80th ANNIVERSARY YPG

The Outpost

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

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Ammunition Recovery section employs experts in the explosives field

By Ana Henderson

Imagine, the scene in a movie where a bomb is about to explode when an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) trained expert shows up to safely defuse it.

The TRAX Ammunition Recovery Section better known as "Demo," performs similar work and more to support the Yuma Test Center (YTC) mission at Yuma Proving Ground.

The Demo team is made up of nearly two-dozen veterans who attended the Naval School of Explosive Ordnance Disposal, at Eglin Airforce base — a joint service school.

"All of our team served in the military as EOD techs, that's the minimum requirement. Some were in four years while others served much longer, retiring from the military before coming to YPG."

The TRAX Ammunition Recovery Section better known as "Demo," are a section of specially trained veterans from all branches of service who provide support in the safe testing of ammunition at Yuma Test Center. Safety protocols require a safety escort on impact areas, meaning where explosives have landed. Before anyone is escorted to the area Demo clears it to make sure there's no unexploded ordnance or other hazards. Pictured are some of the recovered ordnances by Demo. (Loaned photos)

As a part of the larger Armaments and Ammunition Division, this section of specially trained veterans from all branches of service provide support in the safe testing of ammunition.

"A large part of what we do is safety, we help setup target impacts by escorting the different test support organizations," explains, Ben Wallace, Ammunition Recovery supervisor. Safety protocols require a safety escort on impact areas, meaning where explosives have landed.

"Before we escort them out there,

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Commander thanks employees for their years of service

Yuma Proving Ground employees were recognized for their years of service on the afternoon of March 6. YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall and Command Sgt. Major Herbert Gill presented the following members of the YPG family with a certificate. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

35 years of service
Susan Lantzy

30 years of service
Durred Francher

20 years of service
Derek Hairston, Mitchell Turner, and Ilene Evangelista

15 years of service
Raul Velasquez

10 years of service
Lori Ittner

5 years of service
Horacio Ibarra Hurtado and Austin Rudolph

Not pictured: (35) Allen Andrews and Ernie Hugh, (25) Todd Hudson, (15) Paul Harley, Erik Reta, and Walter Lopez, (5) Daniel Sanchez and Ekta Shrestha.

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Pi Day celebrated with pie

Yuma Proving Ground celebrated Pi Day in a delicious way, with a potluck smorgasbord of 18 different pies available to lunchtime passerby in the Range Operations Center. An annual celebration of the mathematical constant "Pi" (3.14159…), the day occurs each year on March 14, which is 3/14 in the month/day date format. As Yuma County's premier scientific workplace, the mathematical constant is vital to many different facets of the proving ground's mission, from weapons test planning and data reduction to weather forecasting. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

YPG participates in job fair

Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) was represented by Rachel Sanchez and Patricia Conley during the Arizona Western College Yuma Transfer and Career Expo in early March. Nearly 50 vendors participated in the job fair. For more information about positions at YPG, visit https://www.ateccviliancareers.com/ and select Yuma Proving Ground. (Loaned photo)

Outpost Outspoken episode 30

In the recent episode of Outpost Outspoken listen as Combat Automotive Systems Division Team Lead Erick Hurtado talks about his decade of testing the Army's most cutting-edge vehicles, and how his example inspired others in his family to also serve the Warfighter. Plus, Munitions and Weapons Division Test Officer Kevin Irr about his service as president of the Yuma Community Theater's Board of Directors in his spare time. Scan the QR code and select the link that appears to be taken directly to the episode.

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It's never too late to learn new skills

By Ana Henderson

Like many, Amanda Heatwole keeps busy with work and home life. She is accomplished in her career as Yuma Test Center's Business Operations Division Chief and is a wife and mother of three kids.

Throughout the years there was one skill she wanted to learn but put it off for decades– hunting.

"I grew up in rural southern Indiana, I lived on a farm and my dad hunted everything. It was a way of life for many people in the area, but not typically for girls," explained Heatwole.

Even so, she never took advantage of the opportunity to learn.

"I was interested but I didn't get invited to go often because I talked too much and couldn't sit still for very long," jokes Heatwole.

She and her husband hunted together on several occasions but since she hadn't honed her skill, she was not successful.

"I had cow elk tags several times and always came home empty handed and frustrated."

Soon after, Heatwole saw a social media post from one of her friends who completed the Yuma Desert Doves program which is a five-part educational series of courses and events designed exclusively for women that culminated with a mentored dove hunt.

"My friend is in her 60's and she was out there learning new skills and having so much fun with other likeminded ladies, and I was inspired by that. I reached out to her, and she put me in touch with the program coordinator who works for Arizona Game and Fish."

Amanda Heatwole, Yuma Test Center's Business Operations Division Chief held off learning how to hunt for decades. She finally had the opportunity through the Yuma Desert Doves program exclusively for women that culminated with a mentored dove hunt. That course opened to door to other opportunities and a sense of personal accomplishment. (Loaned photos)

Heatwole joined the program the following year and noticed other members had a similar story to hers.

"A lot of women joined because they had partners they wanted to go and enjoy these activities with, but they felt intimidated or didn't know where to start. Some participants had never even handled a firearm, so it was rewarding to watch beginners become inspired to pursue shooting sports and other outdoor activities."

Being surrounded with her new classmates with the same goals, she learned in a non-intimidating atmosphere from others who were eager to share their knowledge with the group.

"We learned about shotgun basics, firearm safety, species identification, ethical hunting and conservation principles, trap and skeet shooting, participated in a mentored dove hunt and above all, we had a lot of fun along the way!"

After completing the series, Heatwole was looking for ways to stay involved, so she joined the local Women on the Wing chapter of Pheasants Forever. Many of the activities hosted by this group support the R3 (Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation) effort to get more people involved in hunting related and shooting activities.

Since joining the club, she has participated in a mentored javelina hunt south of Tucson which required her to learn how to use the muzzleloader. She kept going from there. She participated in a mentored quail hunt and a mentored pheasant hunt. This past fall, she was the recipient of a tag to hunt mule deer on the Kaibab Plateau in northern Arizona and harvested a mule deer buck – her first big game success!

Heatwole is proud of what she's learned and realized that learning doesn't have to stop and hopes to encourage others. "It's a personal challenge for me. I compete against myself and try to get better and learn more from each experience. I grow at my own pace and I can see the results of the hard work I put into learning."

She adds, "Being a busy mom, wife, and working fulltime, it's not always easy to fit in doing things for myself but I think it's important to have a healthy balance. I like the opportunity to show my daughter that I can set goals and achieve them and stay committed to learning and making self-improvements. I also like to help others learn and it's rewarding for me to share what I have learned along the way."

*Disclaimer: This article is provided for informational purposes only. Any mention of a non-federal entity is only for this purpose and is not intended as an endorsement, stated, or implied, of any non-federal entity.

YPG test officer leads local theater group

By Mark Schauer

Having served as a Munitions and Weapons Division test officer at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) for nearly 30 years, Yuma native Kevin Irr has learned a lot about leadership.

In his spare time, he applies the same principals to his service on the board of directors for the venerable Yuma Community Theater group.

For the last 10 years, he has volunteered for the organization. Elected to the board of directors four years ago, last year he was elected to a three-year term as the board's president.

It was his then-teenage son Jason's love of acting that first brought Irr into the group's orbit.

"He was involved in several shows with the community theater, and in high school theater as well. If he wasn't doing something at the high school, he got into the cast of several shows at Yuma Community Theater. I would go in at times if they needed help with stages or sets."

Since the group lacks a permanent theater of its own, as president of the board Irr must help coordinate venues for their performances, and try to pick engaging, crowd-pleasing plays to stage.

In his spare time, Kevin Irr, Munitions and Weapons Division test officer at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), is president of the board of directors of the Yuma Community Theater. As seen in this photo, Irr has also lent a hand building and maintaining exhibits for the nascent Yuma Children's Museum over the years, from its beginnings as a recurring temporary summer exhibit at the Yuma Art Center to its nearly-completed permanent home in downtown Yuma, Ariz. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

"It's a tough endeavor. We have to come up with the type of shows that will draw in a crowd."

Most recently, the group performed a musical called Monstersongs, a modern musical. Up next is the Into the Woods, a Tony award-winning musical in its Broadway heyday in the 1980s with a large cast and music by Stephen Sondheim.

"There are a lot of artists in the Yuma community, in all varieties of arts and entertainment. There's a lot of great talent in singing in this town."

The Yuma Community Theater is entirely reliant on fundraisers and the generosity of frequent contributors. The actors are all volunteers who receive no money for their performances. The reward for the time-consuming work of learning lines and rehearsing, Irr says, comes from the thrill of performing in front of an audience.

"It takes a lot of time, so you're just hoping they have the commitment to come in and do those shows. It's usually just for the love of theater."

Additionally, Irr has also lent a hand building and maintain exhibits for the nascent Yuma Children's Museum over the years, from its beginnings as a recurring temporary summer exhibit at the Yuma Art Center to its nearly-completed permanent home in downtown Yuma.

"My wife is the executive director of the children's museum, and as they are approaching the date to get the museum open, there is a lot of work on the front end to prep the museum. The exhibit set-up is quite an undertaking."

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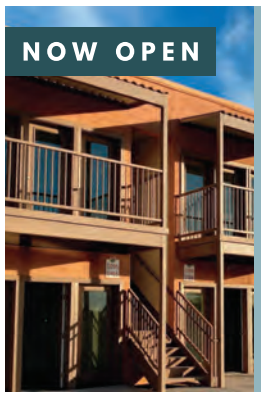
Yuma Proving Ground supports first Yuma Air Show in four years

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) was thrilled to show their support for the first Yuma Air Show in four years on March 11. Instructors from the Military Free Fall School located at YPG provided a crowd-pleasing opening of the event. Soldiers from YPG's Airborne Test Force and the local Army Recruiter Office greeted eventgoers. YPG's display allowed visitors to get up close and personal with a variety of military vehicles, including, for the first time visible to the public in Yuma County, an Infantry Squad Vehicle. Also present was a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV), a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, and a High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMVW). For those looking for some firepower, a M119 105mm howitzer was on display. The crowed eagerly learned about YPG's important mission testing equipment for the Warfighter. (Photos by YPG Public Affairs Office)



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RECOVERY

FROM PAGE 1

we clear the area to make sure there's no unexploded ordnance (UXO) on the ground or any other hazards that might be dangerous for them."

While YTC meticulously maps impact areas and safety fans, YTC first started as the Desert Training Center under Maj. Gen. George Patton and UXO is believed to still be littered throughout the area.

In addition to clearing an area and escorting teams, Demo recovers ordnance. A lot of ordnance, Demo has safely recovered nearly 19,000 items in the last decade.

"Generally, if there is a dud on a Lot Acceptance Test, they want us to dig it up. So, we will find where it impacted, we will use a backhoe to dig it out of the ground, then we will bring it back and cut it open."

This allows the customers to examine why the projectile failed to detonate.

Recovery has many forms explains Wallace. "We look at how it's designed and determine how we can we safely recover the test item. Occasionally it is a matter of waiting a certain amount of time for all the electronics to die. Other times it is something that is always going to be hazardous, and we must do it remotely. We prefer the munitions that we can pick up and carry away because they failsafe."

When recovering remotely, the team has a handful of robots to help them out. The robots have names like, Wolverine, Brutus, Mini and The Wizard, and are used depending on the situation.

The last step of the process is demilitarizing or demiling what's not longer needed.

Ben Wallace, Ammunition Recovery supervisor show Demo's library of ordnance. The room is filled with inert ammunition, associated parts, and training aids. "All this ordnance represents items that have been fired and recovered here," states Wallace. This in house stockpile aids Demo in training their team. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

"One of the facilities we operate is the Open Burn, Open Detonation site that is a munitions treatment facility permitted through the Arizona Department of environmental quality."

Another unique find at Demo is the library of ordnance. The room is filled with inert ammunition, associated parts, and training aids.

"All this ordnance represents items that have been fired and recovered here," states Wallace.

This in house stockpile aids Demo in training their team.

"It is good to go over the fuzing with our team. We have some cut aways to help visualize how they work mechanically. Some of our training aids are designed so that we can take them apart. This allows us to practice with an inert version before we perform a disassembly operation or failure analysis on a live one."

When recovering remotely, the Demo team has a handful of robots to help them out. The robots have names like, Wolverine, Brutus, Mini and The Wizard, and are used depending on the situation. (Loaned photo)

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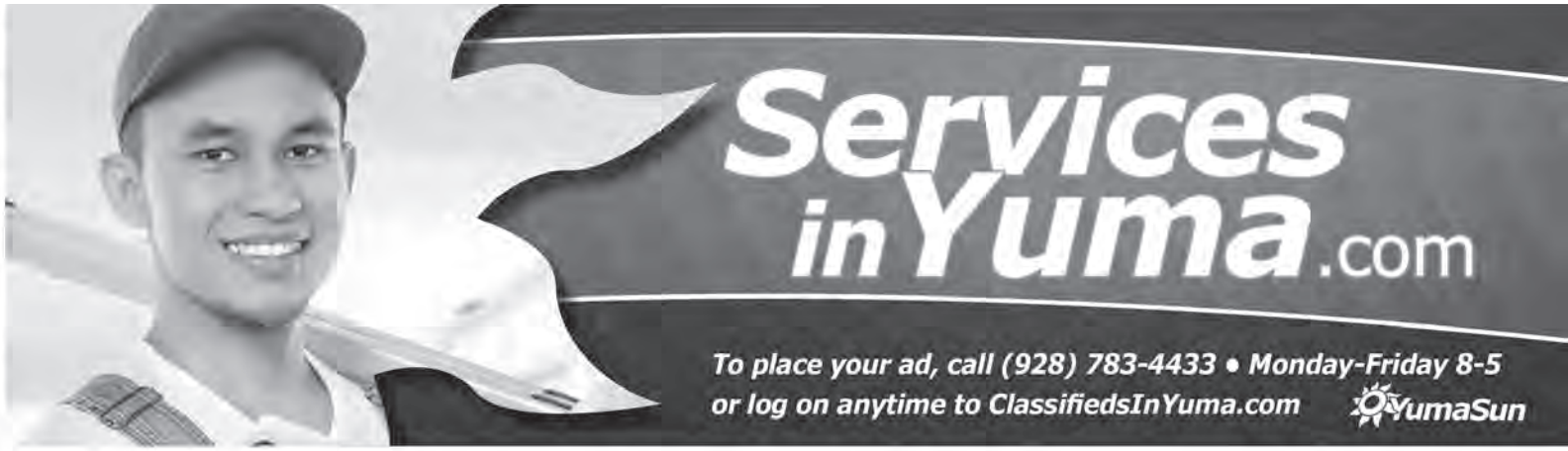

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Antiterrorism Awareness Corner

Antiterrorism the Garden Salad of protection

ATEC Mission Antiterrorism Officer
Alfonzo Brown

Like a good Garden Salad, you will find a mixture of fixings and toppings in your Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC) Antiterrorism Program. Iceberg Lettuce is the foundation of a good Garden Salad; likewise threat awareness is the foundation of a good Antiterrorism (AT) program. Without these two fundamental items you really don't have a Garden Salad or an effective AT Program. Just like lettuce threat awareness holds all the other items in place and joins them all together in a way where it is present but not overpowering the rest of the ingredients needed within the AT Protection Program.

With a good Garden Salad comes its most important support the tomato. With at same support a good AT Programs most important support is its vigilant workforce. The vigilant workforce stands boldly forward ever aware and keenly alert ready to provide a punch to threats that may have an impact on the testing mission. The tomato acts in the same way, it is bold in its red color and ready to provide the extra punch a good garden salad needs. Understanding how and what iWATCH or See Something Say Something mean, are examples of two tomatoes that are always available to the ATEC workforce.

A good Garden Salad also comes with a lot of other selective items of your choosing. Sometimes it may be carrots, cucumbers or even onions. That same principle also applies to your ATEC AT Program and how messaging and threat awareness is sent out to maintain our vigilant workforce. Our monthly news article in the Outpost, or the marque boards when you enter Walker gate. You may have noticed other methods employed throughout the ATEC workforce and our places of work. These items and messages are designed to do the same thing as the selective items on a Garden Salad. They draw you back for another garden salad - in the case of the ATEC AT Program draw you back for more information on threat awareness.

YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall is the salad dressing and croutons for our good AT Program and is always the best source of protection and awareness for the ATEC AT Program. Your Garden Salad comes with the best way to protect the integrity of what you consider a good Garden Salad in the same way our Senior Commander does the same for the vigilance and threat awareness of the ATEC Employee Workforce. As your ATEC AT Officer I am here to provide our Commander the best information possible to protect the ATEC workforce and the ATEC Testing Mission.

For more information contact me at Alfonzo.d.brown.civ@army.mil or 928-328-6498.

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MWR
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Travel Camp Farewell

Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Patrick McFall, Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill, and other YPG leaders attended a farewell barbecue for winter guests of YPG's Travel Camp on March 7. Approximately 200 visitors reside in the camp during the winter months. Both the direct and indirect revenue generated from the travel camp helps support facilities such as the Cactus Café, Coyote Lanes, and the Post Exchange. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

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