trip was scheduled and postponed several times, but eventually Schremp made the journey, the first overseas he had made alone as a civilian. Once in country, he stayed in Marfaq, a city near the Syrian border that now had a majority-refugee population, where he and his associates slept in bunk beds in an unfinished church with electric space heaters as nightly temperatures dropped into the



20s. His primary task was helping to deliver supplies like propane, mattresses, and floor mats to refugees living usually in rudimentary apartments without running water or other luxuries taken for granted in much of the world. Despite the hardships, Schremp found the people unfailingly hospitable—sharing coffee and tea, and usually their story, too.

"Every family that I met could name one or two family members who had been killed. It was usually the deciding factor in leaving."

Moved by the suffering of the people—including small children who had witnessed unspeakable horrors and mindful of their plight of not being to legally seek work as refugees. Schremp wondered if the blacksmithing that had ignited such passion in him might serve others in worse straights. He noticed plenty of

discarded metal nails and rebar that a blacksmith could turn into small items that could be sold for cash. Further, the same propane the people used for cooking could also fire a small forge.

"One of the problems is there is nothing for the men to do. Making things blacksmithing would mean a little bit of an income and keeping the mind busy with something to do."

Schremp plans to make another trip to Jordan in autumn, this time accompanied by his wife. In preparation, when he returned home he held a blacksmithing class in his church's parking lot with five Yuma residents, and subsequently shipped his hardware to Jordan, where it awaits his return.

"I have two anvils and one propane forge in Marfaq," he said with pride. "The equipment I'm taking over there is over there to stay."



From this modest truck, Schremp and his church associates distributed supplies like propane, mattresses, and floor mats to Syrian refugees living in extremely humble circumstances in Marfaq, Jordan."It was an eye opener for me," he said.

(LOANED PHOTOS)

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BODY ARMOR

FROM PAGE 1

protection.

Aside from putting this improved body armor through its paces in a brutally cold Alaska December, the test resulted in improved methodologies for human factors testing, and it all stems from the intensely dynamic flexibility of Soldier movement in combat.

"Anything you are doing as a Soldier is made up of compound, multi-joint movements," said Isaac Howell, test officer.

Howell, who spent 10 years in uniform and deployed to Iraq as an infantry officer, has particular interest and insight into the importance of fit and function for Soldier systems like body armor, and was excited to approach the test in a novel manner.

"The standard anthropomorphic measurements historically utilized in human factors engineering testing are static, not dynamic," said Howell. "You sit in a chair and bend over and I measure that angle with an instrument. That's a static measurement -- even a layperson can see the limitations in that kind of



Test officer Isaac Howell (left) accompanied the participating Soldiers on the foot marches, each carrying 35 to 40 pound packs. "You try not to sweat while you're walking, but you really can't avoid it when you're carrying that much gear," he said. "Sweating is very dangerous in an extreme cold environment."

(PHOTOS BY SEBASTIAN SAARLOOS)

measurement."

Howell feels using a functional movement screen, a system

developed by clinicians, physical therapists, and physiologists for use in the competitive sports world, is

a great complement to this type of testing. Utilizing seven different exercises to screen the components of fundamental human movement, the screening system predicts the possibility of biomechanical injury due to poor movement based on a score test subjects get from performing a battery of exercises.

"In a test, you have to work with somebody who has

The test resulted in improved methodologies for human factors testing, all stemming from the intensely dynamic flexibility of Soldier movement in combat.

good movement to begin with," said Howell. "If a person doesn't have good range of motion in their joints before they put on the armor, it's not going to provide the best data."

Howell began the test by having prospective participants perform five complex exercises wearing only summer physical training t-shirt and shorts. Soldiers passing the baseline test then did the same exercises in the first tier of body armor, progressing up to the fourth.

"From that we were able to see if wearing the extra levels of body armor restrict movement," said Howell. "Obviously it does to some degree eventually, but we were able to see if they still had an acceptable range of motion or how severe the degradation of motion was."

Exercises like the overhead deep squat employed in the screening are difficult, but nothing compared



to what was in store once Soldiers from Fort Wainwright's 25th Infantry Division took the test outside into sub-zero winter. On foot march days, the Soldiers hiked eight miles in the given tier carrying a standard 35 to 40 pound pack, while wearing the weather-appropriate level of the Extended Cold Weather Clothing System. This three-hour ordeal was repeated wearing each configuration of body armor: if they were lucky, the Soldiers got breaks every 20 to 30 minutes.

"It depended on how cold it was: if it was really cold, we tried to just keep moving," said Howell, who marched alongside. "You try not to sweat while you're walking, but you really can't avoid it when you're carrying that much gear. Sweating is very dangerous in an extreme cold environment."

On the obstacle course, the Soldiers had to wear each configuration of the armor through an ordeal that included a 400 meter run, a low-crawl tunnel, mock windows,



As part of the testing, the Soldiers hiked eight miles in each of four configurations of body armor. If they were lucky, they got breaks every 20 to 30 minutes. "It depended on how cold it was," said Howell. "If it was really cold, we tried to just keep moving.'

stairs, and ladders of varying widths and heights. Finally, they each did a 200 meter shuttle run while lugging two 30 pound ammunition cans.

"That day was a real smoker," said

Howell.

To test the new quick-release feature of the armor, the Soldiers had to release, reassemble, and don their armor within seconds, repeating

> the task scores of times for each configuration in standing, kneeling, and prone positions as subzero snow blew past and data collectors looked on. To ensure a Soldier wearing the armor could effectively remove a wounded comrade also wearing it from danger, the testers performed casualty drag evaluations with real Soldiers portraying the mock wounded.

The Soldiers also did marksmanship training wearing the armor, firing over 2,400 rounds in the process.

One final portion of the test, ingress and egress from a combat vehicle, had special applicability to the latest variant of the Stryker combat vehicle, which was simultaneously under evaluation at CRTC. The Soldiers entered and exited all hatches of the vehicle wearing the full complement of armor and all seven levels of the ECWCS system, ensuring everything in the vehicle could be touched and reached, and wouldn't snag their gear. The findings applied to both tests, which both test officers saw as a bonus.

"It was great coordination between the two tests to pick the appropriate miserable day to get the Soldiers to do some limited ingress-egress testing," said Richard Reiser, test officer. "When this vehicle is fielded and the Soldiers have the new body armor, we'll already know it isn't an issue for ingress and egress."

"The whole test was taxing for the Soldiers, but they put in an outstanding effort," said Howell. "We found a lot of limitations and improvements the project manager is already improving upon or implementing."



Howell began the test by having prospective participants perform five complex exercises wearing only summer physical training clothes. "If a person doesn't have good range of motion in their joints before they put on the armor, it's not going to provide the best data." he said.

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May is Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

Submitted by Paul J. Kilanski

Your home is a busy place.

People are always working, playing, cooking, washing, cleaning and moving things around. All that activity is perfectly normal, but it can release small particles and chemicals that build up in the air you breathe. Whether your home is large or small, old or new, the air inside may be causing breathing problems, especially for people with allergies and asthma.

There are some simple things that you can do to clean up the air inside your home so that everyone can

breathe easier. If you have allergies or asthma, you are sensitive to certain 'triggers.' These 'triggers' can set off a reaction in your lungs and other parts of your body. They can be simple things like cold air, tobacco or wood smoke, perfume, paint, hair spray, or any strong odors or fumes. Allergens such as dust mites, cockroaches, pollen, molds, animal dander and saliva from pets may also trigger your asthma or allergies. It's important to learn which triggers are a problem for you: Then you can learn to avoid them and help keep yourself healthy.

Identifying your triggers isn't



always easy. You can experiment with staying away from one suspected trigger at a time. You can also ask your doctor to help. Your

doctor may suggest keeping an asthma diary or having a skin testing to test for allergies.

Sometimes the air outdoors can trigger allergies and asthma. You may have to avoid outdoor air pollution, pollen and mold spores. Any time air pollution and pollen levels are high, it's a good idea to stay indoors: The air at home is easier for you to control.

Some people with asthma and allergies notice that their symptoms get worse at night. Trigger controls in the bedroom or wherever you

sleep are the best place to start. Air conditioning can help: It lowers indoor humidity, which helps to control mold and dust mites.

There are air cleaning machines

that you can buy that may remove some of the triggers in your home, but they will not remove all of them. Some air cleaners use an electrical charge that makes ozone, which manufacturers claim will purify the air, but ozone can irritate the lungs and is especially a problem for people with asthma.

Controlling the home environment is a very important part of asthma and allergy care. In addition to seeing a doctor regularly and taking prescribed medications you should also reduce or remove as many asthma and allergy triggers from your

home as possible. Take control in your home environment and breathe easier.

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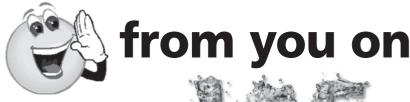
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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER-

Leadership from David's perspective: What can we learn?

By Maj. Steven Smith

Leadership is a word we often hear in the Army. I'm sure you have been in many briefings or heard on the news the attributes and competencies expected of Army leaders, as well as civilian leaders. Though these are essential in our leadership development, God also has expectations for leaders. He, too, requires his people to have the character, presence and intellect to lead and develop His people to achieve Kingdom results.

To start with, let us take a look at David holistically. David is one of our biblical heroes of whom we have a lot of information. He is one of the few biblical characters in which we have a view of most of his life: David enters the biblical records as a young boy, and we see his passing as an old man.

By all accounts, David was considered an exceptional leader. You might be thinking, "wait a minute; he had a major meltdown in his role as a leader." Yes, he did, but in the sum of his life he was considered the best leader Israel ever had because he was a man after God's own heart, despite his failures.

So, what can we learn from the shepherd leader David? I think as we examine his life, in the ups and downs, we see in him three essential attributes born from the heart of a godly leader.

The first attribute is the "Heart of a Godly Leader". We hear at times that a leader must "look the part". I can look the part, but as we

know, God could care less about our appearance; he's interested in the heart. On the outside, we may have all the appearances of a good and godly leader, but the inside reveals the actual condition of the leader's heart.

The second attribute is "Do not Limit Yourself". David overcame a giant because he refused to limit himself to the opinions of others. The Army today is facing many giants as well. Yes, we may have the same naysayers who are quick to point out what they deem as limitations. But when we have a heart that is in tune with God and trust in God, rather than the opinion of others, we can tackle the giants with confidence.

The third attribute is "Cling to the Word of God". As you strive to be a godly leader in your specific piece of the planet, you will face many challenges. You know what the Word says in regard to your life, family, work ethic, and ministry. You know how you are to relate to others, but often your circumstances seem to call for a response that contradicts what the word of God has for you. When the world is pulling you one way and the Word of God is pulling you another, always cling to the Word of God, even if your circumstances seem to contradict it. God will come through in his timing.

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-Shooting the Breeze-

Coffee: Nectar of the Gods

By David J. Horn

Coffee. I just love coffee. From smelling the fresh aroma while it's brewing to sloshing the mud off the bottom, coffee is my greatest bad habit.

I drink my coffee strong and black-- none of that sugar or cream stuff. At restaurants around town I see people dumping in that glop out of those little white containers with all the strange chemicals on the label. That's not for me.

So, every morning before I come out to work here at YPG, I brew up a big pot of the stuff. One cup for breakfast, then the rest goes into my old trusty, old-school stainless steel thermos.

One thing I don't like to do, however, is drink coffee on the drive to YPG. There are enough distractions as it is without trying to maneuver your car through that mess with one eyeball peering around a mug you've got up to your face.

When I arrive here at the office, the first thing I do is pour a cup into my own, personal office coffee mug. We're not talking about some nameless Styrofoam cup here, but one of my most prized possessions, a cool mug I brought from home with the US and Army flags on it. I have to admit however, that some of the other mugs around the office are a little disgusting. Simply put, they haven't been washed out in a while. We have this one guy who has a mug that's not merely

stained, that son-of-a-gun is plated. About a year ago, the admin assistant, who just could not stand the sight of the thing, took it upon herself to clean it out. The guy almost cried... a year's worth of effort literally going down the drain. Now, he's proudly got it built-up to where it's pretty crusty again. He says the black bottom hides the coffee grounds and anything else that might be lurking down there.

Like most offices around YPG, we also have an office coffee pot in the break room that's in business by 6:00 AM. On Mondays, when my old thermos tends to run dry really early in the day, I'll stop by for a warm-up around lunch time. I



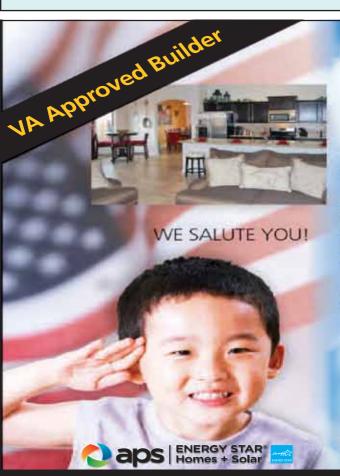
stay away from the office dispenser

afternoons.

however, since usually what's left in there by then, even I can't chip out of there.

In our office, as with most offices here at YPG, coffee is an important part of our work day. When you drink coffee all day, even your spouse will testify that you won't poop out until you get home.

Yes, coffee. Nectar of the gods. I'd say more, but I have a very important meeting with some other coffee drinkers...in a little room just up the hall.



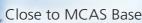
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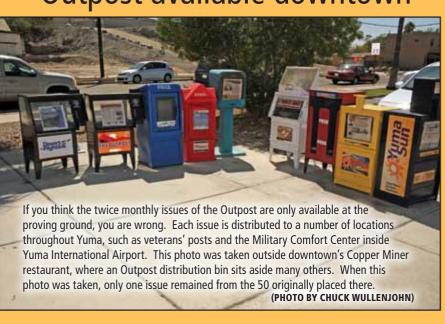
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- 1. Plan your route
- 2. Maintain your vehicle
- 3. Focus your attention
- 4. Minimize your distractions
- 5. Know your surroundings
- 6. Share your space
- 7. Watch your speed
- 8. Keep your distance
- 9. Signal your intentions
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