

THE OUTPOST

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

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Memory of great American celebrated in big way

By Chuck Wullenjohn

Many special breakfasts have been held at YPG over the years to commemorate the life of a great American, Martin Luther King, but 2013 witnessed one of the best ever. Coordinated by YPG's Equal Employment Opportunity Office, the event was well organized, entertaining and meaningful.

The guest speaker was Yuma pastor James Pharmes, who presented thoughtful remarks on each individual's thought process, highlighting the difference between emotional opinions and well-considered critical thinking resulting from the objective consideration of conflicting issues.

"Martin Luther King had a concern for basic character values," he explained after the ceremony. "Each individual must have internal 'truth' to work from, truth that can weather challenges and opposition."

King's truth, explained Pharmes, was based on scripture and God, but also intellect, critical thinking and morality. "This provided a moral compass for him," he said. "Too often, I see politicians and others in the modern world flip-flop back and forth in their opinions, because they have not invested themselves in



Yuma pastor James Pharmes addresses the attendees at the Dr. Martin Luther King Commemoration Breakfast at Yuma Proving Ground's Cactus Cafe. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

fully searching for, then challenging, critical truth."

Other ceremony highlights included Command Sgt. Maj. Keith West's emotional recitation of an excerpt from Martin Luther King's famous "I have a Dream" speech, a

song from Spec. Chasidy Tenison and various remarks from students from Price School.

"When you celebrate an inspirational person such as Martin Luther King among people who maintain an understanding of his

teachings, even though we have a long way to go," said Lashunda Blevins, Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, "it leads to an excellent, meaningful ceremony. Putting on this breakfast was a group effort and I can't speak highly enough." She had special praise for the people of the Cactus Café who prepared a breakfast that garnered many positive comments.

"The talent we have at YPG and in the local community is outstanding and brought this celebration to a new height," said YPG Garrison Manager Rick Martin. "YPG's hats are off to everyone involved."

Technical Director Julio Dominguez presented a brief synopsis of King's life in his remarks, pointing out that what King accomplished lifted and strengthened everyone in America.

"Because of his efforts, previously disadvantaged Americans now enjoy rights denied them prior to 1964," said Dominguez. "And if we agree that a state demeans itself in denying basic human rights to any of its populace based solely on physical or philosophical differences, it is undeniable that, through his fight to move America away from such denial of rights, Dr. King uplifted all of us." (See page 2 for photos)

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Above: Singing are Mahalia and Nastassija Pharmes known as the "praise team" from the Power House Church of God in Christ.

Below: Students from Price Elementary School pay tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King. Not in this order, students are: Madison Munford, Cheyenne Puma, Destiny Kellen and Jadyn Cox (not available for photo).



MLK celebration (Continued from page 1)



Taking time out for a photo are left to right: Lashunda Blevins, Chief of Equal Opportunity Office, Yuma pastor and guest speaker James Pharmes, Joeann Bailey, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) specialist, and Yuma Proving Ground Command Sgt. Maj. Keith West (Photos by Chuck Wullenjohn)

THE OUTPOST

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A Simple Salute

Proper protocol for the American flag

Editor's Note: In a recent email sent out by YPG Commander Col. Reed Young referencing the proper respect to render to our U.S. flag, not only did he point out the respect but moreso, the sacrifice many have made to ensure that we can still do it. For those individuals who do not have access to email, the following is Young's message. Thank you to Capt. Nickolas Pacella, Health Clinic administrator, for providing the letter Young referenced in his email.

"Below is a very poignant description provided by Col. Evan Renz head of the Burn Unit at Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. I think that we all know how to pay respect to the flag, and by extension to our great country and its fine people. But perhaps this is a fine reminder just why we do it and, moreover, the sacrifice many have made to ensure that we can still do it.

Let me also take this opportunity to say that it is appropriate for any of us to politely

and respectfully remind anyone else of the proper protocols. In most cases, it's likely an honest oversight, perhaps a driver simply isn't hearing Reveille or Retreat being played during the flag raising or lowering. However, I've gotten reports recently of confrontational and angry exchanges. This is not appropriate. YPG has a significant population of combat vets and American patriots who likely feel just as strongly about proper respect as the young Soldier below. But don't let strong emotion cloud good judgment. I'd bet simply reading the passage below would be more powerful than any angry exchange."

Dear Friends and Family,

Tonight, I exited the hospital at 1729 hours, heading home to join my family for dinner. Five steps later, I halted in response to the recorded bugle call and turned towards the American flag atop BAMC's flagpole for retreat.

As I raised my hand in salute to the colors, my eyes shifted just a few degrees to my right, just enough to see a young Soldier also raise his salute to the same flag.

His salute was different. His salute was better than mine, it was perfect. His right hand rose briskly to the proper position and was held immovable by a strong solid arm. His fingers were perfectly straight. He remained alone, quiet and motionless as honors were rendered.

His stance, however, was far different than mine for he remained seated during honors to the colors. A few months ago, he would have stood, but now, he sat in his wheelchair, with the remnants of his once agile legs providing barely enough base with which to balance in his seat.

His left arm was not pressed to his

side like mine was, for he had none. His entire left arm was taken from him by the same explosion that stole both of his legs.

Earlier today, this same young Corporal thanked me for the care he has received in our hospital. He is grateful. His wounds are healing. He is happy to be alive. He is proud to be able to salute the flag.

It is him, and those honorable American sons and daughters like him, that we seek to serve.

It is a moment such as this that God uses to remind me of the who, what, when and why of my duty, at least as I understand it.

It was difficult for me to write this, but I felt compelled to do so as not to forget the moment, and to remember the price some have paid for the flag we are honored to salute.

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TRAX recognizes employees with length of service awards

By Yolie Canales

Most employees appreciate when their employers recognize employee contributions toward mission successes. For many, it's an incentive to continue to do better and know that their hard work does not go unnoticed.

Recently, Trax Incorporated, YPG's largest contractor, recognized 16 of its employees at a length of service award ceremony for their dedication to the mission of YPG.

Brian Thompson, Trax project manager, said that these individuals have spent 30 or more years at YPG as range support contractors. YPG has benefitted from their extensive knowledge and expertise for many years and they bring hands-on-experience that is immeasurable.

"These employees have been part of equipment upgrades, process improvements and developing best business practices for decades," said Thompson. "Trax has provided

support, in part or whole, since 1990 and the retention of long term employees is essential to building the next generation of range support and provides YPG with the best and most efficient workforce possible."

Trax has retained many long term employees but most recently, they examined the workforce and noted that many of their employees have been here for over 30 years. They felt that Trax needed to honor its long term employees for their service and sacrifices.

Thompson said that Trax plans to continue paying tribute to employees that meet milestones and hope the recognition inspires others to continue to develop their skills and making YPG the best place to test.

Julio Dominguez, YPG's technical director, added, "The people recognized today have not only been here a long time, but have been delivering excellent results for decades alongside government workers, helping produce better systems for Soldiers."

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Not in this order the following TRAX employees were recognized during a length of service award ceremony. Jack Bails, 32 years; Judith Bails, 30; Daniel Boring, 33; Tom Coz, 35; Bob Davis, 31; Steve Edmonds, 32; James Gourley, 38; Michael Hosko, 32; James Jolley, 33; Betty Kuykendall, 32; Ruben Lugo, 32; Steve Maxedon, 35; Don McCravy, 38; Gregg Oglesby, 30; Rick Taylor, 30; and Curtis Webb, 31 years. (Photo by Yolie Canales)

More eOPF news

In just a few weeks, electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) will be available to you. The questions and answers below provide information regarding the conversion of OPFs from paper to electronic form, security of your personnel information, and access to eOPF. You will be notified once again with specific instructions on how to gain access to your eOPF account.

Q: How many employee records were converted from paper to the electronic format?

A: There are over 300,000 appropriated and nonappropriated fund employee records that have been scanned and imported into eOPF. This portion of the Army project began in September 2011 and continued through September 2012.

Q: Where is the paper version of my Official Personnel Folder?

A: The paper documents within your OPF were scanned and imported into eOPF.

Once scanned, those hardcopy documents were sent to the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in Valmeyer, Il., for storage. Your official personnel record is now the electronic version as determined by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) who controls our employee records federal-wide.

Q: How long will the paper documents be maintained at the NPRC?

A: The NPRC will keep the paper documents for one (1) year. After this time, the NPRC will destroy them. Hardcopy documents will not be returned. If you believe a document is missing from your eOPF, your Human Resources (HR) representative can submit a request to NPRC to return the documents for review.

Q: How secure is the personal information in my eOPF?

A: OPM has taken extensive measures to protect and secure your personnel record documents: the eOPF system can only be

accessed through a secure Internet browser that is protected from interception, access to your eOPF account is controlled by your user name and password, eOPF has been programmed to limit movement between screens, and system timeouts are employed after periods of inactivity. Even with these protections, you need to protect the privacy of your data by printing and filing or electronically storing your documents to ensure that others are not able to access your information.

Q: What measures are in place to protect eOPF system data?

A: OPM manages the eOPF system for all federal government agencies. Nightly incremental backups are conducted for all submitted documents. Full system-wide backups occur weekly.

Q: Who has access to the eOPFs?

A: An employee will be able to view and

SEE eOPF/8

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YPG begins 2013 as Army's busiest test center

By Chuck Wullenjohn

With all of the talk of economic calamity resulting from our nation falling over a fiscal cliff, one of the unique realities of Yuma County's economic life is that it is home for the Army's busiest installation — Yuma Proving Ground. Having racked up over two million direct labor hours last year, YPG has led the Army as the busiest test center for three years in a row.

One of the largest military installations in the western world, 1300 square miles in size, Yuma Proving Ground's mission is to ensure the success and dependability of weapon systems and munitions used by American

military forces anywhere in the world. The proving ground's test and development facilities are capable of testing nearly everything in the Army's combat arsenal, from main battle tanks and artillery pieces to unmanned systems, parachute systems and technologies that defeat roadside bombs.

Yuma Proving Ground features one of the longest overland artillery ranges (40 miles) in the nation, the most highly instrumented helicopter armament test range in the Department of Defense, over 200 miles of improved road courses for testing tracked and wheeled vehicles, 1000 miles of fiber-optic cable linking 400 test locations, the most modern mine test facility

in the western hemisphere, six airfields, and simulated overseas urban areas specifically constructed to defeat the threat of improvised explosive devices.

"YPG has a great workforce and environment," said Lt. Col. Chad Harris, Yuma Test Center commander. "Our people are dedicated to the mission. Customers get testing performed quickly and receive accurate reports. That is why they keep coming back."

Though the total number of labor hours last year was down from its 2011 peak of nearly 2.8 million, it is virtually equivalent to the number posted in 2009, and remains about twice as high as prior to the beginning of military operations



Training in terrain similar to that in an operational environment, Soldiers practice vehicle recovery in cold and snowy temperatures at Cold Regions Test Center located near Fort Greely. (U. S. Army photo)

in Southwest Asia early in the last decade. The proving ground also expanded its training operations, involving units of Soldiers and Marines, as well as military working dogs. Over 600 military working dogs went through training at the proving ground last year.

Though test budgets are expected to decline in coming years, as military budget dollars decrease, YPG senior leaders are confident customers will continue to seek out the proving ground for its technical expertise, highly instrumented ranges and customer-focused culture.

"YPG is a great place to conduct environmental and developmental testing programs," said Harris. "We have a great reputation both in the United States and among our partner nations. YPG's work is critical to the defense of the nation."

"There is almost unlimited potential at YPG in terms of what we can do," added Col. Reed Young, YPG commander. "I'm confident that as long as we have the right mentality and maintain the proving ground's flexibility, modularity and adaptability, the proving ground is going to survive extremely well in future years."



Realistic training is critical for Soldiers in any Army, and YPG's mock Middle Eastern villages are a prime site. Here, a Canadian Soldier fast ropes off of a UH-1 helicopter as part of a simulated assault during their month-long stay at YPG. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Accurate weather data critical to testing

By Mark Schauer

YPG's meteorology team is much more than the weather forecast in your computer inbox each morning.

Yuma Test Center is responsible for conducting testing of military equipment in extreme heat. Testers look at the vast range as a giant laboratory, and need accurate, specialized meteorological data to conduct virtually any test that takes place.

To support these operations, YPG's nine-person meteorology team must work in two shifts and be nimble enough to accommodate last-minute alterations to the test

"We're usually the first people on site. Before a test officer can do safety fans and other preparations, they need meteorological data."

— Nickolas McColl, chief meteorologist.

schedule. The team's meteorological forecaster, which rotates in two-week shifts, begins his workday at 4:00 a.m. and has the daily forecast in all of YPG's email inboxes by 6:00 a.m.

"We're usually the first people on site," said Nickolas McColl, chief meteorologist. "Before a test officer can do safety fans and other preparations, they need meteorological data."

The extensive variety of test activities means YPG met team members collect a wide range of data that measures small-scale weather phenomenon across a range larger than the state of Rhode

Island. While they gather ordinary weather data like temperature, humidity and wind speed, they also collect esoteric data like wet bulb globe temperature, which estimates the effect of heat and humidity on the body, which is critical information for worker safety in the intense heat of summer; and scintillation, a measure of how energy is distorted by atmospheric conditions that is critical information to testers evaluating laser targeting systems.

Some munitions firing programs need to fire ammunition in completely cloudless conditions to ensure optimal tracking of projectiles in flight, a particularly challenging mission for the MET team. "We try to give them the best outlook of 'windows' when there won't be clouds," said Mark Hendrickson, meteorologist. "We do this using satellite imagery and our local 4DWX weather model."

Precise knowledge of wind speeds aloft is critical to ensuring the safe conduct of aviation tests, something the MET team accomplishes with an electronic device known as a radiosonde attached to helium balloons to measure atmospheric conditions. YPG launched more than 4,500 such balloons last year despite a worldwide helium shortage that reduced the number of launches during the summer.

"We're looking to upgrade to a new battery pack for radiosondes that will make the package about 25 percent lighter," said McColl. "That will save helium."

The newest weather sensor the team uses is a laser beam to measure cloud height up to 50,000



Nick McColl inspects a weather sensor platform that includes devices to measure temperature, wet bulb globe temperature, and wind speed. The team has more than 20 fixed meteorological sensor stations located across YPG's vast ranges.

feet above the range, a tool that is invaluable for aviation testing of unmanned aircraft and parachutes. Relatively new sonic anemometers determine wind speed by measuring its sound every tenth of a second. Aviation testers also like the team's lightning strike indicator, which, like much of their data, is available on YPG's intranet page in nearly-real time.

"On all the UAS programs I've worked on, MET team support has been critical," said Gene Hunt, test officer. "The team's support is unsurpassed: any hour of the day or night, weekends and holidays, they never say no, and always give their best to support the mission. They are among the best support elements at the proving ground."

Voluntary Leave Transfer update

Although it's a new year, we still have YPG family members in need of assistance. Leave donations as small as one hour are truly appreciated. We can only accept donations from appropriated fund civil service employees.

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

YPG currently has several employees on the VLTP recipient list:

- Castello, TerRee, Garrison

MWR, left ankle surgery
 - Cuevas, Vannesa, Mission, Technology & Investments Directorate, birth of child
 - Lemme, Audra, Mission RM, son continues to suffer from ongoing health complications; care and death of terminally ill father
 - Packham, Ursula, Mission Plans & Ops, birth of child
 - Padilla, Carlos, YTC, environmental allergy and bilateral lung densities
 - Robinson, James, YTC, cancer surgery with follow-up radiation and Chemotherapy
 - Saladin, Christine (Kya), Garrison DPW, shattered bone in left arm requiring reconstruction

- Smith, Nathan, NEC, family member medical emergency
 Any donation will be appreciated by the recipient. You can donate as little as one hour of annual leave or as much as one half of what you accrue in a leave year, although you must be able to use "use or lose" annual leave before the end of the leave year.

If you are interested in donating annual leave to your co-worker, just complete Optional Form 630-A and forward it back to the CPAC. We'll see the donation gets to the appropriate recipient. Please note, we can only accept donations that indicate to whom the hours are to be given. You can split the donations, as long as donations are in full-hour increments.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

print the official personnel documents within his/her eOPF, but there will be no ability to modify these documents in eOPF. HR staff members will have access to employees' eOPFs within their service area and depending upon their specific roles, they may be responsible for maintaining documents within an employee's eOPF. The eOPF system provides an audit trail of when and why an authorized user has reviewed a specific record.

Q: When will employees have access to their eOPF?

A: The U.S. Army Civilian Human Resources Agency will rollout employee access to eOPF in a phased approach over a five month period. YPG is scheduled to have eOPF access the week of February 12. If you need to view a document in your eOPF before then and you cannot retrieve it from the Army's Civilian Personnel On-Line, MyBiz web site, you will need to contact your servicing CPAC / NAF HRO representative.

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VIEWPOINTS

President's Day is February 18, and the country recently witnessed another presidential inauguration. For this viewpoint, we asked members of the workforce, "Who is your favorite president in American history?"



Alice Hargreaves
Equipment specialist

Teddy Roosevelt. I always figured if I had lived back then, he was a man I could have admired. It was a rough and tumble world back then, and he wasn't afraid of it.

Mike Taylor
Purchasing agent



Ronald Reagan. He got us out of some tumultuous times and was a unifier. He was an easy going man who kept his cool all the time.

Craig Fisher
Test director



Franklin Roosevelt. He was president during the Great Depression and commander in chief during World War II. I remember him being mentioned the most in history class as doing great things for the country and that he was very well respected.

Stan Bent
Supply technician



Abraham Lincoln is my favorite president because of all the good he did in the few years he was in office. He was an intelligent, self-educated man who tried to look out for the well-being of all people.

Connie Whitener
Operations research analyst



George Washington. He was a war hero who put his men before himself and a president who put the nation ahead of his own ambitions. The people would have probably made him a king, but he didn't want that. He had a lot of wisdom and pointed the nation in the right direction.

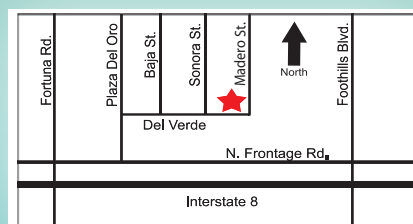
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Tillman Military Scholars now open

The application period for the Tillman Military Scholars is now open and will remain open until 11:59 PM PST, Friday, February 15.

The Tillman Military Scholars program supports our nation's active and veteran servicemembers and their spouses by removing financial barriers to completing a degree program of choice. The scholarship funds cover not only direct study-related expenses such as tuition and fees, but also other needs, including housing and child care.

Go to <http://bit.ly/VrROpe> to learn more about the criteria and application, learn about the benefits and expectations, meet a few of the current and network

scholars, and learn more about the Tillman community.

The foundation provides access to transition assistance tools, career guidance, entrepreneurial and service-related workshops like through Inc. Magazine and the Clinton Global Initiative conferences, and unique job opportunities following school. The foundation has assembled a fantastic team and really does incredible work to support transitioning veterans, their families and their communities.

Although the selection process is rigorous, applying is completely worthwhile for any Army veteran or active servicemember or spouse who plans to continue serving beyond the military."

—CHAPLAIN'S CORNER—

The life lesson of 'Corn Toss'

By Chaplain (Maj.) Loren Hutsell

There is a game in our country that is increasing in popularity. It supposedly started its rise to popularity at Cincinnati Bengals games in the late 1990s. The name of the game? Corn Toss, also known as Bean Bag, Bean Toss, Corn Hole, Soft Horseshoes, or Indiana Horseshoes. Whatever you call it, it's a game in which players take turns throwing special bean bags (cotton bags filled with corn) at a raised platform with a hole at the far end. Throwing a corn bag in the hole scores three points, while getting a bag on the platform gets you one point. Play continues until a player reaches the score of 21. When I deployed with the 47th CSH in 2009, it was one of our favorite forms of entertainment. I have also seen it played here at YPG.

The thing about Corn Toss is that you don't have to sink a bull's-eye to win. You can accumulate points just by getting on the board. You don't need perfect throws to

win because the "almost" throws steadily gain you points in the game. By analogy, the "almost" not only works in Corn Toss, it also works in making important life changes. Sometimes when we set goals for ourselves we get discouraged because the progress isn't going as quickly as we had hoped. But its important to remember that changes we want to make in our lives usually happen little by little. Our goals usually get accomplished over a length of time by making regular small steps and not by instantaneous giant leaps. There's an anonymous quote that says, "Sow a thought, and you reap an act. Sow an act and you reap a habit. Sow a habit, and you reap a character. Sow a character, and you reap a destiny." Keep sowing those thoughts and hopes of change, because eventually, they will become your destiny. Keep plugging away at those important life-changes that you want to make. Galatians 6:9 tells us to, "not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."

Next Outpost deadline is noon February 7th

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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 Retired Air Force Senior Flight Surgeon and State Air Surgeon for the Arizona National Guard with 27 years of military service. 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.



For additional information or to schedule an appointment call:

(928) 782-1980

www.YumaEyeDoctor.com

Se Habla Español

About Dr. Snyder



Elliott Snyder, OD

Fluent in Spanish, Elliott Snyder, O.D., offers optometric care for patients of all ages. He came to Aiello Eye Institute from Florida, where he studied at Nova Southeastern University's College of Optometry. He grew up in Las Vegas and received a bachelor's degree in biology from University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He continued his education at Nova in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, earning a bachelor's degree in vision science and a doctorate in optometry.

During his time in optometry school, Dr. Snyder served as student body president and was a recipient of the Transition Lens Scholarship. He also participated in vision testing with the Florida Special Olympics and worked with the Florida Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Also while in school, he had several externships where he gained valuable knowledge in the fields of ocular disease, pediatric ocular care and contact lens management.

Dr. Snyder is a supporter of the Boy Scouts of America and the Lions Club. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his family, bike riding, swimming and reading.

Dr. Snyder is an active member of the American Optometric Association (AOA) and works with InfantSEE®, a public health program managed by Optometry Cares, the AOA Foundation.

As a highly respected optometrist, Dr. Snyder, offers his patients the very best in precision eye care. To learn more about what he can do for you, request an appointment with Dr. Snyder, or call our office and one of our staff will schedule an appointment for you.

For more information call **(928) 782-1980**

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

**1881 W. 24th Street, Ste C
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**275 W. 28th Street
Yuma**

**11551 S. Fortuna Rd Ste E
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