

THE OUTPOST

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

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CRTC warmly embraces new commander May says positive relationships key to success

By Chuck Wullenjohn

After learning of his selection, one year ago, as commander of the Army's Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC) at Fort Greely, Alaska, Lt. Col. Chuck May began reading about the state to provide historical context for the many challenges he knew to be waiting around the corner.

A veteran of 22 years in the Army, he was assigned to the Operational Test Command for most of the past five years, an excellent opportunity to learn about and develop an expertise in the test and evaluation world.

"My assignment to the Operational Test Command allowed me to work with

teams of great Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians," said May, "and I look forward to working with the folks at CRTC. I have a great deal of experience and expertise, but I know I will be the student and they will be teachers."

"I established warm relationships with a number of people at YPG that will extend through my time at CRTC and beyond. Relationships keep the world going."

— Lt. Col. Chuck May

May began his tour as CRTC commander on May 22 when he took command from Lt. Col. (P) John Cavado, Jr., at a change of command ceremony. His tour could be extended to three years by higher headquarters. He brings with him experience working directly with

teams of civilians, which he views as a plus.

"Most civilians at CRTC have military time under their belts, which always stays

with you," he said. "As long as a leader has achievable visions and empowers people to reach an overall goal, it will be achieved. One must gain consensus and achieve results as a collective body rather than as solitary individuals."

May believes that establishing and maintaining positive relationships are fundamental to success. As an example, he cites his recent visit to Yuma Proving Ground. "I established warm relationships with a number of people at YPG that will extend through my time at CRTC and beyond," he said.

"Relationships keep the world going."

Joining the Army after graduating from college with a degree in construction

management, May looked at opportunities in other service branches before making a final decision. This choice, he believes, was a correct one. "The United States has been good to me and I've always wanted to give something back," he said with a smile. The Army later sent him back to school to earn a post-graduate degree in engineering management. With dynamic movement

see **MAY** page 10



Lt. Col. Chuck May, CRTC's new commander, looks forward to working with folks at test center, who will be the teachers and he the student.

PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER

Military dogs trained to save lives

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National Geographic Magazine visits

YPG

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National Geographic magazine photographs YPG training activity



Shooting over 300 photos at the YPG Canine Village is Adam Ferguson, freelance photographer on assignment for National Geographic. PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER

By Mark Schauer

Everyone has fond memories of the colorful photojournalism of National Geographic magazine, and soon YPG activities will take a turn in the iconic periodical.

Noted combat photographer, Adam

Ferguson, visited YPG for four days in early May to gather material for a photo essay scheduled to run in National Geographic magazine next spring.

The article will cover military working dogs, and trace their journey from birth to serving alongside

Soldiers in Afghanistan. The proving ground annually prepares hundreds of dogs and handlers for deployment overseas, as well as hundreds more for duty with civilian law enforcement agencies, and the photos taken at YPG will represent the training aspect of the working dog experience.

“YPG is the premier center of military working dog training for overseas contingency operations,” said Luis Arroyo, chief of the Training and Exercise Management Office. “Nobody else has facilities like we do to prepare working dogs and their handlers going into combat areas.”

Witnessing both the Army’s Tactical Explosive Detector Dog course and the Marine Corps’ military working dog training course, which serves all branches of the military, Ferguson got an up close and personal look at the average day in a military working dog’s training. From YPG’s kennels before the crack of dawn to lengthy exercises in mock villages and overland looking for mock explosives, Ferguson was impressed with the rigors of training he witnessed through his camera lens.

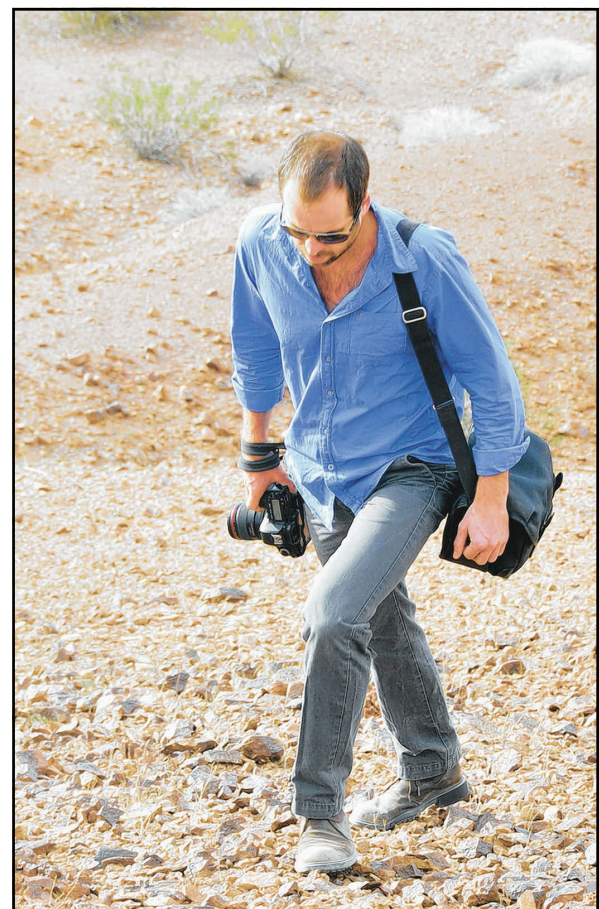
“These trainers really know their stuff,” said Ferguson. “They seem to apply the right amount of pressure to get these guys as ready for deployment as possible.”

A veteran of several embeds with American forces in Afghanistan as a photographer for the

New York Times and Time magazine, Ferguson wasn’t fazed by the portions of the training that involved live fire or lengthy foot patrols across difficult terrain in the heat of day.

“The terrain here is very similar to Afghanistan,” said Ferguson. “The shaley mountains the Soldiers walked through could easily be Wardak province.”

The nine-week photo assignment will also take Ferguson to several other American military bases in the United States and Europe, culminating with embeds in Army and Marine Corps units in Afghanistan this fall.



Ferguson felt right at home as he trampled through the rugged YPG terrain that he found similar to that of Afghanistan, where he accompanied American troops on several embeds.

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YPG ignites action at Cocopah Speedway



Staff Sgt. Armando Amado explains the workings of a Humvee's engine at Yuma Proving Ground's exhibit at the Cocopah Speedway in Somerton, Ariz., on May 19. About 1000 people came to the event to enjoy several hours of high speed racing thrills.

By Chuck Wullenjohn

The day was hot, the sky clear. Below viewing stands situated on a hillside, dozens of juiced-up autos revved engines and serious-looking mechanics concentrated while performing last minute adjustments. An evening of automotive racing awaited and everyone hoped to emerge as number one. A crowd of nearly 1000 slowly gathered to take in the action.

Somerton's Cocopah Speedway held its annual military appreciation evening on May 19th, with exhibits of military hardware from Marine Corps Air Station Yuma and YPG on hand near the entrance. Hundreds stopped by in the course of several hours of racing.

Staffed by Staff Sgt. Armando Amado, parachute rigger for YPG's



Airborne Test Force, a Humvee from YPG attracted nearly non-stop attention from both young and old. Amado has completed nearly two years at YPG and has nearly 900 parachute jumps under his belt.

"I've worked many public events like this before and always enjoy it," he remarked. "Kids like to climb all over the vehicles and I like talking with them. Little kids always want to be just like 'us' when they grow up and we have to set the example."

Marcia Parks, a Yuma resident since 1988, entered a Humvee for the first time, standing in the gunner's compartment. "It was pretty cool," she said after stepping onto terra firma. "I was just missing the machine gun that would normally sit in the mount."

Richard Parks, her husband, served in the military between 1961 and 1984 and, though Humvee's weren't in use during those years, he felt he could easily drive one. "The controls seem to be the same as the jeeps we drove back in the 1960's," he said with a smile. "I'm confident I could drive it right off. If the Army let me, that is."

Everyone, of any age, enjoys climbing into a military vehicle and exploring its inside. Over the course of the evening, dozens of people inspected YPG's Humvee, including Yuma resident Marcia Parks, who personally visited the vehicle for the first time.

PHOTOS BY CHUCK WULLENJOHN

THE OUTPOST

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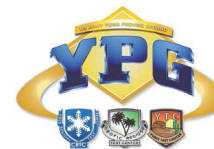
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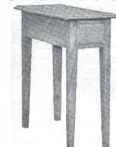
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So long, thanks and best wishes

By Command Sgt. Maj. Forbes Daniels

My family and I thank everyone for a great farewell luncheon held this past April 26th. It was an affair I will always remember and treasure. I would like to mention a few people and offices by name in the following lines who helped make my years at YPG such memorable ones:

I want to thank each person in the YPG Command Group for the daily rich support you have given me, including Teresa, Julita and Tina. I love you guys. Gabby, you are highly professional and energetic, with a great sense of humor. You have helped me out with many tasks and provided great administrative support.

Col. Young, I cannot thank you and Norma enough for your support

and friendship. Opportunities for the growth of our service members could not happen without your support. I also want to thank Col. John Bullington and Col. Thomas Payne for the opportunity to serve on their teams and for their contributions to the YPG mission and the proving ground's development.

Julio Dominguez, you are exactly the right technical director for YPG. Thank you and your lovely spouse for your support to the YPG workforce.

Russell Baas, as a former YPG command sergeant major who now resides in Yuma, your unwavering support to YPG is a role model for others to emulate. Thank you sincerely.

CRTC and TRTC, your workforces are highly dedicated teams that deliver excellent results every time,

even in extreme conditions. Your outstanding leadership creates a safe, healthy learning environment resulting in mission success.

Our garrison team is world class, the best I have worked with and seen in my 27 years. YPG is the best kept secret because of your devoted efforts with limited resources. Thanks to everyone in the garrison workforce.

Riley Williams, visual information manager, and the entire TRAX team always amazed me. We could not had gotten any of our events done professionally without the great support. Particularly memorable were the committees responsible for organizing our two winter balls, which were remarkable.

The city of Yuma is without a doubt one of the best places in the United States to live and work. We greatly appreciate the entire Yuma community and thank you for your support of our service members and their families.

Every employee, from the workers who drive dozens of miles down

range to start his or her day, to the supporters of tests, which include all YPG support organizations and tenants, are doing magnificent things to support families, our mission, military training, and new arrivals. Our team is great because we have talented, dedicated, hard working, and caring people who make a positive impact. They understand the value of safety, teamwork and commitment. They prove that, together, we can accomplish anything.

As I depart, I will always remember the time here, the great people I met and worked with and their contributions to our military. I thank each of you for the work you perform daily -- we will remain connected in the common goal of service to our military personnel and this great nation.

I wish you great success in the future and my best wishes to Command Sgt. Maj. West and his family as they begin their tour in beautiful Yuma.

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Command Sgt. Maj. Forbes Daniels created many good memories at YPG that he will carry with him. PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER

Chaplain Corner

Rotten turtle eggs

By Chaplain Loren (Maj.) Hutsell

One summer I went to visit a friend who lived in the Amazon jungle in Ecuador. He lived with a tribe called the Cofan. It was a great experience except that our diet of unusual jungle meats did not sit well with my eyes or my stomach and by the third day I was getting very hungry. That morning we had eggs for breakfast and I asked for a double portion.

As I sat down to eat the eggs I noticed they weren't the color of regular chicken eggs, but were in fact bright orange. I was informed that these were turtle eggs found by the river. I took my first bite and knew I was in trouble. To be honest, they tasted so bad I could hardly swallow them. Nonetheless, trying to be a thankful guest, I finished them off. I, along with many others, ended up getting very sick from eating those eggs because they were rotten. I was especially sick because I had eaten such a large portion.

That morning in the jungle I thought I was getting chicken eggs for breakfast. I felt tricked when I found out they were turtle eggs. In a similar manner, temptation that comes along in our lives is a lot like that same experience. We think that

a certain sin might bring us great joy or fulfillment, but in the end, it just leaves us empty, unfulfilled, and spiritually sick. Instead of meeting our needs, it leaves us with darkness of mind and soul, estrangement from God, and causes recklessness in our lives.

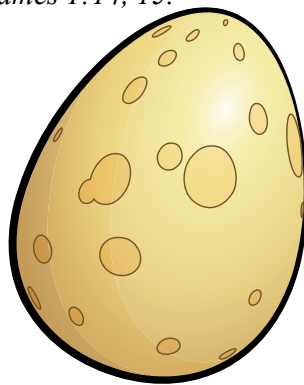
- Scripture teaches us to pray to overcome temptation (Luke 22:46).

- Avoid temptation by recognizing that it leaves us enslaved and unfulfilled.

- Recognize that God wants to release us from the destructive hold and power of sin.

- Seek help by talking to your pastor, spiritual advisor, or chaplain.

Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then after desire is conceived it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. James 1:14, 15.



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Military working dogs

By Mark Schauer

It is early in the morning. Men and women in uniform gather in a tight semi-circle around a briefer standing next to a white board on which a village with a marketplace in the center has been sketched.

“We have probable cause to believe large weapons caches are stored in the marketplace,” Staff Sgt. Wilfred Porras tells the audience. “We are going to move into the village and perform a quarter and knock search.”

It could be Afghanistan, but it is actually a classroom at Yuma Proving Ground

during the latter part of the Marine Corps’ three week-long military working dog training course, which serves all branches of the military and is one of nine unique working dog training courses at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground. Porras, lead instructor of the course, is addressing members of the Army, National Guard, Air Force, and Marine Corps that have come here for rigorous pre-deployment training. Today’s simulated search is a so-called soft knock one, where permission is asked of the occupants, but Porras reminds everyone to maintain tactical vigilance at all times, and drops a hint



“Dog down! Dog down!” It is only a simulation, but the sound of mock .50 caliber machine gun fire on the other side of this wall signals a terrifying and unexpected ambush of working dog teams searching the training village for explosives. The students were expected to carry their canine companions to the safety of a building many yards away, all while keeping hold of their other gear and maintaining appropriate tactics.

PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER

of hardships to come.

“Everything you’ve learned so far will come into play. Everything.”

Out in the blazing sun wearing full combat gear, the working dog teams one by one search the long road into the village, watching their canine partners for indications of hidden explosives or mines. Course instructors encourage handlers to let the dogs work off-leash whenever possible.

“If the dog has the potential to work off-leash, don’t hold it back,” said Gunnery Sgt. Kristopher Knight, course chief. “The difference of 10

feet could be the difference between living or dying. If the dog can work productively at 50 feet, you’re pretty much safe from whatever you’re likely to encounter.”

Once the road has been successfully searched, the focus turns to buildings in the village, sometimes sending the working dogs in alone, directing them with voice commands and carefully watching their behavior. If the working dog indicates the presence of explosives, the handler rewards them with a tennis ball or other toy, though this may not always happen in theater. With the village searched

and the presence of explosives reported, the working dog team begins to exit the village. On the other side of a long stone wall parallel to the road, the sound of .50 caliber machine gun fire is simulated by a propane and oxygen-operated training device.

“Dog down! Dog down!” the instructor calls to the student.

Though the working dog is fine, students hoist the large dogs onto their shoulders and seek shelter in a nearby building. Commanding the dog to lie down, they take their gloves off and pull out first aid kits as

the instructor looks on, treating the bloody wound on a mock dog limb previously staged inside the building and preparing an intravenous drip bag, all the while hoping they will never have to do so in real life.

Three weeks of intense progressive training

The course progresses from basics like first aid and IED identification to tactical searches in YPG’s various simulated urban area compounds and overland across rugged terrain that is remarkably similar to that found in Afghanistan.

“We don’t focus on anything else but dog training, because the dogs

train in Yuma to save lives

“don’t train themselves,” said Knight. “It needs to be consistent and daily.”

Another important part of the training is taking the working dogs along for live fire exercises on one of YPG’s firing ranges. Some working dogs have a violent reaction to gunfire, critical knowledge for a handler to have prior to deploying into combat. YPG’s vast facilities also allow for handlers to imprint their working dogs on new explosive odors that aren’t in their standard repertoire, but that they are likely to encounter once deployed overseas. In operation continuously since 2007, the course’s importance is underscored by the recent addition of an Army instructor to the staff, which expands the number of slots available to prospective students.

“YPG is the premier center of military

working dog training for overseas contingency operations,” said Luis Arroyo, chief of the Training and Exercise Management Office. “Nobody else has facilities like we do to prepare working dogs and their handlers going into combat areas.”

“This facility doesn’t compare to any other I’ve been at,” agreed Knight. This really captures what they’re going to encounter and gives teams a true test of what they’re going to face in theater. I’m not naive enough to think teams from Alaska, Germany, or even North Carolina have truly proven themselves ready to go until they’ve proven it here in Yuma: I’ve seen good dogs come here and not look so good, especially during the hottest portions of the year.”

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In the mock village, working dog handlers sometimes send the dogs into buildings alone, directing them with voice commands and carefully watching their behavior. If the working dog indicates the presence of explosives, the handler rewards them with a tennis ball or other toy, as seen here. YPG’s vast facilities allow handlers to imprint their working dogs on new explosive odors that aren’t in their standard repertoire, but that they are likely to encounter once deployed overseas. In the photo to the right, Spec. Ryan Castonguay of the Connecticut National Guard rewards his working dog after a successful find.



Having carried their working dog out of the simulated firefight to the safety of a nearby building, students treat the bloody wound on a mock dog limb previously staged inside the building as an instructor (right) looks on. Both the student and working dog are judged on their coolness under pressure.

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VIEWPOINTS

For this viewpoint, we ask members of the workforce, "Who's your hero?"

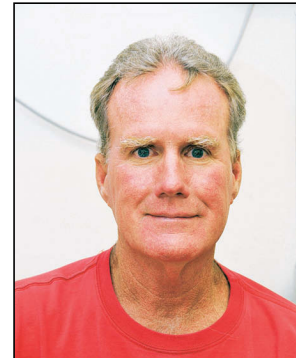


Samantha Hendrickson
Test Officer

My aunt, Dianne Hyndman. She took on a lot of responsibility with me and my sister more than once, and was always there for both of us. I appreciate her for everything she has done for me.

Ron Snyder
Fuel Distribution System Operator

Junior Seau was a sports hero to me. He was a kid that grew up in North County San Diego that made it big in the NFL for 20 seasons, mostly with the Chargers. Junior will always be one of my favorite Charger players of all time. He is definitely going to be going into the NFL Hall of Fame. San Diego's first son is sorely going to be missed.



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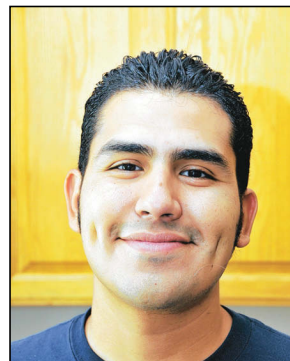


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Jacob Obradovich
Test Officer

My dad, Peter. Ever since I was a kid, he has worked two jobs—running his own lawn service and as a pattern maker in a steel casting plant—to support our family. He has a really good work ethic and inspired me to work hard and go to college.



David Padilla
Firefighter

My dad and my kids. My dad because of all he accomplished and for serving as a big role model to me: he is a firefighter and it was exciting to watch him work as a kid. My daughter, Aliana, went through a lot when she hit her head, but toughed it out and came out fine after surgery. My older daughter, Maleia, was a great big sister during that whole ordeal, and it was inspiring to watch her.

Martin Castro
Warehouse Clerk



My grandfather, Ezekiel Espinoza. He has a good head on his shoulders and has worked hard his entire life. He was a farmer and raised 11 girls and one boy. I hope that I can be half the man he was someday.

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Safety Corner

Staying cool when it matters

Heatstroke is a life-threatening illness that occurs when a person's body temperature rises to 105 degrees Fahrenheit. Even if it doesn't cause death, it can cause permanent brain damage, as the cells in the brain are literally boiled. Muscle cells and blood vessels are destroyed, and if the heatstroke goes untreated, the victim will die.

Heatstroke occurs in otherwise healthy people when they are active outside during periods of high temperature. Think about the many young athletes who die while practicing or playing during times of extreme outdoor temperature.

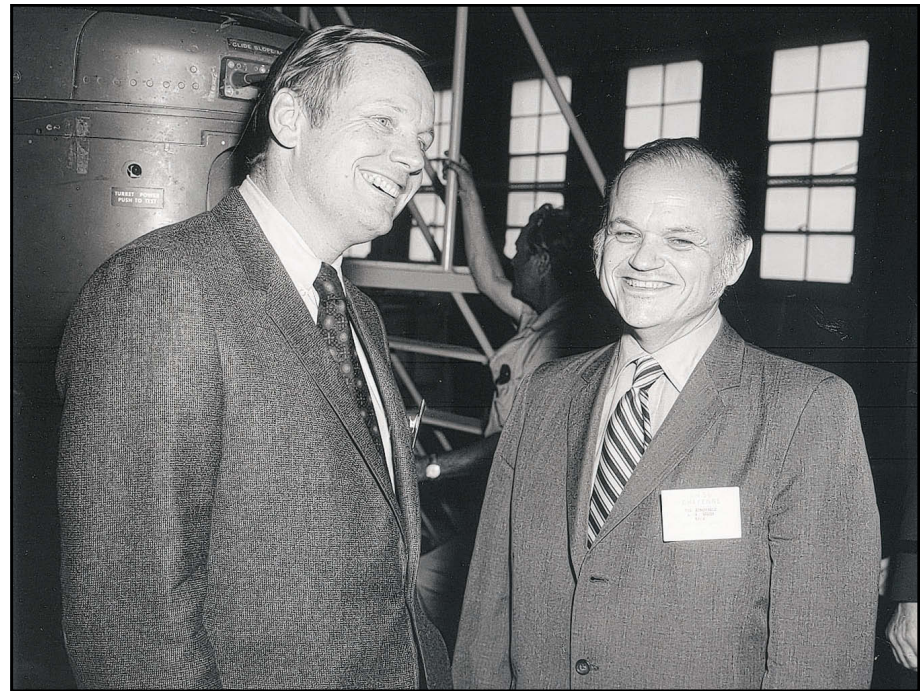
Before heatstroke, people usually experience warning signs known as heat exhaustion. The symptoms of heat exhaustion include headache, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramps, and fatigue. When this happens, get yourself to a cool place. If someone suffering from heat exhaustion is not treated, they will quickly develop a potentially deadly case of heatstroke.

Once the heatstroke has set in, victims will become confused and irritable. If the victim's body temperature is not lowered immediately, they may slip into a coma and die.

Be sure to stay well hydrated in the heat. Wear lightweight clothing and rest often. Pay attention to your body, and never ignore the onset of early symptoms such as headache and fatigue.

People who are overweight, take certain medications, or use illegal drugs are at an even higher risk for heatstroke. If you fall into one of these categories, don't take chances. Drink lots of water and rest in a shaded, cool place until the outdoor temperature drops.

Bottom line: HEAT CAN KILL... So, (a) Stay Hydrated, (b) Report Feeling Ill, (c) Know the Wet Bulb, (d) Check Urine Color, (e) Watch Your Buddy.



A blast from the past....

Yuma Proving Ground has had many distinguished visitors over the years, but none as out-of-this-world as astronaut Neil Armstrong (left), the first man to walk on the moon. Nineteen months after taking his giant leap for mankind, in February 1971 the Apollo 11 commander visited YPG to witness testing of the AH-56 Cheyenne attack helicopter, where he was joined by then-congressman Lucien Nedzi (right) of Michigan. Though the AH-56 was cancelled by the Army the following year, the program was a boon to aviation testing at YPG, as it brought about the construction of a substantial amount of infrastructure like laser and optical tracking sites. YPG has done testing for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) since 1966, when the mobility test article (MTA), a precursor to the lunar rover, came here for engineer design evaluations.

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MAY

FROM PAGE 1

in today's Army, as active operations in Iraq and Afghanistan diminish, CRTC's future role is more relevant than ever, as the Army must be able to effectively function and execute missions in all environments. While America's armed forces have primarily focused on one environment over the past 10 years, the desert environment, nobody knows what the future holds. CRTC is fully capable of supporting both temperate and extreme cold weather testing.

"I will do my best to show

others the value of what CRTC can do," said May, "and I want to be part of the solution. Whatever the right solution set is, I intend to be part of it and work toward it."

May departed from the "lower 48" in early May and drove to his new Alaska home, a journey of thousands of miles and several nights aboard an Alaska Marine Highway ferry between Bellingham, Wash., and Whittier, Alaska. He kept a detailed daily photo record of the trip.

His Army service included numerous overseas tours, including assignments in Panama, Hawaii, Egypt, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo

Bay, Cuba, among others. He has worked with radar systems, cruise missiles, countermeasure systems, the Joint Land Attack Elevated Netted Sensor (JLENS), and much more. He performed key functions within several program executive offices before becoming a test officer with the Operational Test Command.

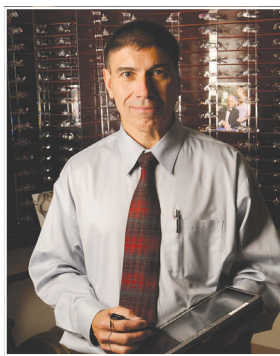
CRTC's outgoing commander, Lt. Col. Cavado, is relocating to Fort Leavenworth, Kan., where he will work in the Mission Command Center of Excellence. He said the past three years have been among the most professional and personally rewarding of his career.

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