

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

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CRTC leader believes status quo is never good enough

by Mark Schauer

At the beginning of 2009, Lt. Col. John Cavedo's long career had taken him to a variety of duty stations around the world. He had a couple of short tours to both Afghanistan and Iraq, had been to Haiti and Thailand in the mid 1990s and began his career as a military police officer in Panama. But except for a month-long winter exercise in Norway in the early 1990s, he had never served anywhere like U.S. Army Cold Regions Test Center, located near Delta Junction, Alaska, and didn't expect he ever would.

"I would not have picked to come to Alaska," admits Cavedo. "But in their wisdom the Army sent me here, and that has turned out to be the absolute best decision someone has made for my career. This is the best

job I've had in the Army so far, and I don't look forward to the day I will have to leave."

Cavedo took command of the Department Of Defense's premier extreme cold weather, natural environments test facility in June of 2009, and during his tenure has already made his mark, making safety and efficiency gains major objectives for the organization.

"I've had an incredible first year," he said. "I can't wait to get another two under my belt."

Given the robustness of the test load, it is easy to understand Cavedo's enthusiasm. Last year's test schedule was the busiest in recent memory in terms of labor hours and this season's will at least equal it. Upcoming tests

(See CRTC leader on page 3)



With one year as CRTC commander under his belt and his 25th year in the Army nearly over, Lt. Col. John Cavedo is looking forward to the next two years. "We've begun so many initiatives to move the organization forward," Cavedo said. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

YPG employee oversees significant radar improvements



Herbert Kiser prepares to pull the lanyard at the recent Yuma Proving Ground Civilian of the Quarter ceremony. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

by Yolie Canales

Herbert Kiser, electronic technician for Yuma Test Center's (YTC) Electronics Division, has recently been selected as Yuma Proving Ground's Civilian of the Quarter in addition to having already been recognized as YTC's Civilian of the Quarter. Kiser was singled out for his outstanding support of the Range Radar Replacement project.

As Kiser explained, four test centers (White Sands Missile Range, YPG, Aberdeen Test Center, and Redstone Test Center) teamed together to create a unified program to replace aging and outdated radar systems. "A very large portion of the inventory of radars located at the respective ranges has become obsolete, unreliable and inefficient," said Kiser. "Right here at YPG, much of the inventory consists of 1950s and 1960s vintage radars with

different modifications and upgrades implemented over many years. Some have seen up to three generations of employees come and go." He says age and obsolescence has resulted in high maintenance and operational costs as well as unacceptably high failure rates. The current performance of much of the radar capability no longer satisfies current and emerging test customer requirements and expectations.

Kiser said the different test centers have contributed subject matter experts to assist with initial requirements, evaluation of alternatives, and, eventually, work with the source selection board to identify a vendor that can deliver a satisfactory system. "If the systems that are delivered last as long as the current radars, then the next generation of technicians at

(See Civilian of Quarter on page 6)

News Notes

Congratulations to YPG's Price Elementary School September's Go-Getters !

Each month the Yuma Elementary School District school's selects two students who meet the criteria of working hard, does his/hers very best and are good abiding citizens. Their photos are sent to the Yuma Sun and are published on the last Tuesday of every month throughout the school year.



Olin Pakkala



Joey Hatton

What's happening in Yuma?

September 29: Round of "Yuma Star" singing competition at Historic Yuma Theatre, 254 S. Main Street, sponsored by the Yuma Sun. Admission is \$4 with tickets at Yuma Sun Classified Department and at the door if available.

October 2: St. Francis Feast Dance, 1815 S. 8th Ave., 8 p.m. to midnight. Music by Oscar Chavez. Appetizers will be served. Cost is \$15 per person. More information from Renee@martinarmijo.com or call 580-6491.

October 3: St. Francis Feast Day Carnival, 700 W. 18th Street. The event includes games, food, entertainment, horse show and pet adoptions through the Humane Society of Yuma. Admission is free, tickets for food and games sold in 50 cent increments.

October 9: In conjunction with United Way of Yuma County, Heritage Festivals has hired a San Diego-based murder mystery production company to write a story based loosely on the inmates, wardens and characters that played a role in the prison's history. The interactive dinner show will benefit United Way and help promote the prison. Tickets available at 783-0515

October 16: Hospice of Yuma Ocean to Ocean Gala will be held 6:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. at the Yuma Territorial Prison State Park. Tickets are \$60 per person. Enjoy an evening under the stars and in the shadows of the Ocean to Ocean Bridge for Hospice of Yuma's 9th annual Ocean to Ocean Gala. The event includes cocktails and appetizers, followed by a dinner of rib eye steak or shrimp linguine with bake potato, salad and grilled veggies. Stroll the grounds and bid on the beautiful artwork, jewelry and other items at our silent auction. Dance to local group "Command Ground." For more information, call Ashlie Davis at Hospice of Yuma, 343-2222.

October 19: Women's Health Topic: Healthy breasts and Your women's health yearly to do list; Discussion with physicians from the Yuma Valley Family Medicine, 2270 Ridgeview Drive. Free. For more information, call 782-1908.

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Downrange intervention helps save life



After being recognized for her heroic actions at a recent safety award ceremony, Kari LaRose (third from right) takes a photo with other members of the workforce who were also presented with safety award citations by YPG commander Col. Thomas Payne (left) and Technical Director Julio Dominguez (right). Other awardees are left to right, Michael Morris, Fernando Caravantes, Lindsey Ward, LaRose and John Barczynski. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

by Yolie Canales

"I don't consider myself a hero just because I provided assistance to a coworker's episode with an epileptic seizure," said Kari LaRose, threat technician for NACCITEC, who was presented with a safety award citation for rendering assistance to an individual suffering a seizure at one of the JERC sites in the northern portion of the Cibola Range. "I did what anyone would have done in the same situation."

LaRose, was miles down range when she heard a radio emergency call from JERC Site II and immediately headed out. "Upon arrival, I saw my car pool partner lying on her back, having a seizure," said LaRose, who had asked her friend that same week about what to do in case she ever suffered a seizure. "She told me to turn her on her side and place a hard plastic device in her mouth to prevent biting her tongue, and this is exactly what I did." She also placed a wet towel on her forehead to provide a bit more comfort before the seizure subsided.

With medical facilities about 60 miles away, this incident quickly could have escalated into a more

serious situation had it not been for her fast action. The incident was contained because of quick intervention, first aid training and knowing what to do.

LaRose's supervisor, Tony Shea, threat technician lead, was not surprised to hear of her fast action. "Kari is a very responsible individual and always alert as to what is happening on tests down range and she knew what to do in this situation," said Shea. "I'm very fortunate to have her on my team. She's a great worker who is not only responsible, but reliable."

A native of Yuma, LaRose has been at YPG for four years and enjoys every aspect of her job except the extreme hot weather. "I love my job," she said. "It's a lot of fun - we meet many different people and even though there are times requiring us to work a 24 hour schedule, it's satisfying to know we're contributing to the safety of our troops."

In addition to LaRose's recognition, five other YPG employees were presented with safety award citations. They are Michael Morland, Michael Morris, Fernando Caravantes, Lindsey Ward, and John Barczynski.

A tribute to Hispanic Medal of Honor Recipient

Fernando Luis Garcia, private First Class, U.S. Marine Corps, Company I, 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division (Rein.) entered the service at San Juan, Puerto Rico, died on September 5, 1952 in Lorea. Garcia was presented with the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a member of Company I, in action against enemy aggressor forces. While participating in the defense of a combat outpost located more than one mile forward of the main line of resistance during a savage night attack by a fanatical enemy force employing grenades, mortars, and artillery, Pfc. Garcia, although suffering painful wounds, moved through the intense hail of hostile fire to a supply point to secure more hand grenades. Quick to act when a hostile grenade landed nearby, endangering the life of another Marine, as well as his own, he unhesitatingly chose to sacrifice himself and immediately threw his body upon the deadly missile, receiving the full impact of the explosion. His great personal valor and cool decision in the face of almost certain death sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

CRTC leader (Continued from page 1)

are also more data-intensive than in recent years, which necessitated hiring approximately 35 seasonal employees. This is twice as many as last year's temporary workforce, and filling the positions was complicated by CRTC's isolated location. From the Stryker Mobile Gun System and Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicle (M-ATV) to Soldier systems such as thermal weapons sights and see-through-the-wall radar, CRTC's dynamic winter workload will put a plethora of equipment through its paces.

"We've begun so many initiatives to move the organization forward," Cavedo said. "The CRTC workforce is outstanding. They're mission- and customer- focused and do whatever it takes to get the job done."

One cost-saving initiative involves new procedures for dispatching test support vehicles and tracking fuel usage by test customers. Whereas these expenses were formerly absorbed by the test center's overhead funds, the cost is now billed to test customers. The initiative has saved \$75,000 in fuel and mileage costs and the same concept is being applied to consumables like wire or cable used to prepare test sites and equipment.

"The status quo is never good enough because the world doesn't stop turning," Cavedo said. "There are always ways to improve effectiveness and efficiency, save program managers money and get better, more accurate data to decision makers in a timely manner."

Background

Cavedo will celebrate his 25th year in uniform in December, but his affinity for the Army goes back much further.

"I like to tell people I've been in the Army for almost 43 years," he said. "My dad was career military, and I was born on Fort McClellan, Ala. I think our family moved 17 times by the time I graduated from high school."

Having graduated from the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe high school in Mons, Belgium, Cavedo returned to the states for one semester at North Georgia College before deciding to follow his father's footsteps. He enlisted in the regular Army, after which he went

to the Defense Language Institute to study Spanish and then assigned to Fort Clayton, Panama, as a military police (MP) officer. He also attended MP investigations school.

"I was a civilian-clothed, pimply-faced, 20-year old MP investigator," Cavedo recalled. "I ran around Panama in my Crockett and Tubbs-style guyabera and slacks and loafers with a .38 on my ankle."

It was exciting, but Cavedo had greater ambitions. He returned to college in the states, and in 1991 graduated from the University of New Mexico, at which time he got his commission as an infantry platoon leader. He served as an infantry executive officer in Germany and at Fort Lewis, and then was accepted into the Special Forces, which saw him deployed to Haiti in the vanguard of Operation Uphold Democracy in 1994, followed by numerous deployments throughout central and South America. After attending the Command and General Staff College, he continued in the special operations command as an acquisition officer and assistant product manager. He was sent to both Iraq and Afghanistan in this capacity, and, after transferring to the Army Evaluation Center (AEC), in September of 2007 he returned to Afghanistan as team chief for a Forward Operations Assessment (FOA) team. It was from AEC that he was tapped for command of CRTC.

Cavedo, who is accompanied by his wife and four children, says that his family has successfully immersed themselves into an interior Alaskan way of life.

Command Philosophy

"It's simple: respect and loyalty to your people and organization and carrying out the lawful orders from your superiors no matter how difficult," Cavedo said. "As a leader, many times you are required to make tough and unpopular decisions. But if you have demonstrated respect and loyalty to the people you are requiring to accept tough and unpopular decisions, you are much more likely to get them to follow. People and organizations can spot a selfish, self-serving leader a mile away."

In the winter test season, working at CRTC entails working long hours in extremely harsh weather. The test

center has a policy that prohibits more than two consecutive days of leave without command approval during the coldest months that constitute its prime time for testing, and summer months are spent maintaining and repairing support vehicles and test infrastructure worn down by the extreme winter weather. Even repairs like re-leveling a meteorology building that has settled into the ground as a result of repeated freezes and thaws are conducted by heavy equipment operators, test officers and members of the meteorology team.

"Because of our remoteness, and because of many competing demands from the many other U.S. Army Alaska tenant units, it is not always possible to get the necessary, timely support from the department of public works to work on these types of projects," Cavedo said. "Approved self-help orders and CRTC's rugged professionals going above and beyond their regular duties enable us to remain mission ready."

Protecting the workforce from the danger associated with evaluating weaponry and experimental equipment is a vital aspect of management at any test facility, but is particularly challenging at one that conducts tests in extremely inhospitable winter weather. Cavedo strives to keep safety at the forefront of the CRTC crew's minds, and has even ordered 15-minute safety stand-downs in which he has addressed the far-flung workforce on the range by radio.

"I wish I could take credit for it, but it is the CRTC workforce that is responsible for our safety record," Cavedo said. "We have a very well-trained and seasoned workforce overwhelmingly comprised of Alaskans with years of experience living in this very harsh climate."

Cavedo points out that the terrain in winter closely resembles that of Afghanistan, Korea and Bosnia, and that world affairs can send the Army to somewhere entirely unexpected at a moment's notice. The destination of the next deployment could well be somewhere else that gets extremely cold, making the preparation for operations in such conditions even more critical. Yet Cavedo knows from long experience that the Army is in a constant state of flux and that



Cavedo has aggressively marketed CRTC within both the Army and the greater community by making sure CRTC's efforts are briefed to Army leaders and showcased at community events like the Delta Regional Fair. He also instituted the use of Facebook to interact with the community. "It is easy to be excited about something as phenomenal as CRTC," Cavedo said. "I believe in it and the relevance of this mission."

CRTC must constantly market its capabilities and value to perpetuate its functions.

"Project managers and assistant project managers rotate every two years, and Department of the Army civilians change positions, too," said Cavedo. "Just because you briefed them 18 months ago doesn't mean the same leadership is there now. We have to keep CRTC's relevancy in the forefront."

The marketing effort extends beyond the esoteric realm of the Army bureaucracy, too. Cavedo is keenly aware of CRTC's venerable 61-year history in Delta Junction, and that the test center, one of the community's largest employers, has a mutually beneficial relationship. In addition to continuing traditional community involvement such as support for the regional fair and its mud bog races, Cavedo has actively used new social media to raise awareness about CRTC. Under his guidance the test center runs a frequently updated Facebook page, for example.

"It is easy to be excited about something as phenomenal as CRTC," Cavedo said. "I believe in it and the relevance of this mission. Soldiers in Alaska get the same equipment and vehicles that Soldiers in the southwest do. The gear has to work for Soldiers wherever they are. There are many places in the world that get as cold as CRTC does."



Cavedo points out that the terrain in winter closely resembles that of Afghanistan. "The gear has to work for Soldiers wherever they are," he said. "There are many places in the world that get as cold as CRTC does." (Photos by Mark Schauer)



Safety is a prime concern of Cavedo's. He credits CRTC's employees for the excellent safety record. "We have a well-trained workforce overwhelmingly comprised of Alaskans with years of experience living in this -harsh climate."



Cavedo believes that respect and loyalty to your organization and its people are the cornerstones of good leadership. "People and organizations can spot a selfish, self-serving leader a mile away," he said.

*Next Outpost
deadline
is noon
September
30th*

Alaska test center prepares for busi

by Mark Schauer

It is vital that all military equipment work wherever in the world American Soldiers need it, and even a cursory examination of our nation's history shows that extreme cold is a weather condition American troops have had to contend with more than once.

From Korea to Afghanistan, the lives of American Soldiers depend on functioning equipment in inhospitably frigid environments, and nowhere else in the world can provide extreme cold weather testing like the U.S. Army's Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC), in Delta Junction, Alaska. CRTC is a subordinate command of Yuma Proving Ground in southwestern Arizona, which is responsible for evaluating equipment in extreme desert, sub-Arctic and tropical environments.

The range of conditions present at CRTC is unimaginable to much of the world's population. The highest summer temperatures have been as much as 150 degrees warmer than the deepest cold of winter. The longest summer days have nearly 23 hours

of daylight, while the winter solstice sees the sun for less than five hours. Close to the Arctic Circle, CRTC is the premier site for punishing tests of military equipment in severe cold, and this coming winter will have plenty of activity.

"We're going to have a busy season this year," said Greg Netardus, chief of the test operations division. "This is probably the busiest test season of the five years I've been here, and last year was very busy. Most test officers will be involved with more than one test, and some will run three or four."

"I believe in overall work hours we'll be about where we were last year, which was our biggest year in recent history," agreed technical director Jeff Lipscomb. "It'll be very busy, but that's why we're here."

Though this season's 16 scheduled tests cover a wide variety of military equipment, from a portable see-through-the-wall radar system for infantry Soldiers conducting house-to-house searches to a long-term test on the environmental effects of spent ammunition in soil, appearances by combat vehicles like the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain

Vehicle (M-ATV) and the Stryker MGS constitute the most prominent of the evaluations. These and other tests are more detailed and data-intensive than tests in recent years, which is prompting CRTC to seek as many as 35 temporary workers this season, about double the number that were hired last year. As soon as the cold weather hits, each of the vehicles will be put through its paces in more than 2,000 miles of mobility missions, pausing only in deep winter to conduct at least six evaluations per vehicle of heater performance and cold starts in punishing -50 Fahrenheit weather, a full 25 degrees colder than many combat vehicles are currently rated to operate. In the meantime, however, CRTC's crew is busy preparing for the coming test season while the weather is still mild.

"A lot of people think we're off in the summer," said Lt. Col. John Cavedo, CRTC's commander. "That is far from the truth. Summertime is far from downtime at CRTC. We reset, refit and prepare for the next winter."

Preparation

Testers covet CRTC for its ability to put their item through its paces in extreme cold in a natural environment. But that very capability brings challenges to test preparation. Foremost among the tasks in summer is arranging the shipping of test items. Since Alaska cannot be reached by land without passing through another country, large items like combat vehicles typically arrive in the state by barge, and can only make the journey using companies that are equipped to handle secure items. Shipping test ammunition to CRTC involves similar challenges, and receiving even innocuous items can be difficult in winter. The nearest major city to CRTC, Fairbanks, with a population of about 35,000, is about



Russell Hollembaek prepares a trench for Sonic Detection and Ranging (SODAR) station as the ground freezes to depths exceeding 100

one hundred miles away, and most of the journey is over a two-lane highway prone to ice and snow. Further, bears and moose can make traversing the road more dangerous during winter's short days. As such, CRTC attempts to stock up on necessary supplies in advance of inclement weather whenever possible. This is not an easy task: Aside from the difficulty of knowing which spare parts might be necessary on an item that has never before been tested in extreme cold, testers also don't want to hoard materiel that might be needed in theater.

Despite these hardships, CRTC personnel can negotiate the weather



Accurate data is important in every test, and summer is an ideal time to recalibrate CRTC's sophisticated equipment after a harsh winter of use. Here, instrumentation engineer Dan Fox calibrates a Doppler radar system used in missile tests. "This would be possible in winter, but much more difficult," Fox said. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



Maintenance chief Todd Zachgo inspects the hydraulic displacement pump and other mechanics are responsible for the upkeep of CRTC's fleet of over 40 wheeled and tracked generators used on remote parts of the range.

Best winter testing in memory



...an electrical conduit leading to one of the CRTC meteorology team's three new stations. Any type of construction is difficult or impossible to complete in winter, when the ground is frozen.

whenever necessary. When an axle on a test vehicle failed during a test last year, for example, the item's normal supply chain was unable to provide a replacement in a timely way. CRTC testers turned to their counterparts in Yuma for assistance, who expedited shipping of a replacement. It arrived at CRTC in a relatively fast nine days, and the vehicle maintenance team worked all night to install it. Since the testers had altered the schedule to continue sub-tests that didn't require the vehicle to be mobile, after the repair the test resumed with a net loss of only one test day. CRTC test officers constantly apprise their customers of

events that could impede testing, and strive to have contingency plans in place to cope with such potentialities.

In addition to drawing up test plans and environmental impact statements for coming tests, test officers spend the summer studying their test items' performance statistics from other test centers, and sometimes travel to observe these tests in progress. Summer also presents the only opportunity to renew professional certifications and complete mandatory annual training, as well as take a vacation: when the winter



Test officer Dave Hoffman checks a collection bottle on a berm that will be used in an upcoming long-term test of the environmental effects of spent ammunition in soil. This year's winter test schedule is slated to be the busiest in recent memory, necessitating as many as 35 temporary workers, about double the number that were hired last year.

test season starts, CRTC employees are prohibited from taking more than two consecutive days of leave without command approval.

Range maintenance

Extreme cold is a coveted commodity at CRTC, and in the winter CRTC test officers scrutinize weather conditions at several microclimates within the range to take advantage of the lowest temperatures, moving vehicles and test items from place to place as necessary. As such, test officers are excited that it is expected to be even colder than usual. Yet any type of construction, be it berms or electrical conduits, culverts or roads,

is difficult or impossible to complete when the ground freezes.

"The ground is like concrete in winter," said electronic technician Wayne Robertson. "The freeze reaches down about 10 feet."

Further, the long summer days routinely result in weeds that untended can grow to six feet in height. This spring had heavier-than-usual rainfall, too, which resulted in a particularly heavy infestation of growth.

"We are setting up the ranges and ensuring that all surveying points and artillery targets are good to go," said test officer Isaac Howell. "This

(See Alaska prepares on page 7)



...removing fluid tank from a snow sweeper. Three other tracked vehicles, and also maintain elec-



Cold weather testers rely on CRTC machinists like Sam Porter (above) not only for the production of common items like wooden targets and metal placards, but also to fabricate replacement parts that aren't available on the market and modify equipment to meet specialized needs.

Viewpoint

With this season's schedule slated to be the biggest in recent memory at CRIC, many people from YPG will be travelling north to support tests. To help these people find some good food during their stay, we asked CRIC employees, "What is a good restaurant for CRIC visitors?"



Diedre Harper, analyst: The Snow Hook is good. They have seafood, but it isn't all fried. They smoke or grill a lot of the food. On Sundays, they have a very nice buffet-style brunch. I like their prime rib, even though I'm not much of a prime rib person.



Joe Pierson, test planning manager: For all-year round, I would say Pizza Bella. It has good homemade pizza and has a little bit of variety with Italian and Greek dishes. They have pita and gyros sandwiches that are good. The Snow Hook is good in the winter and the Clearwater Lodge has a nice bar atmosphere."



Tina Seward, budget analyst: The Trophy Lodge has prime rib night on Fridays, and for around \$20, you can count on getting soup, salad, vegetables, drinks and a piece of meat the size of your plate. I think it is the best prime rib I have had in the interior of Alaska. As the name suggests, there are lots of mounted trophies on the walls: moose, sheep, bears and caribou. There is also a bar for after dinner.



Wayne Robertson, electronic technician, TRAX: The Trophy Lodge. It is cafeteria style, and on Tuesday nights, for \$28 there is an all-you-can eat feast: steak any way you want it and shrimp as big as my thumb. There are even crab legs and all the trimmings, your drinks, everything. You won't leave hungry.



J.D. Hurst, maintenance control clerk: In the summer, the best is the Buffalo Center Drive-In in Delta Junction. It is a treat to go there in good weather: we all spend too much money there. During the winter, I would say go to Poor Boys. It is a diner and has down-home southern cooking in good quantities.



Sgt. 1st Class John Schnering, test NCO: I like the dining facility at the Bolio Lake Complex when it is operating. Whatever is in the main line is good. The last time I ate there, I had breaded veal with mixed vegetables and a salad for only \$4.25. You can't beat it.

Club helps mothers of pre-schoolers

by Mary F. Flores

When you're about to become a mother for the first time, things can be overwhelming with preparations for the new arrival. New mothers may become anxious, having many questions about the infant on its way.

To help new or expecting mother's feel welcome in the Yuma Proving Ground community, Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) meet every other Friday at the Post Chapel Annex. This group meets to plan activities, network, offer support to one another, and hold occasional baby showers, and also to socialize and enjoy a good meal while their content toddlers play nearby. However, with the antiquated baby equipment the chapel had in its inventory, mothers had to haul their own baby equipment from home for each meeting. Some of the parents saw a need to replace worn out playpens, booster seats, swings and other items for the children's safety.

Coming to their aid was the YPG Chapel by purchasing several items to accommodate the attendees at the MOPS meetings and then, using them in the toddler daycare area during Sunday services and bible study.

There are many activities MOPS participates in to support Soldiers and their families. This past summer, the group conducted its annual back-to-school supply drive. Children were provided with writing paper, pencils, notebooks and other school necessities.

As every parent knows, children outgrow their clothing faster than it wears out, so MOPS held a clothing

exchange recently. At this event, mothers take the outgrown clothing and toys to the chapel. They divide donations into sections by age group. Other mothers are welcome to take whatever they need.

"This is one of our biggest activities that takes place twice a year, and mothers don't necessarily need to bring anything to participate," said Martha Jones, co-leader for MOPS. "There is no charge and what's left over is donated to the Child Development Center. Our next clothing exchange will take place next year in January."

As the holidays approach, MOPS is in the planning stages to bake hundreds of cookies and other goodies to be distributed among Soldiers throughout the proving ground. In addition, MOPS will assist the chapel with "Operation Christmas Child" to gather supplies and toys for underprivileged children while sharing Christian teachings.

"Our group is a world-wide, Christian based, non-profit organization to administer and assist mothers," said Jones with a smile. "Whether you're a mother-to-be or not, new to the community or would like to make friends, we welcome everyone to join. Usually we have at least 25 mothers with 25-30 children at our meetings, which is great."

For more information, or if you would like to donate items to the MOPS organization, contact Martha Jones or Jessica Porras at YPG-MOPSGroup@gmail.com. Donated items can be dropped off at the chapel, or call 328-3465 for more information.



Martha Jones (left) co-leader for MOPS, gets help from Chaplain (Maj.) Douglas Ball, his wife, Sarah and son, Levi, as they prepare the new baby and toddler equipment they received through a donation from the Post Chapel. (Photo by Mary Flores)

Civilian of the Quarter (Continued from pg. 1)

YPG and the other ranges will be around long after I have retired," he said.

He considers this process quite an accomplishment. To view a system go from the drawing table into development, then delivered and actually collecting data on items in flight, is almost like when you built something as a child. As one ages, he said, this same thing is handed to your children and their children.

With over 21 years in civil service, Kiser says one of his biggest challenges is staying current in today's technology. "In my job, I try to bring radar systems up to a level where they meet or exceed the expectations of customers and test directors," said Kiser. Another aspect of the job he finds exciting is seeing the job completed while fully satisfying the customer.

Kiser, who served seven years in the Army, has been at YPG for a total of 15 years. He came here after working at both the Electronic Proving Ground at Fort Huachuca and Kwajalein Islands Missile Range.

Alaska prepares *(Continued from page 4 & 5)*



From left to right, CRTC employees Dan Wozniczka, Garry Garner, Wayne Robertson and Russell Hollembaek use heavy machinery to lift a meteorology building onto steel support beams. Alaska's freezes and subsequent thaws often cause structures like this to sink into the ground. "Because of our remoteness and many competing demands, it is not always possible to get the necessary, timely support from the department of public works to work on these types of projects," explained CRTC commander Lt. Col. John Cavado. "Approved self-help orders and CRTC's rugged professionals going above and beyond their regular duties enable us to remain mission ready." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

is not a static environment. A lot of time is spent pre-prepping targets and checking trail systems for vegetation growth."

Another important summer project for the staff is sealing cracks and performing other maintenance work on CRTC's cold weather test track, a four-person job. During test season, test officers intentionally put water on portions of the track to create ice pads to test vehicle traction. If cracks are not fixed in summer, melting water will seep in and heave the asphalt when it refreezes. The track was opened in 2005 and built to have a five-year lifespan.

"It has met its design life, and by Alaska standards it is still in very good shape," said test officer Adam Gould. "For combat vehicles, it is without a doubt one of the flattest and nicest roads you'll find in the state."

The sophisticated and sensitive instrumentation that CRTC personnel use to measure performance data on items under test is not immune to the effects of harsh cold, either, which makes recalibrating instruments another important summertime project.

Met Team

Cold Regions Test Center's ranges are a veritable outdoor laboratory, and weather data is critical to ensuring successful testing in cold weather. CRTC's nimble meteorological team relies on sophisticated instrumentation to accurately forecast conditions across the range's several microclimates, and summer is the prime season to maintain and upgrade this equipment. This year, the met team completed the installation of three Sonic Detection and Ranging (SODAR) stations that can gather wind data at altitudes as high as 10,000 feet, replacing the need for weather balloons for these relatively low altitudes. They also replaced infrastructure like towers, and outfit-

ted them with new or re-calibrated instruments.

Aside from adding to their inventory of sophisticated equipment, the met team also spent the summer doing necessary maintenance to the buildings that house their operations. One small building had sunk significantly off plum from repeated freezes and thaws of the ground beneath it, a problem that was solved with some big equipment and several pairs of hands to lift it onto steel support beams.

"When we're doing tests in extreme cold, we can't run our equipment without a heated building," said Garry Garner, an electronic technician for the meteorology team. "This and the other locations need to be able to be occupied on a moment's notice."

The met team also intends to construct a permanent firing lane that will put instrumented towers every 500 meters to collect crosswind data for direct fire weapons systems.

Vehicle maintenance

CRTC's fleet of over 40 wheeled vehicles and 20 tracked vehicles to support testing, including the only two M88 heavy recovery vehicles in the state of Alaska, sees rigorous duty during the harsh winters. The workhorse of the fleet is the versatile Small Unit Support Vehicle (SUSV), an articulated, tracked vehicle that can negotiate deep snow, and even float. Responsibility for all of these plus the many electrical generators used in remote areas of the range rests with three mechanics in the vehicle maintenance shop.

"These vehicles are driven in nasty weather over rough terrain all winter," said mechanic Rance Lentz. "In the spring and summer, we have an opportunity to fix them. Everything from changing undercarriages, tracks, drive trains, radiators, fuel systems, glass; you name it, we do it."

The extreme variations in sum-

mer and winter temperatures mean the vehicles' oil, lube and antifreeze must be changed for seasonal use, on both fleet vehicles and test vehicles. Whenever possible, fiber hoses are used in lieu of their more common rubber counterparts, which become brittle in extreme cold. Rubber hoses need to be carefully monitored and replaced throughout the winter, as do vehicle wheels and tracks. Last year, not a single tracked vehicle lost a track in the field, a testament to the staff's keen eye for maintenance. Last winter the crew did a limited installation of new composite rubber road wheels on the SUS-Vs, and noticed dramatically extended tread life. Four of the most heavily used SUSVs received full compliments of the new wheels this summer, as well as new composite rubber tracks.

Support services

CRTC's mission would be impossible for test officers to carry out without functioning equipment. Fortunately, the installation has a versatile support staff to support their needs. CRTC's machine shop is capable of producing an astonishing variety of items, from wooden targets and metal placards to duplicates of mechanical parts that are no longer commercially available and large skis to attach to items for transport across snow. The shop has even transformed ordinary shipping containers into insulated, carpeted portable office quarters with central heat and barred windows for use on the test range in winter.

One fabrication project this summer was a hydraulic cooling fluid tank for a sweeper used to clear snow, gravel and debris from the track before a test to ensure precise data. The sweeper came equipped with a 15 gallon tank, which was extremely inadequate for CRTC's specialized needs. Not having sufficient cooling capacity put the sweeper's pumps

and other important parts at risk of overheating and catastrophic failure. To remedy the problem, the machine shop fabricated a 200 gallon tank as a replacement, with the additional feature of a bolted compartment to access the tank for cleaning—a commercially available tank would have to be cut open for this purpose.

"This is fairly typical of the refitting we do in this shop," said machinist Sam Porter. "Not everything we need is commercially available for our unique test needs."

The machine shop has also been making things like a steel conveyor roller system for their own shop, which will be used to bring in large rolls of steel and other heavy objects without having to hand carry them.

"These things are being done to improve our efficiency throughout the year," explained Kyle Anderson, chief of the test support division. "This goes beyond refit and reset."

Always preparing

Summer ends quickly at CRTC: most years the first snow is on the ground by the end of September. But preparation doesn't end there, or even when the test season begins. Test planning manager Joe Pierson is already doing preliminary planning for test events in the two seasons following this one, all in support of Soldiers and the critical mission of ensuring their equipment works in any feasible condition.

"We have a very well-trained and seasoned workforce," said Cavado. "It is absolutely phenomenal what these folks do to support the CRTC mission in every season of the year."

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YPG commander pays tribute to POW/MIAs at American Legion Post 19 recognition ceremony

On Friday, September 17th, YPG commander Col. Thomas Payne marked National Prisoner of War/Missing In Action Recognition Day by serving as the keynote speaker at a ceremony held at American Legion Post 19 in Yuma. Above, Payne tells an audience of about 100 that every Soldier is entitled to the certainty that they will never be forgotten. "Our obligation as a nation is to fully account for the servicemen and women who do not return from the field of battle," he said. "This pledge is one that should not, cannot and will never be forgotten." He also asked the audience to remember the families of those missing from past wars. "For them, there were no joyous reunions, not even the solace of a flag-draped casket and the somber sound of taps," he said. "There were no graves to visit and no peace from gnawing questions that last a lifetime." After the ceremony, Payne talked with members of the audience, including former Yuma city councilman Richard Ortega (right). (Photos by Mark Schauer)

