

The Outpost

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

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U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground tests howitzer for partner nation

By Mark Schauer

For Soldiers deployed in a war zone, the natural environment can be as formidable an enemy as their armed human adversaries.

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) conducts testing in three of the world's most punishing extreme climates, a necessity that is just as clear to the United States' foreign partners.

Recently, YPG hosted a test of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) Type-19 155 mm wheeled self-propelled howitzer that will replace the FH 70 towed 155 mm howitzer the country has used since the late 1970s.

Sporting a 155 mm gun mounted on the back of an 8x8 tactical truck



Recently, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) hosted a test of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) Type-19 155 mm wheeled self-propelled howitzer that will replace the FH 70 towed 155 mm howitzer the country has used since the late 1970s. "The ammunition and charges we are using for this test are ones we cannot use within Japan, which is why we decided to conduct the test at YPG," said Lt. Col. Akihito Baba, of the 6th Test Division Equipment Test and Evaluation Unit. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

chassis, the platform is networked with a fire control system fed targeting information by forward observers and crewed by five personnel.

The test is taking place after three years of planning.

"They're looking to develop a ballistic data package for their system," said Jonathan Bazua, YPG test officer. "This will provide estimated range and deflection values needed for accurate system settings."

YPG's extremely large range, more than 1,200 square miles—and extensive military test infrastructure are the primary reasons the JGSDF is conducting testing here.

"The ammunition and charges we

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The Halo Chapel at U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) welcomes Sgt. Victor Villa who will serve as the Religious Affairs Noncommissioned Officer. Villa arrived at YPG in late 2025 from Fort Knox, Ky. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

Halo Chapel welcomes new Religious Affairs NCO

By Ana Henderson

The Halo Chapel at U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) welcomed Sgt. Victor Villa. He arrived at YPG in late 2025 from Fort Knox, Ky.

Villa has been serving his country in the Army since 2022 and said he

joined because “I have always felt a sense of the necessity to serve my country as a way to repayment for everything that it’s given me.”

He said the United States has given him a lot of opportunities he wouldn’t have anywhere else in the world adding, “I feel as though if

your country calls upon you, then you should answer the call.”

Villa’s role as the Religious Affairs Noncommissioned Officer has him managing the finances and organizing events for parishioners at the Halo Chapel.

The somber side of this job is supporting families at funerals, but he says, “It is helpful to families when they know their deceased relatives are being taken care of.” Adding, “You do feel the somber responsibility of that.”

Villa said his faith drove him to this military occupational specialty (MOS).

“I have always been a Christian man, and this MOS really allows me to grow in my faith. Even though not everyone in the MOS is religious, it does allow you to serve those that are.”

Villa experienced his first holiday season at YPG and enjoyed taking part in the chapel’s activities. In the short amount of time on post, he said of

the YPG community, “You can tell it’s very tight woven, and there is sense of community that you cannot really find in communities much larger than this.”

He’s already getting to know YPG families and their children because of their involvement in events. Villa said at risk of sounding clique, “It really does feel like a family.”

If anyone is interested in being involved in the Chapel, they can use the My Army Post App to find upcoming events. They can also visit the chapel Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. to inquire about events or confidential counseling services.

The Outpost

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Cocopah Tribal Council and YPG Command Group meet



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) leadership visited the Cocopah Indian Tribal Council at the Cocopah Tribal headquarters on Jan. 7. The leaders discussed ideas on how to collaborate more in the future and how to keep open communication between the leadership teams. Cocopah Chairwoman Sherry Cordova said she "appreciates the communication" on projects and developments that affect the land surrounding YPG. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Command team thanks employee for innovative work



Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. John Nelson and Command Sgt. Maj. Joshua Holthus thanked Ryelle Pattuinan for her work helping others via the HALO group which is Hub for Analyst Learning & Optimization. During the recognition Pattuinan was described as a "life-long learner and problem solver." She is the go-to person for several Microsoft applications, such as Power Automate and Power BI, which enhance business efficiency and practices. (Photo by Darcy Broom)

University of Arizona learns about YPG's capabilities



On Jan. 5, more than 30 representatives from the University of Arizona (UofA) visited U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). During the visit YPG Commander Col. John Nelson presented a capabilities brief followed by a discussion focused on data science and artificial intelligence. The group then visited the Mission Control room where YPG monitors active testing. (Photos by Eugene Garcia)



UofA representatives wrapped up the visit with a windshield tour of the Laguna Airfield and a stop at the Wahner Brooks Historical Exhibit, where they snapped a group photo. (Photo by James Stickney)

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YPG's micro-gyms get beefed up

By Ana Henderson

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) employees, if hitting the gym is one of your new year's resolutions YPG's two micro-gyms are now better equipped to help you reach your goal.

The micro-gyms found inside the BROCC building accessible via the restrooms and the Kofa Cantonment at the Kofa Wellness Center recently received new equipment.

"We have added new weight benches to both, with some dumb bells and kettle bells. We added

medicine balls and some different weighted material that can provide more of a workout then they would have been getting with just the cable machine or the cardio equipment," explained Fitness Facility Manager Dani Compton.

The micro-gyms can be used by individuals with a Common Access Card and access to those cantonment areas. The BROCC micro-gym is available during business hours. The Kofa Wellness Center is available 24-hours a day however to gain initial access, employees must

contact the Fitness Center for a waiver and the door combination.

Army Test and Evaluation Command employees can enroll for the Army Civilian Fitness and Health Program by contacting Wellness Officer Michele Dominguez at (928) 328-4090. Garrison employees can contact Wellness Officer Miranda Choate (928) 328-2167.

Dominguez credits the Ready and Resiliency Council for conducting a user survey that jumpstarted the momentum.

"If you haven't been in there,

check it out," Dominguez said to the workforce.

Dominguez and Compton share that YPG will continue to improve the wellness facilities including the Fitness Center on Main post which is gearing up to provide access 24-hours a day.

"We are always looking for input of what people would like. That doesn't mean we can necessarily give it to them, but it gives us an idea of what the patrons that are using the facilities do want and need," said Compton.



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's two micro-gyms located at the BROCC and Kofa Cantonment recently received new equipment. Fitness Facility Manager Dani Compton said, "We have added new weight benches to both, with some dumb bells and kettle bells. We added medicine balls and some different weighted material that can provide more of a workout then they would have been getting with just the cable machine or the cardio equipment." (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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'A hawk of a day': YPG employee volunteers with budding pilots, saves wildlife

By Mark Schauer

After a career in the Marine Corps and Navy that includes eight overseas deployments, some veterans might feel they have served their country enough.

For U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) pilot Scott Myers, however, retirement from active duty merely marked a different phase of service.

A YPG pilot who grew up in Tucson and Phoenix, Myers wasn't satisfied with merely his demanding job and earning multiple graduate degrees. Looking for a chance to volunteer his talents, he heard about the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) about 15 years ago.

"A buddy of mine told me about a squadron he joined," said Myers. "He and I went down to the local CAP unit and I ended up liking it so much, mostly for the people. The missions are really cool and focused on the cadets and their leadership."

The official civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force, CAP serves as a supplement to search and rescue and drug interdiction missions and provides aerospace education and cadet programs for youth ages 12 through 20. Each individual squadron relies on experienced volunteers to teach cadets about aviation and ferry them along on flights for real-world air experience. Though a civilian organization, CAP and its cadet programs are organized along military lines. Myers says he has great admiration for the cadets he has mentored.

"This is probably the top one percent of the kids," he said. "They're full-time students in middle school or high school, so it takes a lot of dedication to have a limited amount of time and apply it to something like this."

He is particularly proud of those who choose to proceed into military



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) pilot Scott Myers has volunteered with Yuma's Civil Air Patrol squadron for nearly 15 years. In addition to mentoring up-and-coming pilots, he has also flown mercy missions on behalf of raptor rescue efforts, as seen here. (Loaned photo)

careers.

"Some of them enlist," said Myers. "Some want to be fighter pilots—there are folks that have gone on to the service academies and now fly F-16s. I'd say about half of the cadets I've met have wanted to make the military a career."

In addition to regular flights with cadets on weekends, Myers has served as the Yuma CAP squadron's mission pilot, safety officer, maintenance officer, and counter-drug officer.

"The program is a really good conduit for community service and for STEM training and learning about aviation," he said. "I've done search and rescue missions with cadets, too, and they do really well."

Myers's CAP connection has even led to him volunteering to fly missions of mercy for non-human passengers.

"The current commander for the squadron is also involved with a

group that specializes in rehabbing raptors: hawks, owls, eagles, you name it," he said. "They do everything from hunt with them to do demos for kids."

When a hawk was found injured in Lake Havasu City after a hurricane that passed through southern Arizona in 2023 and came to the attention of the group in Yuma. Although the hawk's only injury was a broken beak, the creature would have been euthanized without

special human intervention. Myers volunteered to fly to Lake Havasu City and ferry the bird to an animal rehab group who met the plane at Deer Valley Airfield in Phoenix. The hawk recovered after being fitted with a temporary prosthetic beak. Recently, another rescue mission involved Myers picking up two injured raptors secured in cardboard boxes with breathing holes and bringing them back to Yuma for treatment.

"The hawk effort doesn't happen very often, but if it pops up, I'll help if I can," he said.

Myers has plenty of other activities in his non-work hours: among other things, he has taught astronomy and physics part time at Arizona Western College for more than a decade. Yet he has no plans to stop volunteering with CAP.

"It's fun to keep flying and help out," he said.

Scan the QR code to hear Scott Myers in his own words on YPG's Podcast Outpost Outspoken.



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On Dec. 17, 2025, Garrison Manager, Kenneth Musselwhite partook in a simulated indoor fire training alongside with U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground Fire Department. He's pictured putting on his fire gear with the help of Brad Gray. (Photos by Elisa Reitman)

Fire training helps YPG first responders train for real emergencies

By Elisa Reitman

Smoke pours out of a metal building, alongside a window spitting out water from the inside. Teams of firefighters surround the area alongside beeping, radio calls, and the whooshing of water traveling from hose to nozzle. On Dec. 17, Garrison Manager, Kenneth Musselwhite partook in a simulated indoor fire training alongside

the Yuma Proving Ground Fire Department (YPG).

“As soon as you walk in, you can feel that heat in there,” said Musselwhite. “Having the gear on and then walking in and being hotter, it hits you.”

Safety is a primary focus at YPG, and that applies to their fire department as well. Firefighters at YPG go through rigorous training to

prepare for any emergency calls they may face. Whether it's on the testing grounds or civilian homes, having that knowledge and experience is of the utmost importance when it comes to facing the unpredictable nature of fire.

By sharing this experience with someone who is not experienced in firefighting creates a new perspective to how it physically feels to get geared up and extinguish a fire. The pitch-black darkness from the smoke, the constricting space and the toxic chemicals that need to be washed off gear afterwards are all part of the experience.

That level of importance doesn't just come from the situation at hand but understanding the gear itself as well. The pressure from the hose, the weight of all the gear all at once, and knowing what effective methods there are when putting out the fire.

Brad Gray, a firefighter paramedic and acting captain at YPG, was one of the many to assist Musselwhite and navigate him throughout the process of extinguishing a fire within an uncertain, hostile environment.

“That physical stress, that we are

physically putting on our bodies, moving that hose and the heat, it's a lot, and Mr. Musselwhite got to experience a little bit of that,” said Gray.

“You have to have that person behind you supporting that hose to even be able to do it,” said Musselwhite.

For the training the YPG fire department used several conex boxes stacked to simulate a multiple story building.

“We are making it predictable with these training simulations, we have control, but in a normal house fire not every structure is made in the exact same way. It's never controlled for us when we go to a hot structure fire.”

Giving that experience to someone who does not go through something like this daily opens that opportunity to learn and educate more about what it truly means to be a firefighter at YPG.

“That was 11 minutes we were actually in there. I can't imagine having to fight a fire now that lasts an hour and being still able to stand up,” said Musselwhite.



Safety is a primary focus at U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), and that also applies to their fire department. Firefighters at YPG go through rigorous training to prepare for any emergency calls they may face.



The U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Fire Department hosted the training for firefighters which involved setting conex boxes which were stacks to simulate multiple floors ablaze. Brad Gray, a firefighter paramedic and acting captain at YPG, said, "We are making it predictable with these training simulations, we have control, but in a normal house fire not every structure is made in the exact same way. It's never controlled for us when we go to a hot structure fire."

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Radiofrequency Support Lead helps mission run

By Mark Schauer

Even in an organization where it is common to find people who are passionate about their work, Michael Stoltenberg, Electronic Warfare at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), stands out.

“He’s very passionate about what he does,” said Justin Crutch, Aviation Systems & Electronic Test Division Chief. “You can tell he really understands what he is doing and thoroughly enjoys it.”

The Air Force veteran has worked at YPG for nearly 20 years and sees his civilian career as a continuation of his duties while in uniform.

“I was an instrumentation and telemetry technician, pretty much the same job I do here,” said Stoltenberg. “There were only 600 of us in the entire Air Force, and none of us were allowed overseas. It was heavily focused on research and development.”

The Orange County, California native liked drafting and drawing growing up, so started pursuing classes toward an architecture degree at Fullerton College. When he was 21, however, his life changed unexpectedly.

“My college dropped my major and I needed some time to think and figure out what I was going to do with my life.”

He enlisted in the Air Force and scored high on his Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery tests. When offered his choice of military occupational specialties, he chose based on his already-long years of tinkering with electronics: the Radio Shack catalog was a longstanding companion throughout his youth.

“I actually built my own satellite dish when I was a kid,” he recalled. “I was re-wiring tools but didn’t understand electricity at the level I should have. I think I ended up in electronics because I kept electrocuting myself as a kid: I wanted to learn how to not electrocute myself.”



Even in an organization where it is common to find people who are passionate about their work, Michael Stoltenberg, Electronic Warfare Radiofrequency Support Lead at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), stands out. The Air Force veteran has worked at YPG for nearly 20 years and sees his civilian career as a continuation of his duties while in uniform. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

While assigned to the 746th Test Squadron at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, he had dealings with testing conducted at White Sands Missile Range, part of the Army Test and Evaluation Command, and through this experience first heard of YPG. After his enlistment was up, he went to University of Arizona, graduated in 2006, and quickly found work in the private sector, only to get laid off during the Great Recession in 2008. Already familiar with YPG, he found work here as a contractor for the-then National Counterterrorism Counterinsurgency Integrated Test and Evaluation Center (NACCITEC), which was working feverishly to field counter-improvised explosive device electronic systems into Iraq and Afghanistan. He became a government civilian working in his current branch in 2011.

Though YPG does not have to

contend with encroachment from houses and buildings, it is not exempt from the crowded radio spectrum that facilitates much of modern life. Every time you use a cell phone, microwave oven, or garage door opener, you are using parts of the radio spectrum, the invisible resource that YPG relies on to support their highly specialized testing, from using radar and telemetry in evaluation of artillery rounds to replicating the radio spectrum as it is in various places around the world to facilitate the testing of technologies to counter unmanned aircraft.

“A lot of testing involves really complex, dense radio frequency environments. If a system under test doesn’t work, the customer can go back to the bench and work on it, and when they come back, we can put up the exact same environment they used last time.”

Part of Stoltenberg’s job involves identifying the causes of potential spectrum conflict on the test range and finding solutions to allow the mission to proceed.

“Spectrum is a precious resource. If I can’t change the frequency, I can change the time of day or locations for two conflicting tests. It may solve the issue, but we still have to get approvals from the FCC and FAA.”

Toward this end, the tools of his trade to conduct radio frequency investigations on the range include handheld spectrometers and GPS tools. If testers experience radiofrequency dropouts on the range, he can make a computer model to predict a good alternate location for their activities. More important, though, is modeling and coordination to prevent conflicts from occurring.

“We talk regularly to keep each other in the loop so we are not interfering with each other. The idea is to keep ensure the safety of individuals and the security of communications.”

He also assists YPG’s Arctic Regions Test Center at Fort Greely, Alaska and Tropic Regions Test Center (TRTC) in Central and South America. When TRTC conducted a major test of the Armored Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle in Central America, for example, he helped the test team with their communication devices they needed to conduct operations safely in a triple canopy jungle.

“We made sure all their equipment worked here before they shipped it down there. They went down and everything worked well.”

Off duty, he plans to pursue a Master’s degree in applied physics soon, and still tinkers with electronics just as he did in his youth.

“It’s what I like to do,” he said. “I’m teaching my son about RF. I have my own equipment at home that I’ve picked up over the years.”

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HOWITZER

FROM PAGE 1

are using for this test are ones we cannot use within Japan, which is why we decided to conduct the test at YPG," said Lt. Col. Akihito Baba, of the 6th Test Division Equipment Test and Evaluation Unit. "Within Japan there is probably only one location where we can conduct these types of firing tests, a training location where we have to bring all of the necessary equipment to conduct our test. Within this facility we have everything to be able to conduct tests, and it is very well organized."

The JGSDF has tested a variety of military equipment at YPG for decades, including the prototype of the Type 19. The institutional knowledge present here is another reason for choosing to test at YPG.

"We have been receiving great support," said Baba. "Everyone is very meticulous and detailed in the service they have been giving us. We may be getting better support than we are getting in Japan."

The well-known efficiency of YPG's test support personnel shown to customers has been greatly

appreciated by the customer.

"Whenever a malfunction or breakage happens, we get immediate support," said Baba. "When we had trouble with a cable, we had immediate support to address it. Even if we had a malfunction with the tube or muzzle, it could be checked right here in the same location."

"We can't plan for everything, but we can make sure we address any problems that come up to keep the test on schedule," added Bazua.

YPG has extensive experience testing materiel for friendly foreign nations, and in this test YPG weapons operators shared test fire duties with their counterparts from the JGSDF.

For the first time in their experience here, the visiting testers have stayed at the Candlewood Suites hotel located on post and credited the support of YPG's garrison employees in helping make their test successful.

"For the first time, our team has been staying in the hotel within the base," said Baba. "Everybody has been so kind, from the cafeterias to the commissary to the gym. With those people's support, we are healthy and energized to conduct our mission every day."



ABOVE: The Japan Ground Self-Defense Force has tested a variety of military equipment at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) for decades, including the prototype of the Type 19. The institutional knowledge present here is another reason for choosing to test at YPG. "We have been receiving great support," said Baba. "Everyone is very meticulous and detailed in the service they have been giving us." LEFT: Sporting a 155 mm gun mounted on the back of an 8x8 tactical truck chassis, the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Type-19 155 mm wheeled self-propelled howitzer is networked with a fire control system fed targeting information by forward observers and crewed by five personnel. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

Kids get creative with Origami



On Jan. 7, the Post Library hosted an Origami class taught by Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Marketing Coordinator Maiko Black. Twelve students from the Child and Youth Services after school program attended and did their best to perfect their folds to create cats, airplanes and other paper masterpieces. (Photos by Beatrice Brimmage)



Winter story time with YPG's Military and Family Life Counselor



On Jan. 6, the Post Library hosted a winter themed story time. Yuma Proving Ground's Military and Family Life Counselor Penny Collins read three stories to the children and their mothers who attended. Following story time, Logan Teas lead a craft time where participants made snowflakes. (Photos by Beatrice Brimmage)

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