

The Outpost

Published for the employees and families of Yuma Proving Ground, Yuma Test Center, U.S. Army Garrison - Yuma, Cold Regions Test Center, and Tropic Regions Test Center

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground, Yuma, Arizona 85365

YPG Website: www.yuma.army.mil

Volume 40, No.007 – September 13, 2010

Assault breacher vehicle test at YPG vital for Soldiers in Afghanistan

by Mark Schauer

The task of route clearance is usually the purview of combat engineers charged with keeping their buddies and the civilian population safe from the persistent threat of landmines, roadside bombs and improvised explosive devices (IED). Every day, forward engineers in Afghanistan go forth in teams of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles that electronically scan the roadway, investigate suspected threats using the hydraulic claw of the Buffalo vehicle to carefully dig up each explosive from the roadway, and use items like the pint-sized Talon robot to detonate mines and IEDs from a safe distance. Eliminating a single explosive in such a manner can easily take an hour or more, an enormous burden in one of the most mine-afflicted countries in the world.

Such procedures might be practical in areas that are reasonably secure and where time is not of the essence, but what if troops need to assault an insurgent stronghold surrounded by minefields and roadside bombs or clear a path in an area where enemy forces are massed to attack a slow-moving convoy?

“The Assault Breacher Vehicle is a combat vehicle used to clear mines to give those that trail a clear path to their destination,” explained Troy Guerra, combat automotive test officer in charge of the Assault Breacher Vehicle test.

If the best defense is a spectacular offense, no platform in the military’s ground combat vehicle arsenal keeps American forces safer than the Assault Breacher Vehicle (ABV). Built using a 40-foot long, 68-ton M1 Abrams tank chassis, the ABV sports a 15-foot wide plow at its nose to scoop away

mines and two M58 Mine Clearing Line Charges (MICLIC), 350-foot long rocket-launched cords packed with nearly a ton of C4 plastic explosive each, to blast away any low-lying objects in their vicinity. Once a path is cleared, lane markers are ejected from the ABV as it moves along. Aside from its sheer bulk and power, the vehicle is also outfitted with a .50 caliber machine gun for defense. Five of these vehicles are already used by troops in Afghanistan and the platform recently underwent a two week test at Yuma Proving Ground to further refine its capabilities.

“It is, in my opinion, beyond rapid initiative,” said Guerra. “Our results

are directly supporting troops in Afghanistan waiting for the results of our test.”

This test was the first conducted by YPG on the ABV. The proving ground’s well-known technical capability testing route clearance performance in complexly realistic conditions was a major draw for the customer, as was the similarity of the proving ground’s terrain to that of Afghanistan.

“YPG seemed like a natural choice because you have clearance to use jammers and fire 24 hours per day,

(See Assault breacher on page 3)

Child care fees increased

Beginning October 1, most Army Families will see an increase in their child care fees, while others will see a reduction and some will see no change in fees for School Year 2010-2011. This is a result of a new Department of Defense (DoD) policy.

According to Maj. Gen. Reuben Jones, commander of the Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command, the Army will ensure outstanding child and youth programs and a quality of life for Soldiers and families commensurate with their service.

“Army families will continue to have access to some of the best child and youth programs found anywhere in the world,” Jones said. “These programs are an important part of our military communities and will continue to be a great value for our Soldiers and their families”

The Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) also played an important role in shaping the new policy. One result of AFAP was an expansion in the number of income categories to better reflect the full range of family incomes found across the Army.

By law, child care fees are based on total family income (excluding certain special pay and allowances), not rank or civilian grade. In 2008, DoD conducted an in-depth study of the child development program fee policy. As a result, they determined current fee ranges were no longer in sync with the total family income for a majority of the users, and the fees have not kept pace with the increasing costs of providing care.

“While the cost of providing child care has risen each of the past six years, the value of the programs has also increased for Soldiers, their children and the Army,” said Peggy Hinson, Child Youth and School Services Director at FMWRC.

“Our child care programs promote early learning. Most Army programs are nationally accredited, and most importantly, Soldiers can concentrate on their mission, knowing their children are safe and well cared for in a fully-accredited child care system,” she explained.

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, the country’s leading voice for child care, issues a biennial report on the quality of nationwide child care, including the DoD. The 2007 study found that the DoD child care system “stands alone as a model for states.” In that report, military child care ranked first among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and was the only entity to score in the top ten for both standards and oversight criteria.

(See Fees increased on page 2)



The Assault Breacher Vehicle (ABV) uses 350-foot long rocket-launched cords packed with nearly a ton of C4 plastic explosive each to detonate mines or IEDs in its path. Safely loading the heavy charges prior to testing is a painstaking process. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

News Notes

Gate improvements at Main Admin Area completed

Improvements to the main entrance to the Main Administrative Area have been completed and are now open to traffic. Please be advised that the old exit is closed and a new exit lane adjacent and parallel to the entrance lanes has been constructed.

Entrance and exit to the Main Administrative Area is now at a single location. Please use caution and follow all posted signs as you drive through the new exit lane. The temporary exit gate at the travel camp has been closed.

Retired reserve now eligible for health care program

For the first time, members of the Retired Reserve who are not yet age 60, the so-called "gray area" retirees, can purchase TRICARE health coverage for themselves and their eligible family members with the Sept. 1, 2010, launch of TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR).

"This new program offers a health coverage opportunity for "gray area" Guardsmen and Reservists who served America honorably, setting a proud example for today's forces," said Rear Adm. Christine Hunter, deputy director of the TRICARE Management Activity. "TRICARE Retired Reserve will provide an outstanding health benefit."

Retired Reservists may qualify to purchase TRR coverage if they are under the age of 60 and are not eligible for, or enrolled in, the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program. They must also be members of the Retired Reserve of a Reserve component and qualified for non-regular retirement. For instructions on how to qualify for and purchase TRR go to www.tricare.mil/trr.

For calendar year 2010, the TRR member-only monthly premium is \$388.31 (\$4,659.72 yearly), and the member and family monthly premium is \$976.41 (\$11,716.92 yearly). Premiums will be adjusted annually.

The comprehensive health care coverage provided by the premium-based TRR is similar to TRICARE Standard. After purchasing TRR, members will receive the TRICARE Retired Reserve Handbook, which includes details about covered services, how to get care and who to contact for assistance. For more information, visit www.tricare.mil/trr.

Voluntary Leave Transfer Program update



The Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP) is a way to donate annual leave to co-workers who are experiencing a medical emergency (their own or a family member's emergency) and do not have enough leave to cover their absences. These employees have used or will use all sick and annual leave before being eligible to receive donations.

- YPG currently has eight employees on the VLTP recipient list:
- Michelle Cruz, Yuma CPAC, complications during pregnancy
 - Rosa Dayton, MWR, back surgery
 - Lorraine Hernandez, Yuma NEC, providing emergency care for father
 - Teresa Lanham, CRTC, degenerative spinal issues
 - Ursula Packham, YTC, birth of child
 - Robert "Smoke" Trujillo, YTC, motorcycle accident and subsequent surgeries
 - Jesse White, YTC, cancer surgery
 - Clara Zachgo, CRTC, pregnancy and childbirth

Any donation will be appreciated by the recipient. You can donate as little as one hour of annual leave or as much as one half of what you accrue in a leave year, although you must be able to use "use or lose" annual leave before the end of the leave year. If you are interested in donating annual leave to your co-worker, just complete Optional Form 630-A and forward it back to the CPAC. They'll see that the donation gets to the appropriate recipient.

The OUTPOST is an unofficial publication authorized under provisions of AR 360-1. The OUTPOST is published every two weeks by the Public Affairs Office, Yuma Proving Ground. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. This newspaper uses material credited to DTC, ATEC, and ARNEWS. While contributions are solicited, the PAO reserves the right to edit all submitted materials and make corrections, changes or deletions to conform with the policy of this newspaper. News may be submitted to the Editor, OUTPOST, Yuma Proving Ground, Yuma, AZ, 85365. Phone (928) 328-6533/6189 or DSN 899-6533. You can visit our web page at: www.us.army.mil or e-mail to: yolanda.canales@us.army.mil

CommanderCol. Thomas Payne
 Public Affairs Officer.....Chuck Wullenjohn
 Public Affairs Specialist/Editor.....Yolanda Canales
 Public Affairs Specialist.....Mary F. Flores
 Public Affairs SpecialistMark Schauer
 Technical Editor, Cold Regions Test Center.....Clara Zachgo

Cooking Demo by Yolie



Date: 21 September 2010
Time: 1130
Location: Travel Camp

Join us in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month!
 Come out and watch a live cooking demo
 by our one and only....Yolie!
 She will be demonstrating how to prepare and cook
 Green Chili Corn Tamales and Spanish Rice.

Sexual Assault Hotline: 920-3104 or 328-3224

Report Domestic Violence:

328-2720 or 328-3224

Fees increased (Continued from page 1)

Since 2004, child care fees at most Army garrisons have remained static in an attempt to ease the burden of persistent conflict and multiple deployments. In an effort to minimize the financial impact of fee increases, the Army received approval from DoD to begin a phased implementation of this new Child Care Fee Policy. Individual installations will have plans to reach fixed dollar amounts for each fee category within the next three years.

A 2009 update confirmed that DoD child care continues to score more than 60 percent above the national average.

"It's important, in keeping with the promises made in the Army Family Covenant, that we do everything we can to minimize the impact the DoD fee changes will have on our Soldiers and their families," said Jones.

Currently there are six fee categories, including a minimum fixed rate and five income-based categories, each with a range of fees determined by the garrison.

The School Year 2010-2011 Child Care Fee Policy will contain nine categories, with three added at the top to more accurately accommodate higher incomes.

Under existing policy, families earning \$70,001 pay the same fees as those making more than \$100,000. The three additional categories will raise fees incrementally to cover families earning \$125,001 or more annually.

Those earning \$85,000 and below will see smaller increases. Furthermore, some lower-income families will pay reduced fees under the new policy. As always, families with more than one child will receive multiple child reductions, regardless of total family income. This now will become an Army-wide standard 15 percent discount for second and subsequent children.

Commanders may authorize additional fee reductions for families with temporary, documented financial hardships. Army Family Covenant fee reductions are in effect while military parents are deployed.

In addition to Child Development Center fees, The Army's 2010-2011 Fee Policy covers all Child, Youth and School Services (CYSS) Programs, including: Full day; part day; part time; school age and hourly care; Family Child Care Homes; *Skies Unlimited* Instructional Programs and youth sports.

Families should have received information about their specific fee changes last month through personal contacts at their CYSS location. Additional information will be provided through town hall meetings, social media, radio and television commercials and print materials. The Army has launched a website in to provide additional information on its School Year 2010-2011 Child Care Fee Policy.

Assault breacher (Continued from page 1)

seven days a week,” said Mike Bible, test lead for Project Manager Engineer Systems. “YPG was best able to accommodate the ABV and what we were trying to do with the ordnance. The capabilities were perfect for our needs.”

Important, too, was YPG’s ability

“YPG seemed like a natural choice because you have clearance to use jammers and fire 24 hours per day, seven days a week.”

Mike Bible, test lead

to accommodate the test on short notice: initial discussions regarding the possibility of conducting the ABV evaluation occurred a mere ten weeks before the last day of testing.

“It was a very short response time and YPG had to react quickly,” said Bible. “We were fortunate they responded with the alacrity they did and I think the test went better than we expected.”

Given its high profile status and the compressed schedule, YPG testers hosted counterparts from Aberdeen



With the Linear Demolition Charge System locked and loaded, the ABV is ready for test firing. YPG’s vast test ranges and flexible workforce allow this highly specialized vehicle to be rapidly and safely tested. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

Proving Ground and several divisions of the Naval Surface Warfare Center during the ABV’s evaluation. Dozens of testers and support personnel worked long hours into the night at remote locations on YPG’s vast test range conducting dangerous, carefully conducted tests of the ABV’s

MICLIC system.

“We fused into one fluid team very rapidly,” said Guerra. “There was no differentiation or competition of any kind. Everyone had Soldiers and goals on their mind.”

Despite the challenges, the test went flawlessly. Project manager

Engineer Systems plans to bring the ABV back to the proving ground in the future for further testing.

“They are now very familiar with Yuma Test Center’s capabilities,” Guerra said. “Follow-on testing for the ABV will be coming to YPG in the months ahead.”



Using a commonly available construction vehicle, heavy M58 Mine Clearing Line Charges are loaded aboard an ABV. If the best defense is a spectacular offense, no platform in the military’s ground combat vehicle arsenal keeps American forces safer from land mines and improvised explosive devices than the ABV. When time is of the essence, the 68-ton ABV’s 15-foot wide mine plow and pair of M58 charges can swiftly and explosively clear a safe path for other combat vehicles. The platform has undergone rigorous testing at YPG, and five of the vehicles are already used by troops in Afghanistan. The additional rapid-initiative testing conducted at YPG directly supports troops in theater.

General Services Administration Service

Three-man mechanic team conducts maintenance

by Mary F. Flores

With nearly 1,000 vehicles of a variety of many types in the Yuma Proving Ground fleet, one may find it difficult to believe the responsibility for performing preventative maintenance and minor repairs falls on the shoulders of three mechanics. Each week, Monday through Thursday, the team of mechanics service 18 to 25 vehicles at YPG's General Service Administration (GSA) Service Center, getting them back on the road safely in as little as one hour. In addition, these individuals are responsible for maintaining 150 leased vehicles for TRAX International, which directly supports the YPG mission.

From fuel trucks, vans, buses, pickups, ambulances, police vehicles and electric utility carts, the three-man team follows a stringent schedule to keep vehicles operating over an installation larger in area than the state of Rhode Island.

Constructed two years ago, the service center has plenty of space and equipment for the mechanics to use. It is well equipped with two hydraulic vehicle hoists, a tire changing machine, a stock of batteries, tires, hand and diagnostic tools, and an array of vehicle parts.

"Staying fully stocked is important, for we sometimes go through as many

as 10 batteries in one week," said Michael Stroh, lead mechanic at the service center. "The majority of the parts we keep in stock include washer fluid, belts, and air and oil filters that we purchase locally."

With eight vehicle bays, mechanics perform an array of maintenance repairs such as inspections, tire replacements, rotations, oil changes, replacement of air and oil filters, windshield wiper blades, changing fluids such as brake, power steering and transmission, and much more. Oil collected from oil changes is placed in a 3,000 gallon storage tank and properly disposed of.

With hundreds of YPG personnel driving vehicles downrange to support tests, vehicles take a brutal beating as they travel hundreds of miles through rough desert terrain covered with rocks, boulders and potholes. When vehicles are brought in for a scheduled service, mechanics often find anomalies while performing routine inspections. For example, while recently conducting a routine service and oil change, 18-year YPG mechanic Bruce Michels discovered damaged motor mounts underneath the vehicle.

"In this situation, since this was a TRAX leased vehicle and its damages were greater than what is normally repaired here, it was turned over to



Steve Quintero, automotive mechanic, prepares to mount a tire. Mechanics is 35 years of age and shadowed his father, who was always working on vehicles in his own garage on the weekends," he said. (Photo by Mary F. Flores)



Bruce Michels, an 18-year mechanic, checks beneath a vehicle for hidden damage that can be repaired by the GSA Service Center. Through these inspections, Michels determines if the repairs can be done on post or must be taken to a auto mechanic shop in Yuma.

Ron Rutherford, vehicle fleet coordinator, who had it taken to a local dealership for repairs," he said.

Daily operations

In the past, maintenance reminders were sent out to GSA vehicle users via email. This created a bottleneck of vehicles waiting to be serviced which caused long waits for vehicles to be returned to operators. However, with the improved system in place now, vehicles are back in service within one hour.

"Before the new service center was built, vehicles requiring preventative maintenance and repairs were driven downtown to local vendors," said Stroh. "Those vehicles could remain there for over two weeks, causing a lot of down time."

In addition to preventive maintenance services, body repairs are necessary from time to time due to unforeseen accidents. These types of repairs take place off post by a body shop in Yuma, thus contributing to the local economy.

In every office there is always room for improvement on procedures and Stroh explained that a study done by the Lean Six Sigma Program (LSS), has improved customer service at the GSA Service Center. Through the study, a scheduling system was implemented to schedule and track service order appointments for routine vehicle maintenance. "As a result of the LSS program, there have been significant cost savings by preventing downtime. Overall, the system for servicing vehicles is much more productive and cost effective and

employees are happier," Stroh said.

Some people might think performing general maintenance on vehicles day after day is a cumbersome and mundane job, but Steve Quintero,



Michel Stroh conducts a diagnostic check on a vehicle to determine what needs to be done to repair it and get it back on the road.

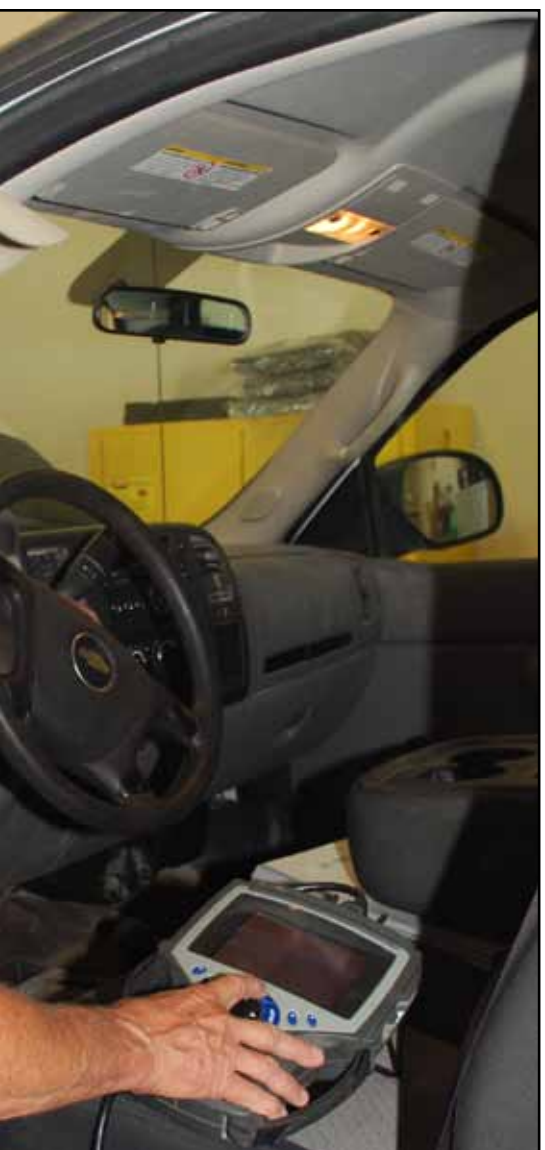
Service Center keeps vehicles rolling

Oil changes and minor repairs to YPG's fleet of vehicles



Steve Quintero, lead mechanic, is of a second nature to Quintero since he was five years old. "I love what I do and I'm always here," said Quintero. (Photo by Mary Flores)

Steve Quintero, lead mechanic, doesn't see it that way. He says on any given day he performs five to six oil changes, taking him approximately 45 minutes to one hour each.



A technician uses a diagnostic tool on a vehicle to determine its problem and get it back on the road.

"I've always liked taking things apart to see how they work," said Quintero. "Ever since I was five-years old, I remember watching my father repair vehicles at home and this sparked my interest in auto mechanics. I have a great job doing something I enjoy, and I like it so much, I'm always in the garage at home on weekends, fixing something."

Safety

With hydraulic vehicle hoists and tools lying around the work area, there is always potential for an accident. However, before each work day begins, a safety brief is given by Stroh, who has been working at the service center since it opened. "During the morning brief, we talk about any unfinished business from the day prior and I cover any safety issues that need to be addressed," he said. "Everyone who works here is an experienced mechanic and uses proper protective equipment to perform the job safely and correctly."

Scheduling

"The system I use tells me 30 days in advance when a vehicle is due for oil change," said Kerry Belk, engineering technician at the GSA Service Center. "I schedule appointments through Microsoft Outlook and notify employees when to bring the vehicle in. Oil changes are done every 7,500 miles and this information is gathered from vehicle reports that are entered into a data base." For public viewing, each appointment is listed on a public calendar in Microsoft Outlook and anyone with access to the program can check the calendar as a reminder, whenever needed.

When an employee drops off a vehicle for preventative maintenance, the individual must follow standard procedures and fill out an intake form, filling in highlighted information pertinent to that vehicle and indicating any problems. Employees can wait in a comfortable lobby or they may return at a later time.

Belk, who is responsible for collecting monthly utilization logs for each vehicle, also reminds employees to turn in original documentation at her office, located in building 2336. Belk explained that the information gathered from utilization logs are input into a data base and the number of miles and days of usage for each vehicle is tracked. She also reminds employees that when they are assigned an appointment, to adhere to the schedule.

It's amazing to see the amount of work produced by the relatively small GSA Service Center team and YPG employees can rest assured their vehicles receive the utmost care and maintenance by a team of professionals. Keeping vehicles rolling is a great responsibility in ensuring the safety of everyone getting behind the wheel.



Steve Quintero tightens up nuts and bolts underneath the hood of the vehicle after completing an oil change. Quintero says he performs up to six daily oil changes and lube jobs.

YPG fleet statistics (Sept. 09 - Aug 10)

Total mileage for all vehicles	7,288,361
Total number of gallons of gasoline	728,837
Total number of tires purchased	1,500
Total number of tires repaired/replaced	1,200
Total number of off post repairs:	168
Total number of oil changes	550
Total gallons of oil used	2,750
Total number of air, oil and fuel filters	1,100



Michael Stroh, lead mechanic, checks data on the computer to see the number of job services that will come in for the week.

Viewpoints

If you could describe yourself as a dessert, what would you be and why?



Martin Bergin, lead data collector, Data Acquisition: I would be a lemon meringue pie because it's tart on one side and desirable and sweet on the other. I think this fits my personality.



Sgt. James Ryckman, medic at YPG Health Clinic: I would be rocky road ice cream because it's a combination of everything and a little bit of nuts inside.



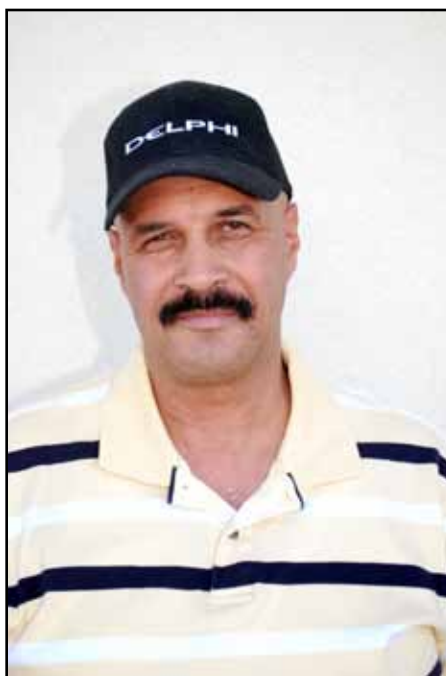
Chaplain (Maj.) Doug Ball, YPG Chaplain: I would be a lemon meringue pie because I always loved it since I was a child. I believe I have a sweet topping exterior but once you get inside you find a little bite and strength. I would love to be full of grace with love on the outside but looking to strength on the inside when I need it.



Capt. Emily Pieracci, veterinarian at YPG and MCAS-Yuma Veterinarian Clinic: I would be lemon cream cake because it's my favorite dessert and it's sweet, mild and not filling.



Beverly Moore, word processor, Data Acquisition: I would be any type of ice cream because it's sweet, cold, smooth and creamy. I love cold things, especially the winter, which is my favorite season.



Ron Basolet, supply technician, Combat and Automotive Division: I would be a New York cherry cheesecake because I'm from New York and I believe we have the best cheesecakes in the world. It's smooth, rich and delightful.

Bernie McGrenahan 'slayed' YPG audience



Bernie McGrenahan "killed" a large Yuma Proving Ground's audience with true stories of his life during a recent comedy performance. McGrenahan's visit was funded by the YPG Army Substance Abuse Program, Army Community Services and the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Directorate. His recent visit to YPG and other future installations is a creative way to get out the message on sexual assault, substance abuse and suicide prevention. "Comedy with a twist provided an opportunity to inform everyone about the YPG Substance Abuse and Sexual Assault programs and resources available to those requiring assistance," said Juanita Saez, Substance Abuse Program Manager. McGrenahan is taking military bases across the globe by storm with his "Happy Hour" program of a stand-up comedy. He is one of today's top stand-up comedians and has appeared on many late night television comedy programs, as well as opened Las Vegas concerts for many big stars. McGrenahan grips the audiences' attention by revealing his step-by-step downward spiral into the world of high-risk drinking and drug abuse. Now 21-years free from alcohol and drugs, he is motivating servicemembers to identify the warning signs and take safe action before it is too late or fatal. He inspires them to be prepared, trained and ready to defend the safety of our nation. In the top photo, McGrenahan signs autographs for attendees at his recent show at the YPG Theater. Bottom photo: Rick Martin (left) garrison manager, presents McGrenahan a token of appreciation for his visit to the proving ground and for the excellent performance and message he delivered. (Photo by Yolie Canales)

TRICARE encourages kids to keep moving, stay active

During the month of September, TRICARE continues its strong commitment to the battle against childhood obesity. By observing Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, TRICARE is an active participant in the Let's Move! program for military kids.

The national Let's Move! program works to combat the epidemic of childhood obesity through engaging every sector impacting a child's health. It provides schools, families and communities simple tools to help kids be more active, eat better and get healthy.

TRICARE's web page at www.tricare.mil/getfit serves as the 'headquarters' for beneficiaries looking for resources on childhood obesity. The page highlights ongoing efforts to raise awareness of childhood obesity and encourages children to eat right and exercise. It has links to informational websites and games emphasizing good nutrition and fitness for kids.

The Let's Move! campaign reports that over the past three decades, childhood obesity rates in America have tripled, and today, nearly one in three children in America is overweight or obese. What is more shocking, one third of all children born in 2000 or later will suffer from diabetes at some point in their lives. Many others will face chronic obesity-related health problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer and asthma.

(See Keep moving on page 8)

Education Center's Chenoah Bowman ensures education has no barriers

by Mary F. Flores

Every year, hundreds of people within the Yuma Proving Ground community walk through the doors of the education center to seek assistance in taking a college course or pursuing a degree. Giving back to the community and providing good customer service is priority number one for Chenoah Dawn Bowman, administrative services manager, who is passionate about her job in the center.

When speaking to Bowman, you may detect a foreign accent, for she was born at Aviano Pordenone Air Force Base, Italy, to American and Italian parents. She speaks the English and Italian languages fluently, and knows firsthand the importance of receiving a higher education. She attended university classes in Italy and received a bachelor's degree in business management in Trieste, Italy, where she was raised.

For more than one year, Bowman has been working at YPG's Education Center located in the Main Administrative Area (MAA) doing things like creating flyers and brochures, assisting with the coordination of college fairs, scheduling classes and placement tests, and much more. She assists with the processing of tuition assistance for civilians, contractors and active duty military and their dependents. She says she fully appreciates the culture of the United States and enjoys meeting people in the YPG community.

With various college courses offered throughout the year at the center, Bowman stays busy coordinating the use of two computer labs and one large classroom with a smart board that can accommodate 30 students. A small conference room is also available that can accommodate six to eight people. To reserve a room or any of the labs, Bowman advises people to contact her at least three weeks in advance.

Although there isn't an Educational Services Officer (ESO) on site at the education center, with the capability of "Skype," a form of online communication, students can receive counseling and guidance from Sharon Lewis, an ESO located at Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

"I can assist with setting appointments with the ESO and make use of Skype and a web camera," Bowman said with a smile. "If anyone needs assistance or has questions regarding tuition assistance or anything at all, I will speak to them first, and then refer them to the ESO for further guidance."

Elizabeth Mikkelsen, test examiner, is also available at the center to assist with giving placement tests.

"If I don't have an answer to a question a customer asks," she said, "I will research the question, find the answer and get back to that person. I believe in 100 percent customer service satisfaction, which is my personal motto."

Bowman explained that anyone with an authorized CAC card or some form of identification from YPG, whether active duty military and dependents, contractors or civilians, is authorized to utilize the computer lab and its cable service. In addition, authorized users can take online courses, access the YPG intranet, or utilize other services available at the center.

Bowman recommends anyone who wishes to use the services at the education center to contact her in an advance. For more information on services or for material on local colleges and other educational literature, you may visit building 501 on the MAA. Hours of operation are from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday, or by special appointment by calling 328-3926 or through email at: YPGEducationCenter@us.army.mil.



Chenoah Bowman, administrative services manager at the Yuma Proving Ground Education Center, is available during normal work hours. (Photo by Mary Flores)

Managing stress in a relationship

submitted by Paul J. Kilanski Family Advocacy Program Manager

Stress affects everyone at times and can be difficult for couples to handle. Hopefully, this article will help you understand what causes stress and how to best manage it together.

Stress is a reaction to demands that feel overwhelming. Stress can cause unpleasant feelings. When stressed, you may feel tense, insecure or irritable. You may feel fearful or powerless. You may also have physical reactions to stress such as headaches, upset stomach or back pains. People under stress may see themselves as less capable and overwhelmed. Stress can make it hard to do well in life and in relationships. In a relationship, one person's stress affects both partners. Stress can be caused by difficult times such as work problems or illness. But stress can also come from positive life experiences such as getting married or getting a promotion at work.

Stress causes you to be different from usual. Some changes caused by stress are: a change in mood from being comfortable to being upset or very quiet, a switch from solving problems to constant complaining, a shift from active to being tired and sleepy, less interest in interactions with your partner or feeling bad about oneself.

Stress can cause partners to turn against each other. Partners can get angry with each other about small issues. You may criticize and blame each other and get into fights. You may stop discussing issues and solving problems together. You may avoid each other and feel apart and alone.

Stress can be outside or inside the relationship. Outside stress can be about work, family, money, health or legal problems. Long absences such as travel for work or military service, can also create stress. Inside stress can be about one partner not feeling respected or appreciated. Some couples experience stress if there is not enough love and intimacy.

Sometimes the cause of the stress is not clear to the person who feels it.

Help reduce the stress! Declare the stress as OUR stress, even if it is only one of you who is stressed. Listen carefully and allow your partner to vent their feelings. Be supportive and encouraging. Tell your partner that they are loved. Reassure your partner that this stress is temporary and that you can overcome it as a team.

Strengthen yourselves for future stress. Practice talking and solving problems together.

Share physical activities. Dance, hike or take a bike ride. Being active produces hormones that fight stress. Be playful and funny. Laughter reduces stress. Support each other in healthy eating, getting enough sleep and taking time for relaxation. Learn from past experiences. If you did well with stress, build on your successes. If you had a hard time, try to problem solve what you can do differently the next time. Be appreciative.

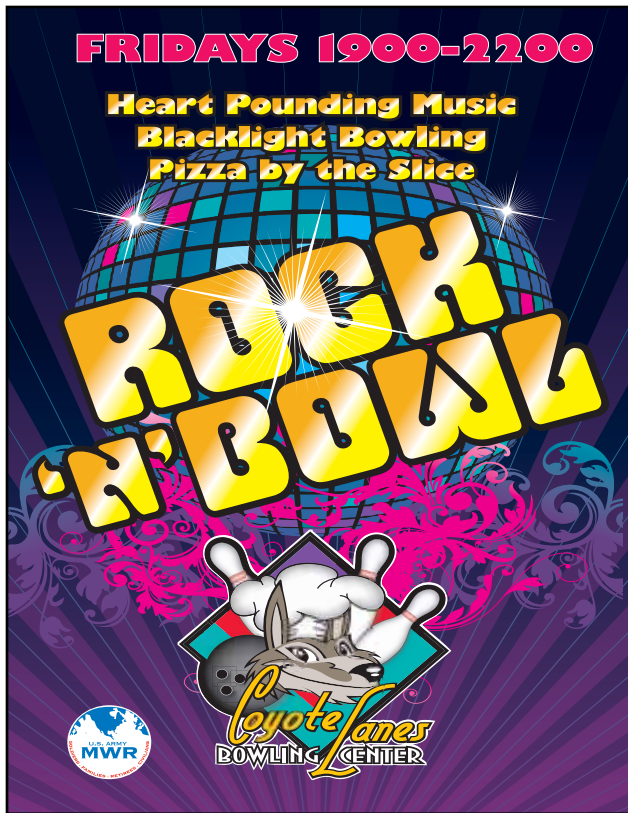
Show affection. People who feel valued and loved are better able to handle stress.



The pause that refreshes

Amy Milton and son, Wyatt, provide refreshments before the performance of the comedian at the YPG Post Theater in late August. Proceeds went to Yuma Test Center's Family Readiness Group. In the words of one happy customer, "the snacks and cold beverages hit the spot." She provides similar refreshments at other proving ground functions. Her efforts have generated a significant amount of money to what is a worthy cause. The readiness group supports the families of deployed civilians and military personnel through providing child care, training, support, and a variety of activities. (Photo by Mary Flores)

Family, Morale, Welfare & Recreation Happenings



Smoke alarms: Up, down and all around your homes

The YPG Fire Department reinforces newer smoke alarm recommendations during Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 3-9

by Chuck Beasley, Fire Inspector

In an effort to better educate communities throughout the U.S. about smoke alarm recommendations, the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is promoting "Smoke Alarms: A Sound You Can Live With!" as the theme for this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, October 3-9, which the YPG Fire Department is supporting locally.

NFPA has been the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for 88 years.

"Many homes in Yuma may not have any smoke alarms, not enough smoke alarms, alarms that are too old, or alarms that are not working," said Chief Don Kist of the YPG Fire Department. "We want residents to understand that working smoke alarms are needed in every home, on every level (including the basement), outside each sleeping area and inside each bedroom. And, if a smoke alarm is 10 years or older, it needs to be replaced."

Kist said smoke alarms can mean the difference between life and death in a fire. NFPA statistics show that working smoke alarms cut the chance of dying in a fire nearly in half. But they must be working properly to do so. The association's data shows that many homes have smoke alarms that aren't working or maintained

improperly, usually because of missing, disconnected or dead batteries. Roughly two-thirds of all home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

The YPG Fire Department will be hosting activities and Sparky visits during Fire Prevention Week to promote "Smoke Alarms: A Sound You Can Live With!" locally, and to help YPG residents understand NFPA's smoke alarm recommendations.

Through these educational, family-oriented activities, residents can learn more about the power of smoke alarms, newer options for installing and maintaining them properly, and how to better protect their loved ones from fire.

NFPA and the YPG Fire Department agree that interconnected smoke alarms offer the best protection; when one sounds, they all do. This is particularly important in larger or multi-story homes, where the sound from distant smoke alarms may be reduced to the point that it may not be loud enough to provide proper warning, especially for sleeping individuals.

"Most people have a sense of complacency about smoke alarms because they already have one in their homes. Fire Prevention Week provides an excellent opportunity to re-educate people about smoke alarms, new

technologies and expanded options for installation and maintenance," said Judy Comoletti, division manager for NFPA public education. "Ultimately, we want this year's campaign to serve as a call to action for households nationwide to inspect their homes to ensure their families have the full smoke alarm protection that's recommended."

The YPG Fire Department offers the following tips for making sure smoke alarms are maintained and working properly:

- Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button, and make sure everyone in your home knows their sound.
- If an alarm "chirps," this is a warning the battery is low. Replace the battery right away!
- Replace all smoke alarms, including alarms that use 10-year batteries and hard-wired alarms, when they're 10 years old (or sooner) if they do not respond properly when tested.
- Never remove or disable a smoke alarm.

To find out more about Fire Prevention Week programs and activities on YPG, contact the YPG Fire Department at 328-2316. To learn more about "Smoke Alarms: A Sound You Can Live With!," visit NFPA's Web site at www.firepreventionweek.org.

Keep moving (Continued from page 6)

TRICARE knows it is not easy battling obesity. Weight loss occurs when calories consumed are less than calories burned. If children (or adults) consume more calories than they are burning, there is a good chance they will gain weight. Decreasing calorie consumption and increasing physical activity to burn more calories than consumed is the simple "recipe" for weight loss. For someone obese, staying committed to changing his or her diet may not be simple. Physicians and experts are in agreement that battling obesity involves a commitment to healthy eating habits and regular exercise. Having a support system is also very important.

Early and appropriate intervention is valuable. Teaching children ways to make healthy eating choices at a young age can bring benefits for a lifetime. Military personnel, retirees and their families can utilize the support from the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA). The DeCA website at www.commissaries.com provides dietary advice columns, recipes and information on making healthy food choices. The "MyPyramid" tool at www.mypyramid.gov from the Agriculture Department assists by creating a personalized eating schedule and physical activity plan.

For exercise and activities, check with schools for a list of programs. Also, military Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) centers offer activities from team sports like basketball and baseball, to music, dance, martial arts, gymnastics, swimming, ice skating and more. MWR youth services has something for everyone. Beneficiaries should check with the nearest installation for more information.

Learn more about Let's Move! at www.letsmove.gov and Childhood Obesity Awareness Month at www.healthierkidsbrighterfutures.org.

