

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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Col. Reed Young shares initial thoughts

by Chuck Wullenjohn

A 25-year Army veteran, Col. Reed Young took over the reins of command of Yuma Proving Ground last week after four years at the Army Research Office in North Carolina. These first days were hectic for him, but he took time out of his schedule to share some of his initial impressions and views of the future.

Q. *You've spent a great deal of time preparing for your assignment at YPG. When did you find out you would be assigned here and what are your first impressions?*

A. I was notified of being slated to come here last September. My impressions so far are fantastic. I visited Yuma on two previous occasions, once about ten years ago for an acquisition commanders conference that lasted about one week and several years later for an airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance test



Col. Reed Young looks forward to his three years at YPG. (Loaned photo)

program. I found the Yuma community remarkable and the YPG staff tremendously competent. Both events went flawlessly and spoke well of the quality of people here. When I

(See Reed on page 3)

Outpost to take new look in next issue

by Chuck Wullenjohn

Yuma Proving Ground's employees have turned to the pages of the Outpost for the past 60 years to gather detailed information about what's taking place at the 1300 square mile proving ground. From descriptions of specific test projects to the latest particulars about child care programs offered to post residents, Outpost reporters have always strived to produce educational and entertaining articles.

But all things change, and the Outpost is undergoing a major revision beginning June 13th.

Since its dawn in 1951, the Outpost has been published using government appropriated dollars, meaning printing costs were paid by the Department of the Army. With the goal of saving taxpayer dollars, things are now different. A contract has recently been inked between YPG and the Yuma Sun to publish the Outpost at no cost to the government. The Yuma Sun has now become the Outpost staff's full partner.

How will the Outpost appear starting June 13th? The format and paper quality will be different, and readers will see advertising from local merchants, for the Yuma Sun will sell advertisements to recoup its costs. Issues will continue to be produced and delivered roughly twice each month and will vary between 12 and 20 pages, depending on the quantity of advertising. Several pages of each issue will contain no advertising at all.

All editorial content – news stories and photographs – will continue to be produced solely by the Public Affairs Office staff. Though future Outpost issues will look different, the content will remain the same. The Outpost will continue to be a YPG product and the editor will be the same person it has been for the last 22 years, Yolanda Canales. Oversight of the contents of each issue, including advertising, is a YPG responsibility and only tasteful

(See Outpost on page 2)

New leader takes command of YPG

by Yolie Canales

On a cool and breezy morning and marching with tradition, Col. Reed Young took command of Yuma Proving Ground from Col. Thomas Payne on Thursday, May 26.

The 26th change of command for Yuma Proving Ground, the ceremony took place on Cox Field and was attended by nearly 200 people. The keynote speaker was David Jimenez, director of the Army's Developmental Test Command (DTC) in Aberdeen, Md.

Young, commissioned in the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps in June 1985, received his Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering in 1986. Upon entering active duty, he was selected for an Army-funded advanced degree program called the Technical Enrichment Program resulting in a tour of duty at Duke University where he earned a Master of Science degree in mechanical engineering (robotics) along with graduate minors in electrical engineering, math, and computer science. Young most recently earned

a Ph.D. from Duke University in mechanical engineering based on research of distributed multi-agent robotic systems.

He is married to the former Norma Alicia Esparza of El Paso, Texas, and they have one son, Brian, 17.

The evening before the change of command ceremony, the 36th Army Band held a concert at the Historic Yuma Theater. Over 500 people were entertained with a variety of melodies including patriotic tunes, jazz, movie themes, and much more.

"Good morning to all and what a beautiful day and beautiful ceremony," said Jimenez as he took the podium. "What a great day for the Army as we bid farewell to an officer who did a fine job for DTC, YPG and the Army. It's great to welcome another fine officer to the DTC family."

Jimenez thanked all the participants as well as the 36th Army Band for a great performance at the concert and for its participation in the ceremony.

Welcoming Col. Young, Norma, and (See Leader on page 8)



David Jimenez, director of the Army's Developmental Test Command hands the YPG flag to Col. Reed Young as he assumes command of the proving ground. (Photo by Mary Flores)

News Notes

Pause for a moment in the midst of chaos

by Chaplain (Maj.) Douglas Ball

Please don't let my wife know this, but there are times that I miss being deployed. Deployment life is simple. You do your job. You eat. You sleep when you can. You start the process over the next day. Between chaotic moments, the days become routine, and there are times to just relax and think.

I like backpacking for the same reasons. Life becomes simple. You walk all day. You eat. You sleep. You wake up and do it again. As long as you have food, shelter, and water, life is good. While walking or resting at camp, there is time to think about life and ponder answers to important questions.

Normal life isn't always like that. We get up early to work-out before spending the entire day at work. Then, we spend our all-too-short lunch break waiting on hold with the DMV and catching up with email before rushing home to help the kids with homework while trying to fix dinner. We squeeze in some evening quality time with our spouse, who is also way too busy and probably gone with one of the kids to ballet practice. Before we know it, we stayed up way too late, and soon the alarm clock is going off way too early so we can do it all again!

This is not good for us. I got tired just writing that last paragraph! We need to make sure that we pause occasionally. We need time to reflect on who we are and where we are. We need stillness and rest.

Psalm 46 talks of calm in the middle of upheaval and reminds us to 'be still and know that I am God.' We cannot find peace in the midst of chaos, unless we pause to recognize that the God of Peace has been with us all along.

Spouses saluted

by Yolie Canales

Military spouses come from diverse backgrounds, demographic areas and age groups, but the one thing they have in common is that they wholeheartedly support the career choice of their husband or wife to defend the nation.

Military Spouse Day has been observed since May 1984 when President Reagan recognized the profound importance of spouse commitment to the readiness and well-being of military members. It is celebrated on the Friday before Mother's Day in the United States. Citizens take this day to acknowledge the significant contributions, support, and sacrifices of military spouses.

Yuma Proving Ground's Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Directorate recently held a celebration that featured hors d'ouvres and refreshments for all military spouses and their families. Over 50 people gathered to honor and pay tribute to military spouses for the hardships they endure to make today's military function smoothly.

What are some of the sacrifices spouses make? Some give up the comforts of home when on an overseas assignment, while others give up their spouses during deployments. Some give up the luxury of decorating their homes knowing they will be there only for the duration of a duty assignment, maybe 18 months to three years, and many sacrifice employment careers. There are situations where families have made over 10 moves in a 20 year military career meaning they are constantly uprooted. Some view this as an obstacle but others see it a challenge they have learned to adapt to, improvise and overcome. They continue to march alongside their spouses.

Of course, every spouse knows this will take place in their lives when they marry their sweethearts, who signed on a dotted line and took the military oath. However you see it, there are sacrifices that must be made by military spouses in order to keep the family together whenever possible.

This year's theme "Celebrating Military Spouses: Team Members in the Army's Success," captures how the mission cannot be accomplished without military spouses. The Outpost salutes all spouses who give so much of themselves!

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Military spouse Ana Estrada slices the ceremonial cake at the Military Spouse Appreciation Day celebration held at YPG. The Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Directorate served refreshments.

BLM needs your help

The Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, is seeking information on the fire around Mittry Lake on May 18. If anyone has photos of the fire or saw anything suspicious going home that afternoon, please call the Interior Department, Yuma Field Office at 317-3200 and ask for either James Stewart or Jeff Moore.

Outpost (Continued from page 1)

ads will be allowed.

The Public Affairs Office is proud to save the government money and looks forward to publishing the Outpost with our new partner, the Yuma Sun. Things change over time and this change promises to be a most positive one.

If an individual wants to place an advertisement in the Outpost, please call David Fornoff at 928-539-6988 or email: dfornoff@yumasun.com.

For more information, you may call Yolie Canales, editor at 328-6143 or email: yolanda.canales@us.army.mil.

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visited while conducting the aircraft test, I never heard the word “no” from YPG. Some of what we asked for was challenging, but all our expectations and desires were met, if not exceeded. The experience was positive and I was excited to come to YPG as commander. I looked forward to it.

Q. *You've been in the Army for many years. What is your leadership philosophy?*

A. It's difficult to boil this down into a nutshell, but I always hearken back to the Army values and the idea of selfless service. There is a greater good in what we do and selfless service speaks to that. My catch-phrase is, “mission first, people always.” A leader has to get out of the office to see what is going on to understand the challenges people face on the job. I feel I have a pretty good understanding of people and the capability to read what is going on. The only way to leverage that skill is to go downrange.

Q. *As commander, are there areas on which you intend to focus?*

A. My initial focus is seeing what's going on and developing an understanding. Once I gather that understanding and find areas in which YPG can become an even greater organization, I'll be able to focus on those things in tandem with the strategic vision I received from senior leaders at our higher headquarters

Q. *When you look back, what portions of your military experience were particularly important in molding you into the person you are today?*

A. Three things stand out, with the first being education. I have been tremendously fortunate in that I have had many opportunities for advanced education in my career. In any job, the more opportunities one has for training, formal education or certification can do nothing but enhance your abilities. The second is mentors. Many people throughout my career have given me the right guidance at the right time, both civilian and military. The third is opportunity. Tremendous opportunities exist in the Army to learn and grow.

Q. *The YPG workforce consists of approximately 3000 people, the vast majority of whom are civilian. In your mind, does this require a different leadership style on your part?*

A. There's always a great deal of discussion about the difference between leading military or civilian employees, but I'm not convinced there is much difference. Some of the mechanisms are dissimilar, but the requirements, qualifications and core requirements are comparable. We want to reward productive, innovative and clever people, as well as provide opportunities to grow and learn to those doing a great job. At the end of the day, the two groups have different rule frameworks, but are much the same in many ways. I've had the opportunity of working with some phenomenal civilians during my career, so I feel comfortable at YPG.

Q. *Communications with YPG's diverse group of employees is important. How do you plan to communicate in the future?*

A. Touching all the people of YPG, as well as those in Alaska and Central America, is quite a challenge, but tremendously important at the same time. I'd love to sit down with everyone in the command but, pragmatically, that's impossible. I plan to communicate in a variety of ways, such as bulk e-mail messages, the Outpost, town halls, and video-



Col. Reed Young (right) received congratulations from a wide variety of people, both civilian and military. Many Yuma community officials attended the ceremony. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

teleconferences, as well as having face-to-face dialogue and getting out in the field as much as possible.

Q. *What is your open door policy?*

A. I'm a firm believer in the chain of command. If possible, people should work with their first line supervisor, then that supervisor's supervisor. Issues and desires should be addressed at the lowest level possible. At the end of the day, however, I want to understand what is going on and fix problems. I won't hesitate to talk to anyone at any time. In that sense, my door is always open.

Q. *On a personal level, your family once had an unusual pet. What took place?*

A. Both my wife and I like pets, but she is a consummate pet lover. A neighbor who was moving to Europe once gave us a very friendly pet dog. It had the most phenomenal disposition you could imagine – both sociable and smart. Some years later, the dog developed a cancerous cyst, about the size of a golf ball, on the upper part of a front leg. The veterinarian recommended amputation, which became our only option. The dog quickly adapted to having only three legs and was happy as a clam. It didn't stop her from doing anything, from jumping up and down to climbing stairs. She lived many years afterward before dying of natural causes. She was an amazing dog and having her was a great experience.

Q. *If you could gather the entire workforce into one room, what would you tell them?*

A. I would tell people to continue to strive for excellence. YPG has direct impact on military operations overseas and on the lives of men and women in uniform. Striving for excellence is something everyone can and should be doing.

School doors close, Youth Center doors swing open for summer camp!



Debbie Rickard, director of YPG's Child and Youth School Services, points at a mobile telescope available for the children at center for their use. They enjoy taking the telescope outside in the evening to gaze at the stars and other planets. (Photo by Yolie Canales)

by Yolie Canales

It's that time of year when school doors close for the summer and doors swing open at Yuma Proving Ground's Child Youth and School Services (CYSS) center from sun-up to sun-down to entertain the community's young dependents during their summer camp.

“We are ready to go full swing and have an awesome and fun-filled 59 days of activities for children ranging from six to 18 years of age,” said Debbie Rickard, director of CYSS. “Our programs include intramural and sports programs that we partner with Marine Corps Air Station Yuma. At the present time, we have enrolled approximately 25 school age kids and 25 middle school teens.”

Each week during the summer, the center will be holding camps. The program kicks-off on Monday, June 6, with a “Summer Splash Luau Bash and Barbecue” at the youth center beginning at 10 a.m. From this day on, activities will include things like roller-skating, tee-shirts from computer design to print, making 3D glasses, swimming outings, participating in an obstacle course at the fitness center, and outdoor camping, right down to an overnight field trip to Sea World and a float down on the Colorado River.

Rickard points out that some programs include a small fee. “School age fees are based on a sliding fee scale for full-day attendance which includes meals and snacks and field

trips,” she said. “However, middle school teens pay only for the cost of field trips. Use of the facility and on-post activities are free.”

The important message that Rickard would like parents to know is that CYSS programs are geared to help children develop and gain social, emotional and cognitive skills. “We have an incredible program that is extremely worthwhile for all,” said Rickard. “First and foremost, parents need to know that CYSS is a safe and fun place to be. Our professional staff is trained to provide the right guidance and basic fundamentals that will help children grow and become responsible adults. In addition, they will find a nice environment with a sense of continuity and care. Rickard said she welcomes input. “We have several parents who are very involved with our programs and volunteer at the center. Input from parents and children is very important to us and is always taken into consideration.”

“I am proud of our center, staff, children and parents,” she said. “The Army does an incredible job with what they provide youth centers and early childhood centers. YPG residents are fortunate to have available at their finger tips a facility that is fully accredited and supported by the Department of the Army.”

For more information regarding the summer camp schedule, call Debbie Rickard at 328-2860 or drop by Bldg. 1102 in the Main Administrative Area.

New leader (Continued from page 1)



Staff Sgt. Victor Torres, YPG medic, presents Mrs. Norma Young with a bouquet of yellow roses as a welcome to Yuma Proving Ground. Young and Col. Payne's wife, daughters and mother were also presented with bouquets of flowers.



The 36th Army Band from Fort Huachuca, Ariz., march on the parade field early in the ceremony. The band also performed a concert at the Yuma Historic Theater for an audience of over 500. They played jazz, patriotic and popular World War I and II musical numbers.



Members of the YPG workforce line up at the Palm Garden Center to welcome Col. Young, his wife, Norma, and son, Brian, during the reception.



Weapons Operations personnel fire two rounds in honor of departing YPG commander Col. Payne's two years in command and three more in anticipation of Col. Young's three years. (Photos by Public Affairs Staff)

From humble beginnings to a bright career at YPG

by Yolie Canales

With the dream of coming to the United States as a young child, Julita Greek, a native of Northern Luzon in the Philippines, had to wait until she turned 30 to have her desire become reality.

Greek, administrative assistant for the YPG commander, has been at the proving ground since 2002 and in the U.S. for 23 years. "I love my job," she said. "The people I work with are talented, friendly, educated and professional. The opportunity to work and live on the installation is something that, as a child, I never imagined."

Growing up in a bamboo house with a thatch roof over her head and within walking distance of the ocean, Greek was the youngest among seven siblings, who in fact, sacrificed a great deal to help her go to college. "Thanks to my brothers and sisters I was able to go to school at the University of Baguio, Baguio City, Philippines, where I earned my Bachelor of Science degree in accounting and, later, worked in the treasurer's office as a tax collector," she said. "Back then, my salary was 20 pesos a day, which, at today's currency exchange rate, would be just under 50 cents."

While working as a tax collector, Greek was given the opportunity to travel with the mayor of her town to attend meetings in Manila. During one of these trips, she decided to visit the U.S. Embassy to apply for a visa, which was denied for the reason that she had no "ties" in the country. However, this did not stop Greek from trying one more time. After a month passed, she made this trip again with the mayor and revisited the embassy. This time she was granted a 10-year multiple entry tourist visa.

With the help of her family, she made the trip to the U.S. after taking a leave of absence with no pay. She visited several friends and relatives in Staten Island, New York. While visiting a former teacher, who was married to a Coast Guard officer, the teacher tried to convince Greek to meet a friend who was an officer as well. Greek, however, was not interested because she was focused on heading to Seattle, Wash., to visit an uncle experiencing ill health. "I visited my uncle who took me to see the sights in Seattle but, unfortunately, he passed away shortly thereafter. I stayed with my aunt a short while afterward as she adjusted to living by herself," she said.

As Greek prepared to head back to the Philippines, which she had come to miss, a cousin asked her to stay a while longer so she could introduce her to a friend. "I decided to stay and this is when I was introduced to another Coast Guard officer, who I married five weeks later," she said. Ron Greek now serves as an attorney at YPG's Judge Advocate Office.

"I truly believe my dream of visiting the United States as a child and doing it many years later was meant to be, for I met my husband. The ironic thing about meeting Ron was that he was the same Coast Guard officer I



Julita Greek, models a traditional fashion for a fancy celebration from the Philippines, her native land. (Photo by Mary Flores)

almost met in Staten Island. How funny is that?"

The couple returned to Staten Island, then moved several more times before finally settling in Yuma in 1997. Their daughter is now a full time student at Arizona Western College.

Greek is grateful for her experiences. "When I was a child, I always looked at everyone living in the U.S. as wealthy, but now, know it is different. There are many opportunities for those who want to help themselves, but you have to work hard and be dedicated to your goals." However, she does not believe that wealth is the most important thing in life. "It's more important to have good health, faith and your family."

*Next
Outpost
deadline is
noon June
2nd*

Team tests vehicles in near-record time

by Mark Schauer

In the worst period of the insurgency in Iraq, employees of Yuma Proving Ground's National Counterterrorism Counterinsurgency Integrated Test and Evaluation Center (NACCITEC) and Combat and Automotive Systems Division (CASD) worked 60 and 70 hour weeks to rapidly test counter-improvised explosive device (IED) technologies.

IEDs were the deadliest threat encountered by American troops in theater, and the troops were particularly vulnerable when travelling in vehicle convoys. Many of the devices tested amidst realistic electromagnetic environments at YPG were found to reliably defeat them.

Once these IED-defeating devices are found effective, however, the testing required to field them is far from over. Any device meant to be installed inside a military vehicle must be tested in conjunction with other electronics inside lest the new equipment cause existing systems to malfunction or perform at lower standards than Soldiers expect.

Boasting the best hot weather testing facility in the Department of Defense, YPG is the perfect location to conduct this testing, and the proving ground's combat systems branch has the expertise to put any upgraded military vehicle through its paces with heavy firing and road course missions.

"From 2007 to now, we have written safety confirmation recommendations for almost the entire fleet of tactical and non-tactical vehicles within the Army, and many for the Marine Corps," said Troy Guerra, combat systems test officer. Guerra said this includes mainstays like the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle, the Stryker Combat Vehicle, the Abrams Combat Tank,



Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) are the deadliest threat encountered by American troops in theater, and multiple branches at YPG work tirelessly to test and integrate IED-defeating technology into combat vehicles. Here, an M1A2 Abrams tank undergoes testing on a YPG road course. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

the Bradley family of vehicles, and the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (Humvee), as well as less commonly known vehicles like the M1200 Armored Knight fire support vehicle and the Small Unit Support Vehicle (SUS-V).

The safety of troops deployed overseas required these entire systems to be evaluated and confirmed quickly, regardless of which vehicle a given IED-defeating system was installed in. Doing so was complicated by several factors, the biggest being time and numbers: initially, 15 different Heavy Brigade Combat vehicles were part of the rapid initiative, most of which had different existing components, reporting requirements, and product managers. To expedite the testing of each vehicle, Guerra and

Ninette LaRose realized a systematic collaboration was necessary. Accordingly, they formed the Platform Integration Management Team with test officers from NACCITEC, Combat Systems, and the Electronic Proving Ground (EPG).

"We started testing together in 2007, and formed this team shortly thereafter," said Guerra. "It was a joint effort."

Working together, the team processed all 15 vehicles by running each on staggered starts through the test regimen every two weeks. This time included efforts by YPG's vehicle maintenance personnel to install and uninstall IED-defeat devices prior to the test and perform repairs. The initiative was completed in a little more than six months, instead of the

30 months that had been projected by the Army.

"None of this would have been possible without the incredible dedication and support of a variety of branches at YPG," said Guerra. "This includes the Systems Test Branch and Automotive Instrumentation Section, as well as our test vehicle operators and data collectors."

Today, a full scope test can be accomplished in as little as six weeks, and the team sees no let-up in the need for rapid testing.

"As technology progresses, the threat progresses also," said Guerra. "Threats are constantly changing, so the systems need to constantly change. This goes beyond just IED defeat."



Any IED-defeating device installed inside a military vehicle must be tested in conjunction with other electronics inside, lest the new equipment cause existing systems to malfunction or perform at lower standards than Soldiers expect. In the last four years, YPG has conducted intensive durability testing of virtually every combat vehicle in the inventories of the Army and Marine Corps, from mainstays like the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle and the Bradley family of vehicles, to less commonly known vehicles like the M1200 Armored Knight fire support vehicle and the Small Unit Support Vehicle (SUS-V). In 2007, the Platform Integration Management Team formed by YPG test officers Ninette LaRose and Troy Guerra fully evaluated 15 different vehicles in six months: one fifth the time the Army had estimated the project would take. Here, an M1A2 Abrams negotiates a 60 percent grade as part of its durability testing.

Viewpoints

What does Memorial Day mean to you?



Kimberly Dikerson, technical writer: Memorial Day reminds me of my dad because he is a retired Army veteran. I remember this day as a celebration with family members and it doesn't go unnoticed, as I grew up in the military lifestyle.



Denise Valenzuela, service order clerk: This day reminds me of the people who have served and fought for our country. One fond memory I have of this holiday as a child, is my father would take the entire family to the beach where we would spend the day having fun!



Rene Painter, word processor: It's a reminder that we need to be thankful for the service men and women who have served our country and kept us free. Also this reminds me that it's almost time for my birthday. My birthday usually lands on the same weekend as Memorial Day and, this year, my birthday falls on the day after. The long holiday weekend will give me the opportunity to spend extra time with friends and family.



Carrie Meisinger, data collector: I think about all the service members and everything they have done for us and our country's freedom. It also reminds me of the families and loved ones of those who served in the military and are still serving and how they cope with it. My father also served in Vietnam, so this day reminds me of him as well.



David Nieto, contract management specialist: This day reminds me of all my family members who serve in the armed forces. My son-in-law, who is actively serving in the Army, just returned from Afghanistan, and my sister is currently serving in Iraq with the Army National Guard. I think about all those people serving our country overseas, and how nice it would be for them to be with their families.



Barry Butz, quality assurance safety consultant: It means after having spent many years in the military, it's time to remember those folks who went on before us and took care of business, so we could all be here today. Being part of this retired military group means a lot to me. I retired from the Navy with a little under 32 years and have been working here at YPG for 20 years. On this special day, the Vietnam Legacy Vets motorcycle group that I belong to visits retirement homes, in addition, we visit burial grounds to place flags and wreaths on the gravesites of our veterans.



Capt. Nickolas Pacella, OIC YPG Health Clinic: I think about the historical context of Memorial Day which is traditionally about our military. For me as a service member and having served overseas, I think about the people who came before me and the conditions they suffered during two world wars, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. This day makes me very appreciative of the service and sacrifices they made for us.



Anessa Little, military spouse: This is a day of consideration for all military men and women for what they have done for us. It is a time to be thankful for those serving our country and spending time with family and friends. We like to get together and have a cookout and remember those who made sacrifices for us.

Memorial Day tribute

by Joseph Raisner, Camp Hill High School Senior, 2004

Editor's Note: In researching Memorial Day information, I ran across this tribute written in 2004, by a high school senior. As I read each word, it said everything I was seeking to publish in honor of all men and women who served and serve our military. As you read through it, I have no doubt in my mind that you will see what the true meaning of Memorial Day is all about.

Every spring we celebrate this holiday called "Memorial Day," which traditionally marks the beginning of summer.

Although the true celestial observance of the changing seasons does not officially occur for another three weeks, this is recognized as the day when all the summer events may officially commence. It is a day when families can congregate for a picnic or a barbeque; it is a day when used car dealers are expected to mark down all their prices; and it is a day when, weather permitting, small communities can provide their citizens with a parade to entertain both children and adults alike.

However, not all Americans today are celebrating this holiday with such spirited enthusiasm. Some families may not be holding that annual barbeque in the back yard. Some children may not be holding their fathers' hand as the band marches past. And some mothers may still be staring at a flag which flies at half-staff. It is to these individuals whom I speak today, empathizing with your grief that a loved one may not be here to celebrate in these festivities. So today, let us take a moment out of the celebrations to reflect on the true meaning of Memorial Day, and the sacrifices that our military personnel make for each and every one of us.

It has been said that one must die so that others may know the full value of life. We are all given only one life to live. It may end in an instant—an instant unfamiliar to one and all. Yet it is because of this certainty of death that we place such a high regard on human life. Were we all able to live forever and experience no losses, we would never be able to fully appreciate the moments in life that make us truly happy.

But just as happiness isn't free, the freedom to live life to its fullest has its costs as well. That's what the members of our Armed Forces do for us: they pick up the check so that the rest of us may enjoy the land in which we live. They fight for our freedom, for the freedom of their fellow human beings, and for the freedom granted to us by the founders of our nation.

Every minute of every day, there is a Soldier somewhere far from home, giving all he has to give for a much higher cause. Likewise, there is always a veteran somewhere, with his fingertips on a war memorial, thanking a fallen Soldier for saving his life years before. These brave Soldiers, Sailors, Fliers and Marines died

(See Memorial Day on page 7)

Mother hawk causes damage



Keeping a protective eye on her young, a mother hawk perches atop meteorological equipment mounted on a tower at the Kofa Firing Range. Without intending to, the hawk repeatedly damaged the equipment before a solution was found. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

by Mary F. Flores

It was a typical morning for Dean Weingarten, branch chief of Meteorology, when he visited a gun position on the Red Bluff range to make routine checks on the proper functioning of weather instrumentation towers in the area. He noticed that one of the weather towers was reporting suspect data, which called for further investigation.

Weingarten drove to the tower under suspicion and discovered broken blades scattered on the ground from weather instrumentation atop the tower. He also found evidence that a bird of some kind had been there.

After driving downrange a bit further, he discovered the culprit -- a red-tailed hawk. It was perched atop a nearby tower amid weather instrumentation. This was Weingarten's first experience at catching a culprit red-handed in his 22 plus years at the proving ground. He figured that the hawk had caused over \$500 in damage in this one instance.

Rather than chase the hawk from the area, which would prove ineffective in the long run, Weingarten came up with a more creative solution. He went to the YPG Metal Shop and asked workers to construct metal barriers out of scrap metal to place on the towers.

Later, after he returned to the tower and affixed the metal barriers, he cranked the tower back to its upright position. By this time, however, the hawk had returned and was again perched on top. It had good reason to be there, however. A large nest was tucked into the arms of a Saguaro cactus some 30 feet away.

"I found it discouraging at first," Weingarten said with a smile, "but then I noticed the hawk feeding nestlings nearby, so the mother had every incentive to perch on the highest

available point, which is our tower. She was merely keeping a close eye on her young."

Since the metal barriers did not discourage the hawk, another solution was necessary. Weingarten returned to the metal shop and requested that an over two foot perch be built to extend well above instrumentation at the top of the tower. This would allow the hawk to perch on top without harming anything else.

"What a fantastic metal shop we have with state-of-the-art equipment and incredibly expert personnel," Weingarten remarked. "They made the perch out of scrap metal and it is now sitting atop the tower, and the hawk is happy to use it. It offers her a good vantage point and prohibits her from causing further damage at the same time."

Weingarten says there are 15 weather towers in the Red Bluff area, with a total of 50 more throughout the entire proving ground, including the Cibola Range.

"The Red Bluff area has the most weather towers because there are two separate firing lanes," Weingarten explained. "Sometimes the towers get hit during fire missions and this has been the most common reason for tower damage, not red-tailed hawks."

"We all hope the new perch will keep hawks and other wildlife from causing further damage to the towers. If it works, we may place additional perches in other locations. Hawks are protected by federal law, so we need to respect the law while completing the mission."

The instrumentation atop each weather tower provides critical wind and other climatic information before any test can begin. For accuracy reasons, if winds reach a certain speed, test fire missions cannot be conducted until they calm.

Memorial Day (continued from page 6)

protecting their country and what it stands for. They died defending a way of life that they felt was worth dying for ... for families, children, freedom, morality, values, and responsibility.

Although Memorial Day may be a federal holiday, and some of us have the luxury of a day off from work or school, our Soldiers do not enjoy such a privilege. War is a 24/7 commitment that knows no holidays. War does not allow for second chances or second thoughts. And unfortunately, war brings the inescapable reality of death far too close to home. So why would someone even want to join the military in the first place? Why put yourself into that position, knowing you are only placing your life on the line?

Well this commitment comes down to two things: honor and duty.

When a Soldier goes into battle, he is immediately stripped of any prejudices that befell him at home. He is no longer described according to his ethnic background, religious beliefs, or political affiliation. Instead, he is left with the title of an "American Soldier." I cannot think of any more honorable distinction than this. Were I a doctor, a fireman, or an astronaut, all these childhood dreams would fall far short of the honor that a Soldier in uniform carries.

I know that every time I see one of our decorated men and women in public, I immediately hold them in the highest esteem. Although you may see a Soldier at a common restaurant

eating dinner, or walking to an appointment in the city, it is undeniable that you must feel a sense of admiration for this person. As he or she walks past, children stare in awe and veterans salute. This respect is earned through the meaning that the uniform carries. It isn't

simply for show, to decorate with pretty ribbons and sashes. Instead, it is to show that person's dedication and willingness to serve. They serve each and every one of us by defending the nation in which we live today. Before adorning this uniform, they must swear an oath to protect the Constitution, the land, and the peoples of America from any and all enemies. To uphold this oath, they protect us with guns; they protect us with tanks; but most of all, they protect us with their lives.

Recently, ABC News aired a special program titled "The Fallen," which paid an exclusive tribute to all of the U.S. servicemen and women who have been killed while serving in Iraq. Their names were read aloud, and their pictures were displayed for the entire American public to witness. This program had no melodramatic flair, no background music, nor any traditional plotline to follow. Instead, it was merely a reading of the names of the heroes who died for our country. I must admit that personally I found myself totally enthralled by this program, despite the fact that I didn't know any of the Soldiers being mentioned. I actually sat there and

listened as each and every person's name was read, and felt a sense of admiration for these men and women whose commitment and courage were being showcased. They felt a sense of duty, and they dedicated their lives to fulfill that duty.

How many of us actually feel that sense of duty so fervently that we too are willing to give the last full measure to defend our nation? How many of us can honestly say we'd choose the path of most resistance in order to contribute? We can all sit back and hang a flag in our windows or flaunt a bumper sticker that says, "Support the Troops," but how many of us will actually dedicate our lives? Four years from now, I will raise my right hand and swear an oath to become an officer in the United States Air Force. I seek to humbly join the ranks with the provided assurance that I will contribute a significant service to my country and seal the bond among Soldiers that survives even death. Knowing that my life means something—that I will have contributed to a cause greater than any other I can think of—allows me the satisfaction of knowing the true worth of my existence.

Historically, our nation has achieved many successes in battle, both domestic and abroad, fighting to protect humanity from oppression, tyranny, and to uphold a common freedom. However, these victories did not come without their casualties. We join here today to recognize the valiant



efforts of the hundreds of thousands of men and women who put country before self and made their marks in history. We find ourselves dedicating a remembrance to the veterans of the past, as well as to the veterans of the present. In our nation's capital, we have opened a new National Monument to the heroes of World War II; however, we are constantly reminded of the death toll in Iraq that has not gotten any smaller.

As Senator Dole once said, we do not pay a tribute to war, rather, a tribute "to the physical and moral courage that makes heroes out of farm and city boys, that inspires Americans of every generation to lay down their lives for people they'll never meet." On this Memorial Day, to feel the full effects of the sacrifices our Soldiers have made for us, I ask all of you to take just one moment to silently gaze upon the graves in our cemetery. Each one of those small American flags represents not only that person's service to the military, but also their service to each and every one of us. They gave all they had to give, and we owe our freedom, our happiness, and our lives in gratitude.

Family, Morale, Welfare & Recreation Happenings




june 2011

Dates & times subject to change.
Get the latest event information by
following us on Facebook and Twitter.

community calendar

2	1800-2000 Texas Hold 'Em Cactus Cafe <small>(Info: 928-920-7344)</small>	15	Swim Team Practice Begins <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small>
4	0800 -1000 Paintball Season Finale <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small>	18	½ Day Fishing Trip <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small>
6	CYSS Summer Camp Begins <small>(Info: 928-328-2860)</small>		1800-2100 South of the Border Pool Party Kahuna Lagoon <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small>
9	Registration Deadline Swim Lessons/Swim Team <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small>	19	Father's Day
	1800-2000 Texas Hold 'Em Cactus Cafe <small>(Info: 928-920-7344)</small>	20	Summer Reading Program Begins Post Library <small>(Info: 928-328-2558)</small>
13	Swim School Begins <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small>	25	Dive in Movie Kahuna Lagoon <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small>
14	236th Army Birthday		

weekly events

<p style="color: orange; font-weight: bold;">monday</p> <p>0900-1000 Zumba Fitness Fitness Center <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small></p> <p>1100-1300 Spudalicious Potato Bar Cactus Cafe <small>(Info: 928-328-2333)</small></p> <p>1300-2100 One Buck Boogie Coyote Lanes <small>(Info: 928-328-2308)</small></p> <p>1715-1815 Aerobics Fitness Center <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small></p> <p style="color: orange; font-weight: bold;">tuesday</p> <p>1715-1815 Zumba Fitness Fitness Center <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small></p>	<p style="color: orange; font-weight: bold;">wednesday</p> <p>1715-1815 Aerobics Fitness Center <small>(Info: 928-328-2400)</small></p> <p style="color: orange; font-weight: bold;">thursday</p> <p>1030-1130 Children's Story Time Post Library <small>(Info: 928-328-2558)</small></p> <p style="color: orange; font-weight: bold;">friday</p> <p>1900-2200 Rock'n'Bowl Coyote Lanes <small>(Info: 928-328-2308)</small></p>
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Leader (Continued from page 1)

Brian to the community, Jimenez said, "You're going to lead YPG to a future that will be as exciting as it will be challenging. You're joining a fantastic community and command."

He went on to say, "Col. Payne took command of YPG two years ago. We expected good things to happen and that's exactly how it turned out. Under his leadership, YPG built a reputation as the Army's premier test installation — a place where strong community service and unwavering dedication contribute to mission success."

"No Army mission is more critical or more important than giving our Soldiers the weapons systems they need to both win on the battlefield and return safely home. YPG is a cornerstone in achieving that reality," said Jimenez.

"Thank you, Mr. Jimenez, for those kind words, but all this wasn't me — it was the incredible team we call 'Team YPG,'" said Payne as he thanked everyone for their support.

As Young took the podium, he began by saying, "What an honor and privilege it is to be afforded the opportunity to command such an outstanding organization."

He said YPG's reputation extends far and wide as a testing facility with superb expertise and a dedicated team of military personnel, government civilians and contractors.

"To everyone here today, thank you very much. Good luck, Col. Payne, and best wishes to you and your family. To my family, thank you to my wife and son. We are excited to call Yuma our home and look forward to enjoying all the treasures it has to offer."

The event concluded with a reception held at the Palm Garden Conference Center to welcome the new commander and his family to YPG.

Range Controllers highlighted



Col. Thomas Payne, YPG commander, took time out of his busy schedule to present awards to several YPG employees during the month of May. Top photo are personnel from Range Safety and Range Control who were recognized for their professionalism in maintaining a safe environment to test and train during the last six months. These nine individuals work together to support, plan and execute a dynamic range schedule involving various test and training platforms to include high performance fixed winged aircraft, rotary winged aircraft, tactical vehicles and troops, artillery and mortar equipment, precision parachute systems and demolition activities. This mix of activity requires 100 percent attention to detail and teamwork, beginning with range safety. During day-to-day operations, range controllers continually monitor, control and reevaluate current range events and adjust as necessary to maximize area utilization for safe movement of all ground personnel and air activities across YPG's 838,000 acres of range space and 1,200,000 acres of airspace. Individuals in photo (not in this order) are Gary Burris, Charles Crawford, Cindy Dresselhaus, Joe Felli, Frank Warnock, Timothy Wendt, Jesse White, Darrell Williams and Hugh Lottinger. Not available for photo was Ken Ault. (Photo by Yolie Canales)



ICE awardee recognized

Vicki Martin, budget analyst, was presented the Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) Outstanding Customer Service Award by Garrison manager Richard Martin in recognition of her dedication to providing excellent customer service during the 2nd Quarter. Martin received numerous positive ICE comments from various department heads installation wide for understanding customers' needs and matching them to services or products; sought ways to increase customers' satisfaction and loyalty; and, offered appropriate assistance. (Photo by Yolie Canales)