

Packing parachutes takes exacting touch



PHOTOS BY MARY FLORES

Master Sgt. Alan McCollum, test parachute program manager, demonstrates the procedure of packing a parachute, paying close attention to detail.

Packing parachutes – for people and heavy cargo

By Mary F. Flores

Editor's Note: This is the third part of a four part series.

When a test jumper steps out of an airplane at altitudes ranging up to 25,000 feet, he or she must be physically fit and fully trained, but success is also affected by something else — a properly packed parachute. The tedious hours spent packing parachutes and ensuring that all equipment is fully operational is critical.

For the test jumper, having stamina and remaining physically fit is not only the healthy thing to do but an Army requirement. Every morning at the crack of dawn, Soldiers go through a detailed physical fitness regimen. In accordance with Army regulations, they set out on a two-mile run, followed by gym conditioning in preparation for a hard day's work.

"All test jumpers are highly skilled Soldiers and must have completed several levels of intense training," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Prager, non-commissioned officer in charge who oversees two sections to include the personnel parachute packing section and the heavy cargo parachute packing section. "It is at these schools where the test jumper learns the skills needed to rig, pack and jump out of

airplanes." All parachutes that are packed, he said, must pass inspections by a certified individual who has been trained on packing various types of parachutes.

From personnel parachutes that range in size to 32 feet diameter to larger cargo parachutes that range between 64 and 100 feet in diameter, packing section personnel keep busy each day packing hundreds of parachutes in preparation for the next mission.

No matter the type of parachute, test jumpers pay close attention to detail as each chute is painstakingly packed with intricate folds. On an average work day, 25 personnel parachutes can be packed by one individual, while cargo parachutes require up to three individuals, taking up to one hour per parachute.

Always ensuring safety comes first, three separate inspections are conducted on each parachute. After each thorough inspection, the inspector signs his or her name in a log to certify the inspection. Upon completion, parachutes are moved to a "ready for issue" room where they are kept in a locked cage with two separate locks for security. In addition, a fourth and final visual inspection of the parachute is conducted by a jump master prior to a jump after it has been see **PARACHUTES** page 9

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new logo
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New rock wall offers
vertical challenges
to keep in shape
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Viewpoints asks:
What's your
favorite book?
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YPG logo more focused

By Chuck Wullenjohn

Symbols are powerful in communications and, with this principal in mind, Yuma Proving Ground's official logo has undergone an update roughly every 10 years in past decades.

Col. Reed Young's first several months as YPG commander have been a blur of activity and one of his many thrusts was to redesign the logo, with the goal of updating its appearance, making better use of colors and proclaiming YPG's expansive test mission.

"The YPG logo is displayed in thousands if not hundreds of thousands of locations," said Young, "and it has a great deal of impact on people, whether conscious or sub-conscious. My intention was to improve the overall aesthetics of the logo, which means the font, shape, colors and shading, and to make it modern both in visual and technical terms."

The most significant logo change is that the letters "YPG" are displayed in the color blue, rather than the

green used in the past. Though YPG is an Army installation with the mission of testing weapon systems and munitions for customers, most of whom hail from the Army, YPG's customer base is extremely diverse, with customers coming from all the other military services, as well as friendly foreign nations, law enforcement agencies, and private companies. Additionally, the people who work at YPG come from a variety of organizations.

"No one color means 'everybody,'" admits Young, "but blue is the most generic color we could think of to represent the greatest population set. Plus, it goes well with the gold in much of the rest of the logo."

The Army Test and Evaluation Command chose the same color, blue, for the command's name on its logo several years ago, making the new YPG logo complementary in nature.

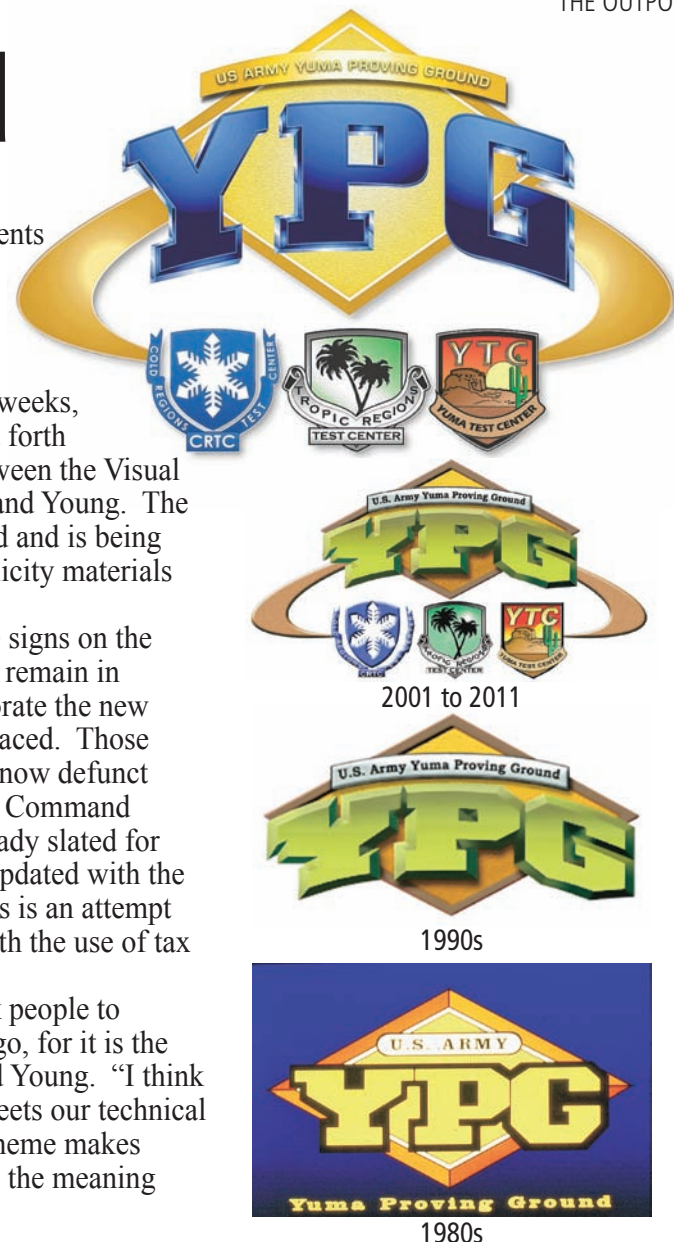
"YPG consists of three test centers, so selecting desert colors would not realistically show the breadth of what we do," he said. "The new logo highlights the individual logo of each of our test centers, which I'm proud to incorporate. YPG is responsible

for testing in a wide variety of environments which the logo encompasses."

The physical development of the logo took about six weeks, with much back and forth communication between the Visual Information Office and Young. The logo is now finalized and is being incorporated in publicity materials and some signs.

Most serviceable signs on the proving ground will remain in use and will incorporate the new logo only when replaced. Those that incorporate the now defunct Developmental Test Command logo, which are already slated for correction, will be updated with the new YPG logo. This is an attempt to be responsible with the use of tax dollars.

"I respectfully ask people to embrace the new logo, for it is the YPG standard," said Young. "I think it looks great and meets our technical goals. The color scheme makes it attractive and gets the meaning across."



2001 to 2011

1990s

1980s

Fast cable service now available at proving ground

By Yolie Canales

After over two decades of providing limited and slow cable service to Yuma Proving Ground via a microwave feed, Time Warner Cable of Yuma is ready to provide cable service to YPG in a much improved manner.

"With our new fiber optics feed, we are now able to provide a direct link from our Time Warner Cable building directly to the proving ground," said Ricky Rinehart, Time Warner Cable

Southwest Area Manager and General Manager. "The reliability and quality service will definitely be there, for the microwave feed is a thing of the past. The frustration that YPG residents and members of the workforce experienced over the last 20 years is over."

Over 30 miles of fiber optics have been installed by the company to serve YPG, but the cable does not extend into the Kofa Firing Range. Rinehart says this service will begin in the future.

Initially, route identification had

to be conducted from Yuma through the Foothills to YPG before the project could begin. Once the route was established and the necessary permits and agreements were completed, the project got underway in mid-June; however, work had to be stopped immediately due to an archeological issue (a buried wagon wheel) uncovered along the way. Permission was later granted to move forward, providing the crew worked around the finding. With the help of the Arizona Department of Transportation and the Wellton

Mohawk Irrigation District, work was completed 45 days later.

With the new fiber service, digital video, data service and digital phone voice-over services are now available to YPG residents. Rinehart says residents will receive a clearer digital picture, better reliability, video on demand, and the company's switch digital products.

"On the internet side of the house, we're now able to offer increased speed," he said. "On the phone side of the house, reliability is what people will continue to see."

More paramedics, better equipped YPG fire department

By Yolie Canales

A paramedic must be a confident leader who accepts the challenge and high degree of responsibility entailed in the position. They must have excellent judgment, be able to prioritize decisions and act quickly in the best interest of the patient. He or she must be disciplined and able to develop patient rapport. In addition, they are expected to be professional, physically fit, compassionate, and sincere. They must have a genuine love of people and willingness to work with them, for saving lives is what they are trained to do.

This and lots of dedication is what six Yuma Proving Ground firefighters demonstrated in order to complete an intense one year course at Arizona Western College's "Emergency

Medical Services Paramedic Academy" to become certified paramedics. After working weeks up to 72 hours in length in varying forms of shift work at YPG, the firefighters attended classes on their own time, finally graduating early this month.

The YPG firefighters were Jessie Aguirre, Dustin Dinwiddie, Robert Goekler, Tyler Hudson, Andrew Lammel, Michael Lutz and Joshua Onyan. Each was presented with his hard-earned certification and had an official patch pinned by members of his family.

"It took lots of dedication to reach this goal," said Don Kist, chief of YPG's Emergency Services. "This is something they did on their own. It did not cost YPG any money nor did it burden the department, for it was done on their own time."

In the past, YPG had a total of



Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Reed Young congratulates four of the six firefighters certified at the ceremony.

PHOTO BY YOLIE CANALES

six paramedics who staffed the ambulance. Now, with the additional six graduates, the department will be better equipped to respond to life threatening emergencies. "The more

paramedics we have, the better off we are," said Kist. "The YPG community and the surrounding area our fire department responds to will reap the rewards."

THE OUTPOST

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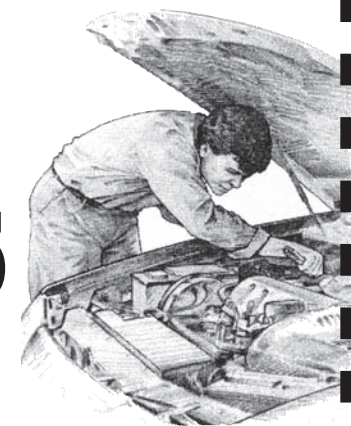
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VIEWPOINTS

Reading a good book can change your life. We asked, "What book has had the biggest impact on you?"



Emma Almendarez
Engineer technician

The book that made the biggest impact on me was "Huckleberry Finn." I was moved by the relationship between the characters Huck and Jim. I read it as an extra credit project when I was in fifth or sixth grade and did a report on it.



Troy Guerra
Test officer lead

"The Road to Glory." It is the true story of the 1966 Texas Westerners men's basketball team that was later made into a movie called "Glory Road." My alma mater, now known as the University of Texas at El Paso, and their basketball coach Don Haskins, recruited and started five African-American basketball players, the first team to do so. They won the division national championship that year and completely broke open the race barrier in college sports. I read the book shortly before the movie came out in 2002.

Mark Schauer
Public affairs specialist

"Great Expectations" by Charles Dickens.

It is the story of an orphan from humble circumstances named Pip who attains riches and opportunities through an anonymous benefactor. The benefactor turns out to be a wanted criminal and Pip loses everything trying to help him. What he loses in wealth, however, he gains in character and appreciation of his true friends.



Mark Webster
Explosive test officer

There are many great books and I don't think I've found my absolute favorite yet, but the most recent one was "Night and Day" by Robert B. Parker. It is part of the Jesse Stone mystery series, the character that Tom Selleck plays in the television adaptations. I like the character and story. It is more realistic than the typical endings: generally he catches the bad guy, but sometimes he gets skunked.



Rebecca Anderson
Staff action officer

While I can't say that one specific book had a profound impact, I can say that reading Steinbeck and Hemingway at an early age launched me on the path to be the extreme reader I am today. I was so fortunate to grow up in a home with a large library and a family that loved reading. I believe I have passed this on to my own children.



Rick Faris
Transportation office

"Luckiest Man: The Life and Death of Lou Gehrig." I'm not a Yankee fan, but I am of Lou Gehrig. I read the book after I saw the movie "Pride of the Yankees." I read mostly biographies, including ones on Roberto Clemente and Charles Barkley. I prefer reading about real life.



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What's Going On In Yuma?

By Yolie Canales

Summer is almost over. Different types of entertainment will soon start popping up. For the athletic and sports minded individuals, there is football, soccer and fall ball within our local community. There are also concerts for adults at different venues in the community for your enjoyment. Check the schedule below and go out and have some fun!

Wed., August 24 from 5 to 9 p.m.:

Dancing and dinner at the American Legion Post 19, 2575 S. Virginia Drive— Proceeds will benefit the Crossroads Mission and the American Legion Building fund. Dinner is served from 5 to 7 p.m.: Spaghetti and salad dinner: \$5. Dancing from 6 to 9 p.m.: \$3. Entertainment by

Snowbird Jammers.

Sat., August 27, starting at 8 p.m. (Arizona time)

Randy Travis live in concert in the Pipa Event Center at Quechan Casino/Resort. Tickets start at \$29. For more information, call 800-585-3737.

Sun., August 28, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Bridal Show and Expo at the Hilton Garden Inn & Pivot Point Event Center, 310 N. Madison Ave. Cost is \$5 in advance; \$7 at the door. Enter to win a free honeymoon package. Fashion show at 12:30 p.m. For more information, call 783-1500, ext. 103.

Every Tuesday from Sept. 6-27

Cooking classes will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn/Pivot Point Conference Center with Executive Chef Jose Candelario. Admission is \$25 per person, per class. For more information, call 783-1500, ext. 103.

Fri., Sept. 9 from 8 p.m.

Comedy show featuring Willie Barcena at Pivot Point Conference Center. VIP tickets \$17; General admission, \$13. Adult refreshments: \$2 and \$3 with specials from 7 to

8 p.m. Call 783-1500, ext. 103, for more information.

Oct. 15 & 16: Quail hunting camp

Location: Yuma area
Hunt Unit: 45A
Hosted by: Yuma Valley Rod and Gun Club and Game and Fish
Contact: Chris Bedinger at cbedinger@azgfd.gov, or call 928-341-4045.

Look for more family fun time events in the next issue of the Outpost under "What's Happening in Yuma."

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George Davis
WEALTH ADVISOR

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Rock wall challenges all comers

A popular attraction for lots of people giving it a try

By Mark Schauer

The best sports combine physical and mental exertion in a compelling way, and technical rock climbing gives participants plenty of both. Thanks to a new rock climbing wall at the YPG Fitness Center, members of the workforce have a safe and fun opportunity to try the challenging endeavor.

“Rock climbing walls have been common in the private sector for the past 15 years or so and are becoming standard in the Army,” said George LaBossiere, director of the YPG Fitness Center. “It is growing in popularity and more and more a mainstream activity.”

Installed in early July, the wall has become a popular attraction, with more than 100 people giving it a try. The wall has also garnered rave reviews from uniformed personnel who regularly utilize it during their daily physical training.

“It’s definitely a good workout,” said Staff Sgt. Matthew Prager. “I’ve started getting competitive with the other guys to see who can get up and down fastest and with different grips and routes. I come here every day.”

“I did a lot of indoor rock climbing in North Carolina when I was stationed there,” added Sgt. Robert Little. “I use it as often as possible.”

Constructed of synthetic material textured to resemble a rock cropping, the 21-foot tall wall has three separate climbing lanes along its eight foot circumference. At the top of the structure for each lane is a belayer, a tensioned pulley system with a metal loop attached to the cable. Climbers hook the loop to a comfortable torso harness obtained from the fitness

center staff. If the climber loses his or her grasp on one of the narrow, irregularly shaped hand and foot grips on their race to the top, the fall back to the ground is slow and harmless.

While its height pales in comparison to even the most modest mountain, summitting the rock wall is not an easy task.

“It takes a tremendous amount of forearm and finger strength to reach the top,” said LaBossiere. “You drive with your legs, but in places you have to muscle yourself up with your upper body. It is more difficult than people think.”

Novice climbers need not be discouraged, however. The fitness center has also acquired a five-foot tall tread wall, which operates something like a vertical treadmill.

“We try to convince people not to give up, but to train on the tread wall first,” said Labossiere.

The tread wall is outfitted with the same style of grips as the rock wall and is propelled downward by the upward motion of the climber. If the climber stops, the wall’s motion does, too. It provides the same level of physical activity as the taller wall and the only risk is a short fall onto a gym mat.

Climbers of all abilities can look forward to a consistently challenging experience on the rock wall, which is outfitted with hundreds of retaining holes for the grips.

“We plan to change the configuration of the wall several times a year,” said Labossiere. “There are endless unique routes we can put on the wall, and each will make it a whole new climb.”

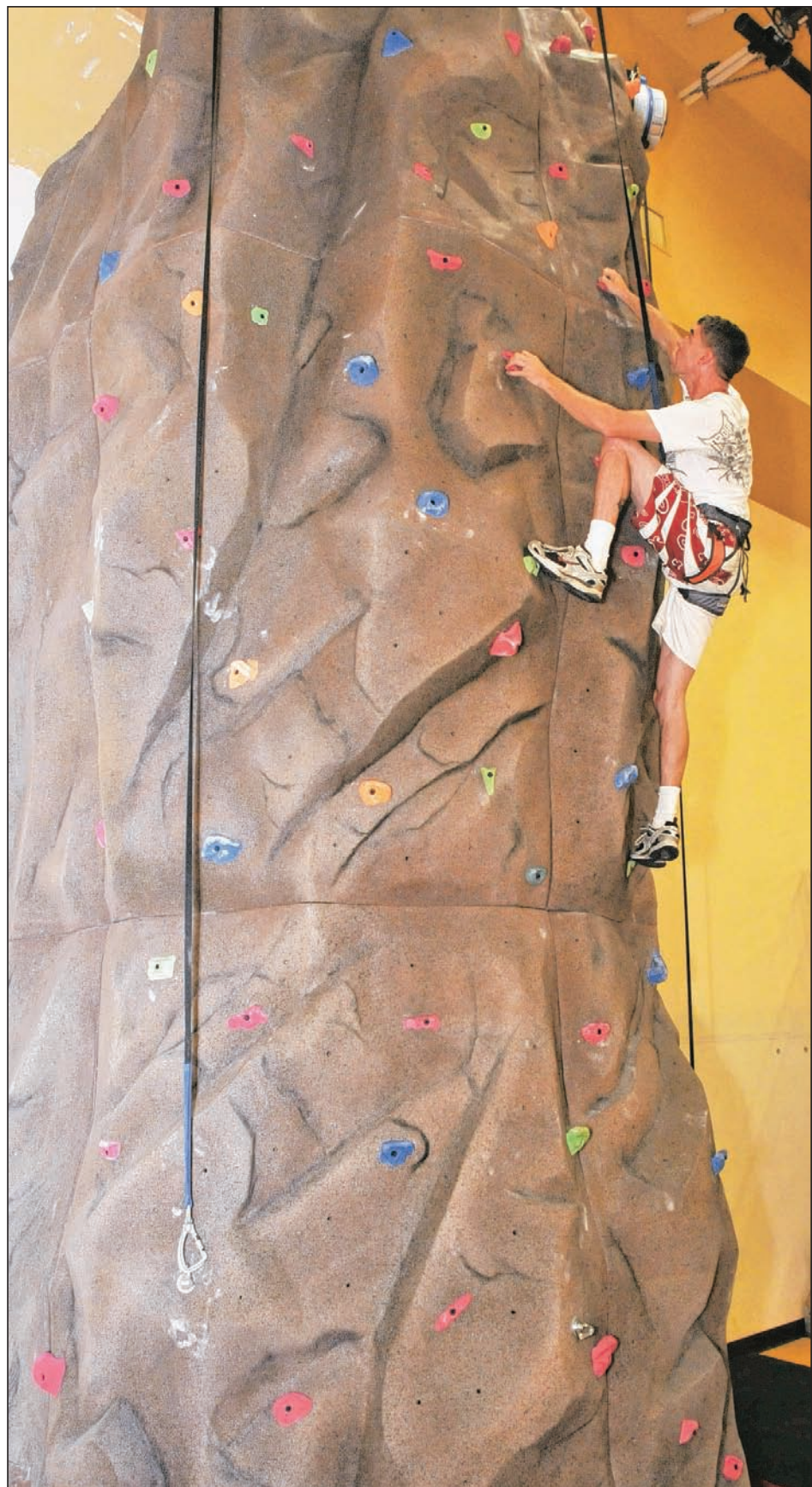


PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

Staff Sgt. Matthew Prager heads for the top of the YPG Fitness Center’s new rock wall. Installed in early July, the wall has become a popular attraction, with nearly 100 people trying it so far.

Working his way up the career ladder

Gene Hunt a true role model after 25 years of service to YPG

By Mark Schauer

Earlier this year, YPG test officer Gene Hunt was in a secure conference room being briefed on a sensitive test that would soon begin. As he listened, his eye caught sight of the trash can in the corner.

“I thought how 25 years ago, I was dumping that trash can in this same room,” Hunt said. “I thought that was a neat bookend.”

The classic American dream is one of hard work, determination and a little luck combining to lift individuals from humble beginnings to new heights of service and self-actualization. A native of Oregon, a teenage Hunt found Yuma Proving Ground a place to prove not only equipment for Soldiers, but himself.

“I came to Yuma to do contracting work with my father in the winter,” Hunt recalled. “We were working concrete, pouring patios and constructing trailer parks. He went home when it warmed up, but I had met a young lady and didn’t want to go back. I married her about the time I got my first job at YPG, so I’ve had both for 26 years.”

Hunt’s first five months at YPG were spent with Aaron’s Janitorial, one of the installation’s first contractors. Soon after he arrived, the base motor pool, which had been operated by uniformed Soldiers and civil service workers, was converted to a contract operation. His janitorial foreman was hired as manager and



PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

Test Officer Gene Hunt (left) started his 25 year service at YPG as a janitor, then worked as a test driver and test coordinator before being promoted to his current position of test officer. His years of experience and can-do attitude made him a natural choice for this demanding position in the aviation branch. “Supporting the warfighter is very rewarding, but the work itself is a reward,” he said.

brought Hunt along with him. Hunt then stayed through three different contractors.

“For 16 years, I drove practically everything on this post with wheels or a track,” Hunt said. “Being in the motor pool puts you at all points across the range. You meet everybody.”

His years of driving experience and can-do attitude made him a natural choice to serve as a test driver on Stryker Combat Vehicle tests in the early years of the last decade. Hunt found driving the most versatile and

technologically advanced armored vehicle in the United States military across 20,000 miles of punishing road courses a memorable experience.

“I think driving the Stryker on test courses was the most fun I’ve had,” Hunt said.

His next position was as a test coordinator for Target Operations, a hectic position setting up ground targets for tests. Not long after, he was offered the opportunity to become a test officer in the booming Aviation branch. He knew it wouldn’t be an easy road, for being certified

as a test officer requires over a year of training, with formal exams and appearances before review boards along the way. But never one to shrink from a challenge, Hunt agreed.

“If you do a good job as a test coordinator, somebody notices,” he said. “I was eager to please and didn’t want to say no, so here I am. It was a remarkable opportunity that pushed me into areas I’ve never been before.”

These days, Hunt specializes in tests of unmanned aircraft, and ensuring a successful test requires a great deal of preparation. YPG boasts 2,000 square miles of restricted airspace and careful, continuous coordination with all tests in progress is necessary to ensure smooth operations. From making work schedules to ensuring that materiel such as fuel is available when needed, Hunt is responsible for every facet of the test. Underpinning everything, however, is a duty to keep everyone on a test site safe, particularly visiting testers who may be unfamiliar with the proving ground’s procedures.

“You can get hurt doing this,” Hunt said. “It is serious business and we take it seriously. Visiting testers are in a strange land, out of their element, and they rely on us to help them be successful.”

Though his job is demanding, Hunt wouldn’t trade it.

“Supporting the warfighter is very rewarding, but the work itself is a reward,” he said. “I knew it would be a challenge, but after 26 years at YPG I thought I was up for it. There is a lot of great support in the Aviation branch.”

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Changes to military education benefits

By Tracy Meyers

YPG Education Center

Military service offers a tremendous array of education benefits that can be used while Soldiers are on active duty or after they leave the service.

The centerpiece of Armed Services Educational Benefits is the GI Bill which encompasses several Department of Veterans Affairs education programs including the Post-9/11 GI Bill, the Montgomery GI Bill for active duty and veterans (MGIB-AD), the Montgomery GI Bill for Selected Reserves (MGIB-SR). The Reserve Education Assistance Program (REAP), Veterans Education Assistance Program (VEAP), spouse and dependents education assistance (DEA), and the Vocational Rehabilitation and Education (VR&E) program.

Over the last few months, there have been significant changes and updates to military education benefits.

Retirement of eArmyU Programs

Effective April 1, all eArmyU programs will retire. This program lasted for almost 10 years allowing Soldiers to participate and complete college programs anytime, anywhere. As eArmyU comes to an end participating students will be transferred from their current Participation Agreements (PA) to the standard Tuition Assistance (TA). Current students may continue to use their PA benefits through March 31, 2012. If you are an eArmyU participant, contact the YPG Education Center at 328-3926, bldg. 501 for the best course of action to complete your degree program by March 31, 2012.

Clarification on tuition assistance (TA) for active duty, Reserve and National Guard
TA provides financial assistance

for voluntary off-duty education programs in support of a Soldier's professional and personal self-development goals. The program is open to nearly all Soldiers including Army Reserve, and Army National Guard on active duty. TA has specific program restrictions to consider when pursuing a college or vocational degree. It can be used for a bachelors degree or up to 150 semester hours of undergraduate credit, whichever comes first. In addition, it is available for a masters degree or up to 45 semester hours of graduate credit, whichever comes first. Standard TA provides up to 100 percent financial assistance toward higher education, not to exceed \$4500 per year and \$250 per semester hour.

Changes to the Post-9/11 GI-Bill

The Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Improvement Act 2010 (GI Bill 2.0) is in effect as of Aug. 1.

G.I. Bill 2.0 will pay all public school in-state tuition and fees; this includes graduate training.

For students attending private institutions of higher learning or foreign schools, the tuition and fee reimbursement is capped at the lesser of net out-of-pocket cost or \$17,500 annually.

College fund payments will now be paid on a monthly basis instead of a lump-sum at the beginning of the term. Those training at half time or less are now eligible for college fund payments.

Reimbursement is now available for multiple licensing and certification tests

Reimbursement is now available for fees paid to take national examinations used for admission to an institution of higher learning (e.g. SAT, LSAT, ACT, GMAT, etc).

Vocational rehabilitation participants may now elect the higher housing allowance offered by the see **BENEFITS** page 11

Chaplain's Corner

A lost cattle dog

By Chaplain Douglas Ball

When I was a boy growing up on a cattle ranch here in Arizona, my dad got us a genuine Australian Blue Heeler cattle dog. She was an amazing animal, yet slightly odd – which meant she fit into my family well. My dad, in his usual corny way, named her ‘Moo,’ since she was, after all, a cattle dog.

Once, when our dog was a young puppy, my parents had to go out of town and my grandparents were nice enough to volunteer for dog-sitting duties. Things went well until they got ready to go to bed in the late

evening and realized that they could not find the puppy. A quick search through the house turned up nothing. They assumed then that the puppy had slipped out the front door at some point, so they moved their search outdoors. With flashlights in hand, they diligently wandered around for 45 minutes calling for the dog.

That would have been okay, if it hadn't been for the dog's name. My grandmother was mortified that she had to run around outside the house yelling ‘Moo, Moo’ at the top of her lungs. She celebrated when they finally found the puppy inside the house though, even if she really hadn't needed to do all that searching

and yelling. But, that's what you do when you lose something valuable; you search for it at all costs. And even if the searching is hard – especially when the searching is hard – you celebrate when you find it.

In Luke 15, Jesus tells three

parables about lost things: a lost sheep, a lost coin, and two lost sons. The message of all three stories is the same. Each of us is valuable to God; he searches for us at all costs and rejoices when we turn to him. He is a God who seeks us.

YPG CHAPEL FALL PROGRAMS

- Kidz Klub (kindergartner): Mondays, beginning, Aug. 22, from 12:30-2:30 at the chapel. There will be games, crafts, songs, teaching and more!
- MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers): Every other Friday, beginning, Aug. 26, from 9:00-11:00 in the Chapel Fellowship Hall. All ladies (and children) are welcome.
- Financial Peace University: Wed.,

Beginning, Aug. 31, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the chapel. Topics to be addressed include: budgeting, paying off debt, and financial planning. The average attendee pays off \$5,300 in debt and builds \$2,700 in personal savings during the 13 week course! Slots are limited so please register ASAP.

• Contact the YPG Chapel at 328-3465 for more information.

PARACHUTES

FROM PAGE 1

donned.

Aerial Delivery Section

In the aerial delivery section, heavy loads are simulated by filled plastic containers used to equal heavy loads they would see in use. For example, depending on weight requirements, the containers are filled with sand or metal to mimic loads of medical or ammunition supplies and vehicles that often make up heavy drops.

For testing purposes, these heavy loads are rigged to a platform made out of aluminum assembled by the riggers. Like snapping together pieces of a puzzle, they construct the platform and secure the load on top. Held by sturdy straps, the loads are then attached to container delivery systems (CDS) and giant parachutes, capable of holding up to 42,000 pounds. These cargo loads are then deployed out of large aircraft, such as a C-130, for performance testing

of parachutes or delivery release systems.

The aerial delivery section is overseen by Staff Sgt. David Minnis, who supervises three Soldiers and up to 15 civilians. He says everyone works cohesively in support of the mission.

“In this shop, almost everyone is cross-designated to operate forklifts, heavy duty cranes and other equipment,” said Staff Sgt. Ian Dimmick, ATF test jumper. “When there is a test mission, depending on what the test plan calls for, we're always busy preparing hundreds of plastic containers and filling them with sand or metal to simulate the weight of various objects.”

High Altitude Low Opening (HALO) jumps

At the ATF facility, the HALO section sees lots of action. Various types of equipment such as parachute systems, oxygen tanks, altimeters and cameras are stored for free fall and high altitude-low opening jumps in

this section.

“I oversee two to three Soldiers and ensure equipment is stored, accounted for and maintained properly,” said Staff Sgt. Aaron Engelman, noncommissioned officer in charge of the HALO section. “Oxygen tanks must be inspected, filled and stored properly to ensure test jumpers are utilizing top notch equipment when performing high altitude jumps.”

To qualify to perform HALO jumps, every jumper is placed in a controlled chamber that simulates high altitudes. The chamber offers jumpers the experience of feeling the effects of hypoxia, meaning the lack of oxygen to the brain.

Inside the chamber, test jumpers feel the euphoric effects and tingling sensations created by lack of oxygen. They must perform simple tasks inside such as reading a map or trying to fit various shapes into a child's toy to evaluate motor skills without the usage of oxygen. Upon completion of the evaluation, jumpers are either referred or disapproved to attend the

MFFS.

During a test mission, which may last from one week to several months, things can become hectic for all test jumpers, with parachutes being folded, packed and inspected.

Equipment such as altimeters, which measure the altitude of the jumper as he or she is descending, is also maintained in the HALO section. In addition, digital and video camera equipment is maintained and prepared for a test jump by designated photographers who record free-fall jumps during missions. Currently there are six test jumpers serving as videographers and photographers to capture footage of free-fall jumps.

“From the standard reserve parachute to newly developed parachute systems, we ensure all equipment is in good working order and properly stored,” said Engelman. “One thing about this job is that our work is always interesting. Testing for the Soldier to ensure they get the best equipment on the battlefield is a critical part of our job.”

Summertime reading



LOANED PHOTO

The YPG Library summer reading program registered nearly 150 children this summer. 129 children read a total of 1,836.5 hours. Three teens read 61 hours while adults read a total of 402.5 hours. This is the second year the adults participated. "We had a great summer reading program this year. We held three classes for six weeks and everyone involved had lots of fun," said Deanna Boyer, reading coordinator. "On the final day, we had 20 adults and 30 children. A great time was had by all."

One stop shop safety recalls

Submitted by YPG Safety Office

To provide better service in alerting the American public to unsafe, hazardous or defective products, six federal agencies (Consumer Product Safety Commission, National Highway and Transportation Safety Administration, Food and Drug Administration, United States Coast Guard, Environmental Protection Agency, and United States Department of Agriculture)

have joined together to create www.recalls.gov – a "one stop shop" for governmental recalls.

Another site covers recalls of consumer products, foods, medicines, cosmetics, meat and poultry products, motor vehicles and car seats, environment products, and boats and/or boating safety. Access the Consumer Product Safety Commission recalls and product safety news directly – <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html>.

**Next Outpost deadline:
Noon, August 25th**

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School is now in session, think safety

Submitted by Safety Office

All over the U.S., the time has arrived when children go back to school. Please be vigilant when driving near schools throughout Yuma County, especially Price School on the proving ground. Drivers and pedestrians both play key roles in accident prevention. Remember to obey posted signage.

When buying school supplies and clothes, think safety. Avoid clothing with drawstrings for children because the drawstring may become caught in playground equipment.

When purchasing appliances for college, ensure they are UL approved. Items such as coffee pots, heaters and other devices

must be equipped with safety features such as automatic shut off devices.

Backpacks are used among all age groups returning to school. Pack light – a backpack should never weigh more than 10 to 20 percent of the student's body weight. Organize the pack to make use of all compartments and pack heavier items closest to the center of the back. Choose a pack with wide, padded shoulder straps. Always use both shoulder straps. Slinging a backpack over one shoulder can strain muscles and may increase curvature of the spine.

Drivers must keep in mind traffic laws and speed limits whenever out on the road. Be alert for reduced speed limits in designated school speed zones.

Watch for school buses. Red flashing lights and an extended stop arm indicate the school bus is stopping to load or unload children. Know and follow state laws that require you to stop.

Keep an eye out for children riding their bicycles or walking in the street, especially where there are no sidewalks. Be alert for children playing and gathering near bus stops and for those who may dart into the street without looking for traffic.

When backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage, watch for children walking or biking to school. When driving in neighborhoods or school zones, watch for young people who may be in a hurry to get to school and may not be thinking about getting there safely.

BENEFITS

FROM PAGE 8

Post-9/11 GI Bill if otherwise eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Break or interval pay is no longer payable under any VA education benefit program unless under an Executive Order of the President or due to an emergency situation such as a natural disaster or strike.

Entitlement which previously would have been used for break pay will be available for use during a future enrollment. This means that if your semester ends December 15 your housing allowance is paid for the first 15 days of December only. Your benefits will begin again when your new semester begins (e.g. January 15) and you will be paid for the remaining days of that month and term.

Students using other VA education programs are included in this change. Monthly benefits will be prorated in the same manner.

If you are training at greater than

half time, your housing allowance is now prorated according to the student's rate of pursuit (rounded to the nearest tenth), i.e. full housing allowance for you is \$1000, you are attending three-quarters time — your housing allowance would be \$800 (80 percent of \$1000);

Housing allowance is now payable to students (other than those on active duty to include spouses of active duty) enrolled solely in distance learning. The housing allowance is half the national average BAH for an E-5 with dependents (the rate would be \$673.50 for 2011);

Non-college degree programs, on-the-job training, and flight training programs are now covered under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

The book stipend is now payable to active duty members.

Post 9/11 GI Bill transferability

In addition to the education benefits offered by the Post-9/11 GI Bill, there is a special provision of the program that allows career service members to share their remaining GI Bill benefits

with immediate family members. The key factor is whether or not the member has used any of his/her GI Bill in the past; only unused benefits can be transferred.

Servicemembers must meet specific criteria to be eligible to transfer their GI Bill benefits. This includes having at least six years of service and an obligation to serve at least four more.

Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MyCAA)

MyCAA is a career development and employment assistance program sponsored by DoD. Spouses of active duty service members in pay grades E1-E5, W1-W2, and O1-O2, as well as the spouses of activated Guard and Reserve members within those ranks can be eligible. Spouses of Guard and Reserve members must be able to start and complete their courses while their sponsor is on Title 10 orders as well. MyCAA program provides up to \$4,000 of financial assistance for military spouses who are pursuing associate degree programs, licenses or credentials leading to employment

in portable career fields.

Army Family Education Programs:

The Army offers the following education programs for its spouse and family members. SOCAD is the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) degree program for the Army. SOCAD consists of colleges that offer associate and bachelor's degree programs on or accessible to Army installations worldwide. SOCAD colleges form networks in which each college accepts credits from all the others. SOCAD guarantees that you and your adult family members can continue toward completion of your degrees even though the Army may transfer you several times. There are also degrees available by distance learning that require no classroom residency. The YPG Education Center has a military representative from Arizona Western College available by appointment to assist active duty, family members, and workforce with AWC academic advising, enrollment, and placement testing.

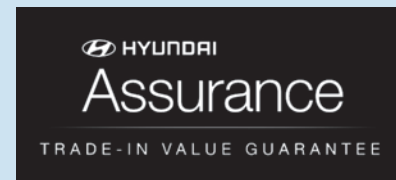
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Bring Your World Into Focus



LASIK... *What's it all about?*

LASIK (laser in situ keratomileusis) is an out-patient surgical procedure used to treat nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism. With LASIK an ophthalmologist uses a laser to reshape the cornea in the front of the eye. This improves the way the eye focuses light rays on to the retina at the back of the eye and subsequently improves your vision.

Does LASIK work?

More than ninety percent of those who have LASIK achieve somewhere between 20/20 and 20/40 vision without glasses or contact lenses. In many cases the need for eye glasses and contacts is reduced significantly or eliminated.

Who is a candidate for LASIK?

Generally speaking a large portion of the adult population can benefit with LASIK. It cannot, however, correct all vision impairments. Before the decision can be made you must have an eligibility exam and consultation. The doctor will ask questions about your medical history and give a thorough eye

exam designed to determine if the procedure is appropriate for your individual case. The doctor will also talk about the benefits, risks, available options, and preparation and recovery associated with the surgery to ensure that your goals and expectations are realistic.

How is LASIK done?

LASIK is an out-patient surgical procedure usually performed in an ophthalmologists surgery suite. After the eye is numbed with a few drops of topical anesthetic a hinged flap of corneal tissue is created using an automated microsurgical device. The surgeon will then use the laser to sculpt the corneal tissue. Upon completion the corneal flap is placed back into position. No stitches are required.

While some patients report some discomfort or pressure on the eye, pain is not associated with this procedure. It is important to remember that the procedure is surgery and you should know the qualifications of the surgeon as well as the technological status of the equipment being used. Like all surgeries, the patient needs advance knowledge.

See Better, *Live Better*

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The Aiello Eye Institute has two locations to serve your needs:

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Yuma**

**11551 S. Fortuna Rd Ste E
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About Dr. Aiello



Patrick D. Aiello, MD

Dr. Aiello received his MD degree from the University of Michigan. After completing both an Internship and Residency in Internal Medicine at the University of North Carolina, he finished a Residency in Ophthalmology at the world renowned Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. He is board certified in both Internal Medicine and Ophthalmology.

In addition to caring for his patients at the Aiello Eye Institute, he is an examiner for the American Board of Ophthalmology, and a clinical instructor for the Midwestern School of Osteopathic Medicine in Phoenix. He is a Senior Flight Surgeon and State Air Surgeon for the Arizona National Guard.

Having performed more than 15,000 surgeries, he is regarded as one of the state's leading eye surgeons.

Dr. Aiello is the only Ophthalmologist doing Lasik and PRK in Yuma, Arizona.

Aiello Eye Institute

Dr. Aiello organized the Aiello Eye Institute in Yuma in order to provide world-class eye care to the community. With a highly trained staff and associates utilizing only the latest technology and equipment, the Aiello Eye Institute provides the areas most comprehensive and patient-centered vision healthcare. Your vision is our mission.

The Aiello Eye Institute has two offices to serve your needs:

- 275 W. 28th Street – Yuma
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