

Piranhas swim on YPG range

By Mark Schauer

YPG is one of the busiest vehicle-testing centers in the Army.

It's more than 200 miles of roads and trails have been traversed by generations of wheeled and tracked combat vehicles from both the United States and friendly foreign nations.

Now, you can add the Mowag-manufactured Piranha 5 to the list.

Descended from a vehicle originally produced in the early 1970s, the Piranha has evolved from an armored personnel carrier to an 8 x 8 infantry fighting vehicle. Currently used by over 20 nations, it is similar to the Stryker Combat Vehicle, which is based on the third generation of Piranha. In 2016, the Danish Defense Acquisition and Logistic Organization (DALO) ordered 309 of the Piranha's fifth



Two Piranha 5 infantry fighting vehicles undergoing a test at YPG conducted by the Danish Defense Acquisition and Logistic Organization traverse a fording basin as part of a month-long test in August. The test at put the base infantry variant of the Piranha through its paces across punishing desert terrain. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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Commander addresses workforce in all-hands meeting

By Mark Schauer

Col. Ross Poppenberger, YPG commander, addressed personnel across the command via video teleconference in mid-August.

More than 200 members of the YPG team were present in the post theater to hear his vision for the command and ask questions as personnel at Cold Regions Test

Center watched by video link.

Also speaking at the event were YPG Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Prosser, Technical Director Julio Dominguez, Garrison

Manager Gordon Rogers, and YPG Police Chief Don Lucas.

A major part of Poppenberger's address concerned the upcoming

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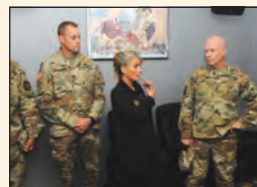
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antiterrorism
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COMMANDER

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command climate survey. After sharing the results of the previous one, which garnered a 37% participation rate, Poppenberger called for maximum participation from YPG personnel, assuring those gathered that the feedback provided is critically important for ensuring the proving ground's continued success.

"We read these things and think about these things," he said. "Your feedback is important. As you testers know, having more data is better."

Poppenberger said he and the proving ground's entire senior leadership have open door policies and that communication is a two-way street, a theme hit upon by other speakers who followed him.

Poppenberger was mostly impressed by the results of the previous command survey, particularly those that indicated an extremely high level of confidence within the workforce that the post's senior leadership would take any potential reports of sexual harassment or assault seriously.

"In the Army I joined, sexist comments were the norm instead of the exception. Over the years, we've significantly ramped up

the professionalism of the entire organization and government."

Poppenberger spoke at length about proactively positioning YPG for future testing, particularly about what he deemed the "three I's": instrumentation, investment, and infrastructure.

"I want success for the organization I'm a part of and the people around me," he said. "I take transparency and fairness to heart and feel taking that path is rewarded. From the most senior to the most junior, say what you're going to do and do what you say: That, to me, is the basis of integrity."

Poppenberger stressed that part of ensuring that YPG will be able to support testing of future military systems is continuing to be good stewards of the infrastructure and equipment the installation already has. Prosser elaborated on this point with a presentation about vehicle safety and the importance of safe driving practices. YPG's fleet has hundreds of vehicles, all of which are needed to accomplish the diverse testing mission. Accidents, Prosser emphasized, have second and third order effects that can impact test schedules.

"The mission doesn't stop because a support vehicle is down," Prosser observed.

He went on to state that safe



Col. Ross Poppenberger (right), YPG commander, addresses a capacity audience at the post theater at his first of a series of quarterly all-hands meetings in mid-August. Poppenberger discussed proactively positioning YPG for future testing and stressed the importance of participating in the upcoming command climate survey. He also praised the long legacy of excellence at the proving ground. "YPG is a great facility," he said. "There's always room for improvement, but things are pretty good here." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

driving practices were just as crucial when operating personally owned vehicles—including motorcycles—as in government service vehicles.

Technical Director Julio Dominguez discussed training and advancement opportunities at the proving ground. He said the YPG Aspiring Leaders Program currently has nearly 40 participants. He stressed the importance of higher education in becoming eligible for advancement opportunities at Yuma County's premier technical workplace, and addressed a suggestion that beginning test officers be allowed to rotate through different test branches during their first year and choose which one they like best at the end. Unfortunately, Dominguez said, YPG's operations tempo isn't conducive to this idea: here, mid-career changes in commodity area are far more feasible. He encouraged those who seek this to make their ambitions known to their supervisors as early as possible in their careers.

Garrison Manager Gordon Rogers

shared results of the garrison's scores in the Army Readiness Assessment Program. He said YPG's latest score not only put the proving ground in the Army's top 25% of installations, but bested their already-high scores in the last survey in 2014. Further, he said, excellent scores on this assessment correlates positively with an installation's probability of having an outstanding safety record.

YPG Police Chief Don Lucas discussed an upcoming plan to reduce the speed limit on Barranca Road to 10 mph during hours when Soldiers are engaged in physical training. He admonished anyone using Barranca Road for this purpose to wear reflective items while jogging, and to come to the police station for same if they needed them.

At the conclusion of the presentations, Poppenberger took time to recognize eight Soldiers with Army Commendation and Army Achievement Medals, and YPG civilian of the quarter Jim Stickney with the Army Civilian Achievement Medal.

THE OUTPOST

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Shoot'in the Breeze

Our class

By David J. Horn

Earlier this summer, I attended another high school reunion up in my old hometown of Lake Wilson, Minnesota. There were 40 of us in our class. The old school building is gone, taken out in 1992 (along with most of the town) by the only F5 tornado to hit the North American continent that year. When I go back these days, I recognize the names of the streets, but the buildings and most of the current residents are strangers. Here are some observations of class reunions past:

The Five Year Reunion. Young adults, arriving in fast sports cars, fancy clothes, all brag about where they went to college and their prestigious new jobs. The jocks are hanging out around the keg. The girl who considered herself the most gorgeous in the class, who wasn't voted to be Homecoming Queen, is still mad about losing and didn't show up. The class nerds, the unattractive people, and most of the people who actually still live in the town, aren't there.

The 10 Year Reunion. People are more settled down. Old flames awkwardly meet new spouses. Most people have "filled out" a little since high school. The folks who already started their families and have young kids look really...tired. There's less bragging, and more, "How are you doing?" Careers are still moving up. We're stunned to learn that two classmates tragically passed away. I'm asked about how I like living in Arizona, but my response is interrupted by a guy who never ventured more than 30 miles from town, who asks, "Can we go back to talking about my tractor?" The class nerds, the unattractive people, and most of the people who actually still live in the town, aren't there.

The 20 Year Reunion. Minivans fill the parking lot. Careers are topping out. The nerds and unattractive people

start arriving. The once popular crowd doesn't know how to react when they learn that the stunningly beautiful professional woman up at the bar, is... or used to be, "fat Brenda." One of the jocks from the beer keg saunters over to say, "So Brenda, you finally got the nerve to come back." She replies, "I'm a vice president at American Express. Are you still driving your milk truck?"

The 30 Year Reunion. By now, most everyone has gained a lot of weight and lost a lot of hair. Some never got married, some are grandparents. There's a band this time around, playing oldies from the '70s. Spouses who aren't from town and only know the person who brought them, sit quietly, bored and ignored. The nerds are now hanging out at the keg, being loud. The lady who's still mad at not getting to be Homecoming Queen isn't there.

The 40 Year Reunion. People, some with a lot of gray in their hair, arrive in their small SUVs. Many come alone, their 25-year marriages having ended in divorce. Some of the ex-jocks aren't there, deciding that it's just not fun to sit around and listen to all the success stories of the nerds. A lot of folks are already retired, and have started their second careers as janitors. Car accidents and serious illnesses have taken their toll. People find out that their old flame is now divorced, too, then the two of them spend the evening talking in a quiet corner.

The 50th. While it's still years away, I'm still holding out hope that the lady who wasn't voted to be Homecoming Queen, and the locals who have been no-shows all these years, might finally attend. And while I'll never be able to convince my old divorced girlfriend to move to Yuma, maybe she would be open to the idea of me stopping by her place, picking her up, and the two of us going to the reunion together...in a fancy sports car.

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Chaplain's corner

Seek forgiveness for mistakes

By Maj. Ronald Beltz

Once upon a time Sammy and his sister Marie visited their grandparents at their farm. Sammy picked up a slingshot to play with out in the woods. He practiced in the woods but he could never hit the target. Getting a little discouraged, he headed back for the lunch. As he was walking back he saw Grandma's pet duck.

Just out of impulse, he let the slingshot fly which hit the duck square in the head and killed it.

He was shocked and grieved. In a panic, he hid the dead duck in the pile of woods. Marie had seen it all from the window but she said nothing. After the lunch, the next day Grandma said, "Marie, let's wash the dishes." Marie said, "But Grandma, Sammy told me he wanted to help in the kitchen."

Then she whispered to Sammy, "Remember the duck?" Sammy got nervous knowing his sister knew about the duck and if he doesn't obey, she may tell his grandparents about it. So without saying anything, he did the dishes.

Later that day, Grandpa asked if the children wanted to go fishing

but Grandma said, "I'm sorry but I need Marie to help make a supper." Marie just smiled and said, "Well that's all right because Sammy told me he wanted to help."

She whispered again to Johnny, "Remember the duck?" So Marie went fishing and Sammy stayed to help. After several days of Marie taking advantage of Sammy, he finally couldn't stand it any longer. He came to Grandma and confessed that he had killed the duck.

Grandma knelt down, gave him a hug and said, "Sweetheart, I know. I was standing at the window and I saw the whole thing but because I love you, I forgave you. I was just wondering how long you would let Marie take advantage of you."

Moral: Always confess your mistakes. It will take away a load of guilt from your heart which will boost your conscience and no one will take advantage of your secret mistakes! Accept your mistake, apologize, and seek forgiveness.

Proverbs 28:13 tell us: Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

A walk-run for antiterrorism awareness



As part of the proving ground's month-long observation of the Army's Antiterrorism Awareness Month, Soldiers and civilian personnel participated in a 5K run the morning of August 24. Successful counterterrorism operations rely on people reporting and following-up on suspicious activity, be they law enforcement or ordinary civilians. "The takeaway I want everybody to understand is, 'see something, say something,' and to be vigilant," said YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Virginia Tech shooting survivor to speak at AWC

On Monday, September 11, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground and Arizona Western College will partner on a public safety event. Kristina Anderson, professional speaker, survivor of the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting, and director of Koshka Foundation for Safe Schools, will offer a 90-minute public presentation and take questions from the audience.

The 3:00 p.m. event will be held in the Schoening Conference Center on the Yuma campus of AWC, in the College Community Center (3C).

The goal of the event is to educate and build awareness of school and workplace safety locally and regionally for interested members of the public.

Attendees are asked to pre-



register for this free event online here - https://awc_kristinaanderson_guestspeaker.eventbrite.com.



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Installation Management Command Commander visits YPG



Lt. Gen. Kenneth R. Dahl, Commander of the U.S. Army Installation Command (IMCOM), visited Yuma Proving Ground with IMCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Melissa Judkins in mid-August. After touring facilities such as the YPG Fitness Center and Kahuna Lagoon Swimming Pool (left photo), YPG Fire Station #1, and the Desert Breeze Travel Camp, Dahl participated in the quarterly Garrison Employee Recognition Ceremony at the Cactus Café (right photo) where he addressed members of the garrison workforce. Among those recognized at the ceremony were garrison civilians of the first and second quarter Chief Don Lucas of the YPG Police Department and Workforce Development Program Specialist Connie Everly. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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PIRANHAS

FROM PAGE 1

generation, with full delivery expected by 2023. The vehicle is expected to be the basis of the Danish Army's vehicle fleet for the next three decades.

"Piranha 5 is a major step forward in all senses," said Lt. Col. Soren Horst, project manager for DALO. "When it comes to protection, it has a much higher ballistic and mine protection capability. It has

a much larger payload and is more powerful."

The vehicle, 26 feet long and weighing in excess of 30 tons, comes in six different variants: Infantry, Command, Ambulance, Engineer, Mortar, and Repair. The Piranha 5 has larger wheels and a tighter turning circle thanks to a fourth axle that turns. The electrical system has been improved to accommodate current and future electronic gear. The test at YPG put the base infantry variant through its paces across punishing desert terrain.

"We configure the vehicle as if it were on a mission and drive in terrain that looks like Afghanistan and Iraq," said Horst. "The things we put the vehicle through are not far from what they would encounter in theater."

The testers were eager to see whether the vehicle could run at full capacity in an extremely hot desert environment. For example, could the air conditioning cope with not only the exterior heat, but that generated by a vehicle full of soldiers with all of the electronic equipment powered

up as it traversed punishing, irregular terrain? What if it had to ford a body of water in the middle of the mission?

"What we stress on the vehicle is the air conditioning, oil temperature, cooling temperature, and the driveline and suspension," said Horst. "We also see if it has enough power to pull the vehicle and all the add-on equipment like mine rollers and dozer blades that we can attach."

With a crew of three and enough room for nine additional soldiers, the latest variant of the vehicle has



Testers put the Piranha 5 through its paces across all manner of punishing desert terrain, even taking it through YPG's fording basin multiple times. "We configure the vehicle as if it were on a mission and drive in terrain that looks like Afghanistan and Iraq," said Lt. Col. Soren Horst. "The things we put the vehicle through are not far from what they would encounter in theater."



YPG's mud course was yet another test of the Piranha 5's extreme environment capabilities. "Yuma provides fantastic facilities when it comes to tracks that look like Afghanistan and Iraq," said Lt. Col. Soren Horst. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



Though the test was conducted by the Danish Army, provided a variety of support personnel to the effort. "We had instrumentation support, general service support, tactical vehicle operator support, and escorts," said Luis Arroyo, TEMO chief. "I believe the customers were happy with what they were able to accomplish here."

a greater interior volume than its predecessor. The Piranha's interior boasts padded seats and retractable, raised footrests that suspend soldiers' feet above the vehicle's hull as an anti-blast precaution.

"It's quite comfortable," said Horst. "When soldiers ride in it they maintain their combat strength."

"Soldiers should not get fatigued in here," added Maj. Erik Viken. "They should be ready when they get out to go into combat."

Denmark's climate lacks the extremely hot conditions Danish soldiers have faced in recent years in places like Afghanistan. Yuma's summer didn't disappoint the testers: Every test day saw temperatures north of 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Though the Danish Army conducted the test, YPG offered plenty of support personnel. Day-to-day operations were coordinated by the staff of YPG's Training and Exercise Management Office (TEMO), with technical support from test officers Carlos Anaya and Brad Cox.

"We also had instrumentation support, general service support, tactical vehicle operator support, and escorts," said Luis Arroyo, TEMO chief. "We had a team put

together for this event and I believe the customers were happy with what they were able to accomplish here."

"This is one of the few places we can be certain to have that high level of temperatures," added Horst. "Yuma provides fantastic

facilities when it comes to tracks that look like Afghanistan and Iraq, and also maintenance facilities and experienced personnel who can support us."

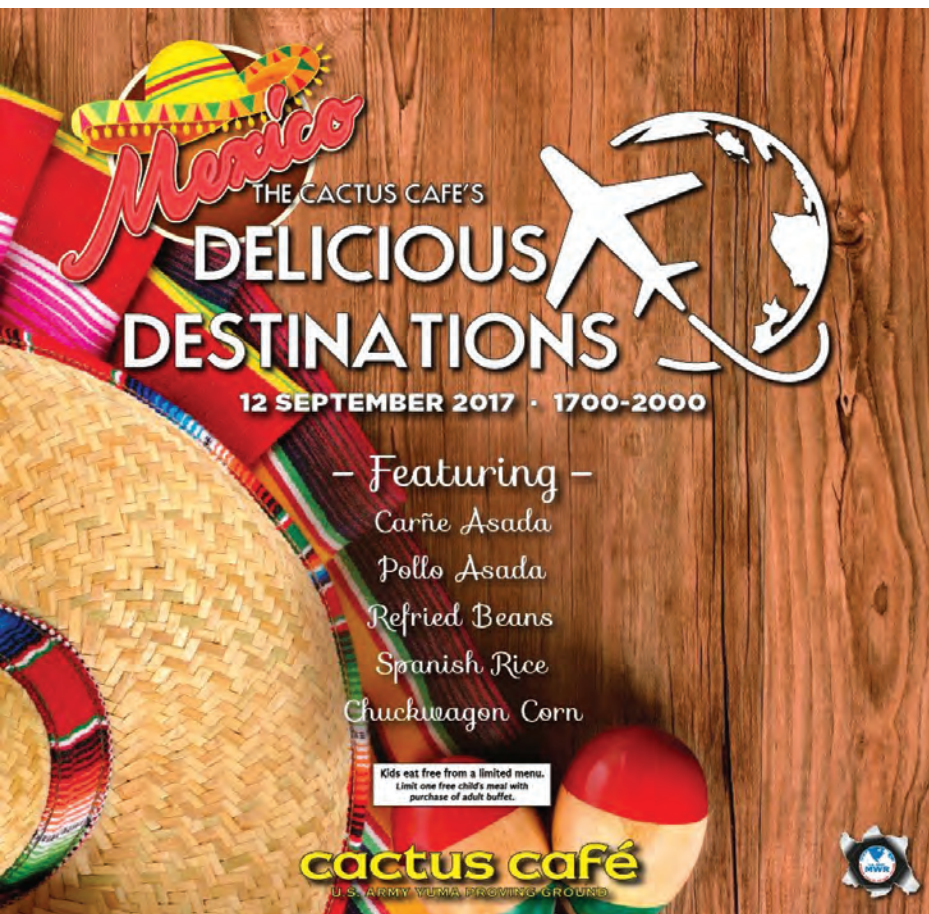
At the conclusion of the hot climate testing in Yuma, the Piranha will see

further testing in Scandinavia during the winter months.

"We've been extremely grateful for the support we've gotten from YPG," said Horst. "They've offered us fantastic facilities and this has been really fruitful for us."



YPG's maintenance facilities were another draw for the Danish Army to test the vehicle here. "This is one of the few places we can be certain to have a high level of temperatures," said Horst. "Yuma provides fantastic facilities when it comes to tracks that look like Afghanistan and Iraq, and also maintenance facilities and experienced personnel who can support us."



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Price School youngsters experience rare partial solar eclipse



Youngsters at YPG's Price Elementary School were able to safely view a solar eclipse this morning thanks to a donation of eclipse glasses from General Motors' Desert Proving Ground. Though Yuma wasn't in the path of totality that spread across parts of 14 states, about 60% of the sun was obscured at the maximum eclipse. The next total solar eclipse to be visible from parts of the United States will take place on April 8, 2024. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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Healthy communication in relationships

Submitted by Melissa Gomez

Successful communication is vital to any relationship and is a key factor in its longevity. When relationships are healthy and strong, each person is free to focus their attention on activities that benefit not only themselves but those around them as well. Working with your partner to learn and practice basic communication techniques can help you build trust and intimacy in your relationship.

Communication basics

Here are some tips that can help you improve your communication skills and build a strong relationship:

- Make time to talk. Try to spend at least 15 minutes a day talking with each other. Share your day. Put it on the calendar or set a phone reminder if you struggle to find the time. Do your best stick to this simple task each and every day. Eventually, this will become a natural part of your daily life.

- Share your thoughts and feelings. Make the extra effort to share the things that matter to you most. Share important things such as current and future plans, goals, dreams, etc. This type of sharing can be tough but creates genuine connections within your relationship.

- Be an active listener. Listening is a key skill in every relationship. When your partner talks give your full attention, free of interruptions. Turn off the television, and let phone calls go to voicemail. It is also helpful to repeat back what you heard to show that you are listening and received the message well.

- Pay attention to your body

language. Experts state a substantial amount of our communication is non-verbal. Uncross your arms, smile, and make eye contact with your partner. You can even try leaning in a bit when you talk to show you are interested. Additionally, ensure the atmosphere is appropriate for communication and you will be on your way to a productive conversation.

- Offer praise, support and encouragement. Studies show that couples who stay together make far more positive comments to each other than negative ones.

- Strengthen your relationship through utilizing tools and activities. There are many tools to help relationships grow. Books, videos and counseling are a few common tools couples utilize often. In our modern world however, there are new and exciting ways to communicate on the go. Military One Source offers a text application that connects you with your partner via short texts and activities over a 21 day period. Just one text a day for three weeks can open up your communication channels, build intimacy and rekindle the spark. Try it at: <https://love.resilienceboost.com/>

Last but not least keep at it! Establishing good communication takes patience and hard work. Make a commitment to change the way you communicate and watch your relationship flourish and grow.

Presented by YPG Family Advocacy Program: (928) 328-3224. YPG Domestic Violence 24/7 hotline: (928) 287-3361

YPG personnel celebrate Women's Equality Day



Commemorating the 97th anniversary of women achieving the Constitutional right to vote, members of the YPG workforce gathered at the Palm Garden Conference Center in late August to watch a brief documentary about Lillie Ledbetter and the Equal Pay Act. Afterwards, eventgoers pose with free t-shirts that were available to the first 30 attendees, who also enjoyed free popcorn. (Photo by Mark Schauer)



YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger (right) recently sat down to share lunch in YPG's Cactus Cafe with Yuma Mayor Doug Nicholls to discuss issues in the Yuma area pertaining to the proving ground. Although YPG is located outside the city of Yuma's boundaries, the bulk of the workforce resides in Yuma and the proving ground is the largest single employer of civilians in Yuma County. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

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