

The Outpost

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

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U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground tests containerized missile launcher

By Mark Schauer

Soldiers may soon have a new counter-unmanned aerial system (C-UAS) option thanks to a rapid test conducted at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG).

YPG rapidly tested the Grizzly vertical launcher for use with the AGM-179 Joint Air-to-Ground Missile (JAGM), following on previous institutional knowledge testing the launcher's use with the Hellfire missile.

"The primary objective was to support a controlled demonstration of a counter-UAS concept using JAGM and the Grizzly launcher to engage and disable a UAS," said Eugene Walters, YPG test officer.

Housed in an ordinary looking 10-



Soldiers may soon have a new counter-unmanned aerial system option thanks to a rapid test conducted at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). YPG recently tested the Grizzly vertical launcher for use with the AGM-179 Joint Air-to-Ground Missile, following on previous institutional knowledge testing the launcher's use with the Hellfire missile. (U.S. Army photo)

foot shipping container, the Grizzly and JAGM combination was evaluated as a containerized launch concept for Counter-UAS applications. The test at YPG was conducted in support of an industry customer and demonstrated YPG's ability to support defense technology testing rapidly, safely, and objectively.

"We've tested JAGM and Hellfire extensively and have worked with a similar launcher over the past year," said Justin Crutch, Aviation Systems & Electronic Test Division Chief. "Based on that resident institutional knowledge we've built over time we were able to react quickly and safely."

YPG has nearly 2,000 square miles

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YPG names new fire chief: Matthew Kelly

By Ana Henderson

Former Deputy Fire Chief Matthew Kelly has been named the new fire chief for U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground (YPG).

Kelly has served as the interim chief for more than six months and has served at the YPG Fire Department for the last six years in various positions.

In 2020 in the midst of COVID, he started as the training chief, which he thoroughly enjoyed.

“You are setting up for teaching the guys to do a lot of different skills and it’s neat and a lot of fun,” Kelly said of the role.

That position was cut short because he was mobilized to the Middle East for eight months as an Air Force reservist.

Kelly’s extensive career in the fire service began while he served 10 years active duty and 16 years as a reservist in the Air Force.

“It was a great time; I am so happy I did it,” he said of the experience.

Once back from deployment Kelly filled two more roles at YPG, as the

assistant chief of operations and as the deputy fire chief. He served in that role for the last three years.

Now, as the chief, Kelly plans to continue being a servant leader to his team saying he looks at the three P’s, people, processes and programs.

“I focus on people, I grow people, because if I can grow one person and then another, eventually, I have grown the organization.”

He says processes are “about repeatable success,” so if the process



Former Deputy Fire Chief Matthew Kelly is U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground’s new Fire Chief. He’s worked in the organization for six years in various roles. (U.S. Army)

is broken, it needs to be fixed to make sure people are successful every single time.

Lastly, Kelly explains that programs which provide insight and analysis help identify gaps that can be improved for continuous process improvement.

The YPG Fire Department holds a vital

role not only for the YPG community serving the residents and the proving ground but also providing support to the surrounding communities. Because of mutual aid agreements, which are pre-arranged agreements

with community partners like Department of Public Safety, The Bureau of Land Management, Yuma County Sheriff’s Department, and Rural Metro among others, the YPG Fire Department responds to calls outside of the installation gates.

“Our ability to run and provide service to our community is very wide.”

Kelly further explains that he conducted a community risk analysis roughly a year ago to get a better understanding of who is driving on the public roads surrounding YPG.

“It proved the concept that more than likely if there is an accident out there, it’s one of our own,” he said. With Rural Metro about 30 minutes away it makes sense for YPG’s emergency services to provide first response from one of its three fire stations which have emergency medical services.

Kelly is ready to lead YPG’s Fire Department and is grateful for the community partner relationships and hopes to “continue to strengthen the community bonds.”

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Matthew Kelly has served as the interim chief for more than six months and has served at the Yuma Proving Ground Fire Department for the last six years in various positions. Now, as the chief, Kelly plans to continue being a servant leader to his team saying he looks at the three P’s: people, processes and programs. (Photo by Kami Martin)

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Bazua Beltran named ATEC Command Mission Employee of the Quarter

In an email to the Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC) workforce ATEC Chief of Staff Westley Williams said, "Mr. [Bazua] Beltran demonstrated exceptional leadership, technical expertise, and initiative this quarter when he detailed as the Acting Branch Chief for the Simulation Branch." Adding, "He successfully restored multiple critical vibration systems from nonmissioncapable status by coordinating closely with engineers and technicians to troubleshoot, repair, and return assets to mission readiness. Mr. Bazua [Beltran] strengthened reporting processes, drove modernization initiatives, and proved himself a highly capable and effective leader."



Jonathan Bazua Beltran

Military Officers Association of America gets update on YPG test activities



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Public Affairs Officer Mark Schauer gave an update about the post's developmental test activities on behalf of the nation's warfighters to members of the Yuma chapter of the Military Officers Association of America on May 27, 2026. (Photo by Michael Crawford)

COL Nelson hosts last town hall as YPG Commander



On March 21, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. John Nelson held his final town hall as commander of YPG. Nelson, along with Command Sgt. Maj. Joshua Holthus, Chief of Staff Omar Silva, Chaplain Byron Denman, Operations Division Chief Jonathan Olbert, S1 Program Analyst Teresa Elizalde, MWR Marketing Coordinator Maiko Black all presented to the YPG workforce about a variety of topics including recent and upcoming testing, events and projects. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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YPG engineers launch rockets with the Gators

By Ana Henderson

Yuma Proving Ground engineers visited Gowan Science Academy to talk rockets. The Gowan Gators fourth-grade class invited the local firing experts at YPG to show them firsthand how rockets work.

On the morning of May 22, YPG test engineers Daniel Sanchez, Ashley Lochetto, Caleb Little, Dillon Mann, Cullen Wilkes, Jose Ramirez, Bryan Sprouse, and Technical Director Ross Gwynn, with the help of teachers, parent volunteers and older-grade students guided the fourth graders through assembling a rocket.

The engineers took turns showing and telling about the vital work YPG does to test items for the warfighter. The engineers then talked about the mechanics of rockets before the building began.

Once the students were done with

the hard work of assembling the rockets, it was time to watch the rocket show. Nearly 100 students had the opportunity to launch their rocket with the guidance of the YPG team.

This is the second year YPG has been invited to Gowan for this particular event. Fourth-grade teacher Yesinia Curiel said, "We want our students to get familiar with careers in STEM and get them involved, get them curious, and interested in careers that are exciting like rocketry or mechanical engineering."

YPG places an emphasis on reaching out to local students, and teaching them about YPG's mission as the premier extreme natural environment test center for weapons and technology, and exposing them to the world of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in hopes they will choose a career in STEM.



Yuma Proving Ground engineers visited Gowan Science Academy on May 22 to talk rockets. YPG's team, with the help of teachers, parent volunteers and higher-grade students guided the fourth graders through assembling and launching rockets. (Photos by Ana Henderson and loaned photo)

Yuma Proving Ground Chaplain participates in local mental health panel discussion



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Chaplain Byron Denman (right) participated in a "Stop the Stigma" mental health panel discussion with other community members at Yuma's Vista High School on May 18, 2026. "Stigma is a super important topic based on my own personal experiences with losses of servicemembers who have fallen beside me due to suicide," he said. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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YPG engineers attend Career Day at Otondo Elementary School



Mary A. Otondo Elementary School invited Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) to take part in its annual Career Day. On May 21, YPG engineers with the Munitions and Weapons Division Richard Bloomfield, Hector Magana, and Mike Torres talked with students about their careers testing items for the warfighters. (Loaned photos)



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Radiofrequency spectrum vital to YPG test mission

By Mark Schauer

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) status as the Department of War's premier test and evaluation facility is greatly aided by its geographic isolation.

Possessing over 1,300 square miles of range space, the proving ground can safely test virtually every piece of equipment used by Soldiers, even dangerous items like long-range artillery.

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," said Michael Stoltenberg, YPG Radiofrequency Support Lead. "If a system under test doesn't work, the customer can go back to



Radio spectrum is the invisible resource that Yuma Proving Ground depends on to support 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. (U.S. Army photo)

the bench and work on it, and when they come back we can put up the exact same environment they used last time."

Maintaining these unique capabilities without competing needs interfering with each other is only possible thanks to the careful management of the air waves. 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 Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (AMPV) 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.

Being a good steward of the spectrum is a bilateral affair, too: not only must important tests be insulated from electronic interference, it is also vital that YPG's projects do not interfere with spectrum users outside the installation.

"Just getting clearances and approvals to operate and making sure we don't interfere with our neighbors in the region is a lot," said Stoltenberg. "Minimizing our footprint and meeting test objectives are key."



Possessing over 1,300 square miles of range space, the proving ground can safely test virtually every piece of equipment used by Soldiers, even inherently dangerous items like long-range artillery. (Photo by Mark Schauer)



Being a good steward of the spectrum is a bilateral affair: not only must important tests be insulated from electronic interference, it is also vital that Yuma Proving Ground's projects do not interfere with spectrum users outside the installation. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Honoring the Fallen



Since the birth of our nation, members of the Armed Forces have made the ultimate gift anyone can offer: themselves. Our liberty was purchased with their toil, sweat, and blood—and often their lives. For more than 80 years, Yuma has paid a small part of this debt of gratitude with a solemn ceremony to remember the fallen at the Ocean-to-Ocean Bridge. As usual, on Memorial Day 2026 a color guard from U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's Airborne Test Force was front and center as YPG Commander Col. John Nelson and Command Sgt. Maj. Joshua Holthus looked on. Nelson then gave keynote remarks at ceremonies honoring the fallen at Yuma's Desert Lawn Cemetery and Sunset Vista Cemetery. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



Arctic Regions Commander honors the fallen



Arctic Regions Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Brian Karhoff honored the fallen during a Memorial Day ceremony for the Fort Greely and Delta Junction communities. Karhoff shared remarks recognizing the enduring legacy of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. He joined U.S. Army Garrison Fort Greely Commander Lt. Col. Alissa Clark and Lt. Col. Michael Keckler, commander of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion during the ceremony on May 25 at Rest Haven Cemetery. (Photos by Angela Glass)



Garrison Employee Recognition Ceremony

On March 21, 2026, Garrison Manager Kenneth Musslewhite hosted his last Garrison Employee Recognition Ceremony as the GM of U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground. He recognized the following employees for their years of service and excellent work. (Photos by Michael Crawford)

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LAUNCHER
FROM PAGE 1

of restricted airspace, a vast holding used to test manned and unmanned aircraft and devices to defeat them in all stages of the development cycle. Multiple tests can be conducted concurrently and without having to compete for airspace as at many other installations.


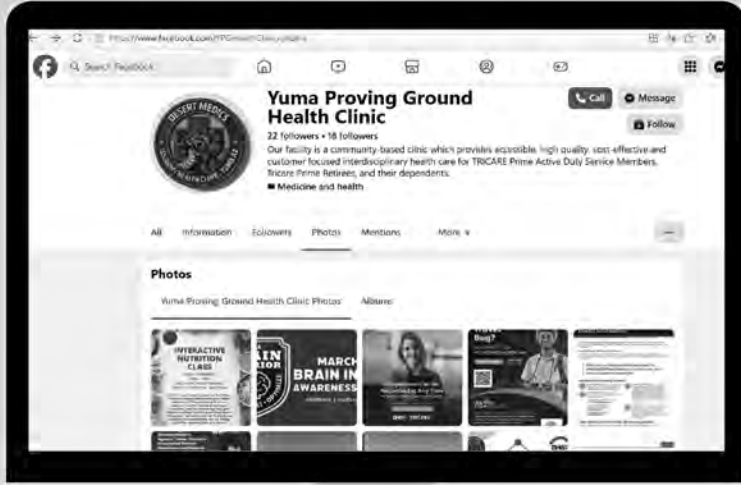
“As industry is asked to demonstrate capabilities that will solve gaps for the military, we’re going to see industry partners and contactors that want to come out and get opportunities to test their systems in restricted airspace,” said Ross Gwynn,

YPG Technical Director.


The clear, stable air and extremely dry climate where inclement weather is a rarity, as well as YPG’s isolation from urban encroachment, makes it highly coveted for this type of testing, as does the ability to control a large swath of the radio frequency spectrum. Evaluators also appreciate YPG’s vast ranges and variety of realistic targets that enable them to put their item through its paces in a variety of scenarios in a natural environment.

“The subject matter experts and culture that YPG has will make sure that we can enable them to go faster in whatever they need to get after this counter-UAS fight,” said Omar Silva, YPG Chief of Staff.



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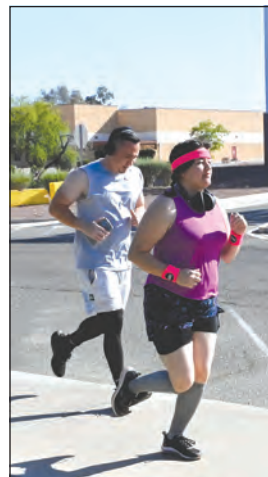
YPG community cools off at dive-in movie



What better way to cool off during the scorching Arizona heat than by hanging out in a refreshing pool. On May 30, nearly 75 YPG community members headed to the Kahuna Lagoon to watch "Pirates of the Caribbean" during the Dive-In movie night. (Photos by Dani Compton)



YPG Fitness Center hosts active remembrance of fallen navy SEAL



The Murph Challenge honors Lt. Michael Murphy, a Navy SEAL who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on June 28, 2005, in the Kunar Province of Afghanistan. The YPG Fitness Center hosted its second annual iteration of the challenge on Memorial Day weekend, drawing die-hard fitness enthusiasts of all ages. In life, Murphy utilized the grueling cross-fit regimen participants now perform in his honor: Competitors run one mile, then complete 100 pull-ups, 200 push-ups and 300 squats before running an additional mile. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

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