

# THE OUTPOST

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground, Yuma, Arizona 85365 Volume 40 No. 9 Monday, May 12, 2014

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

## Peacetime use for aerostats

By Mark Schauer

For years, YPG has conducted developmental and acceptance testing on scores of aerostats called the Persistent Threat Detection System (PTDS) and its smaller cousin the Persistent Ground Surveillance System (PGSS) for use in forward operating bases and above urban areas in combat zones.

Both platforms marry the most cutting edge high-tech detection sensors to an inexpensive platform: an ordinary blimp.

The helium-filled lighter-than-air craft float thousands of feet above ground level, tethered to an armature on a long, portable mooring trailer and lofting a sensor suite that allows ground controllers to continuously monitor a huge swath of land with video footage and radar. To prevent wind gusts from putting stress on the tether, the armature gently revolves in a strong breeze, rotating the entire aerostat. The blimp is raised and lowered with an easily-operated winch.

More than 100 of the platforms have proved their worth numerous times standing guard above forward operating bases in Iraq and Afghanistan, but what is the future of this elegantly simple means of keeping surveillance over territory?

“I’ve always thought that this system would



(PHOTO BY MARK SCHAUER)

**YPG commander Col. Reed Young recently hosted representatives from the Yuma and Tucson sectors of the U.S. Border Patrol, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Drug Enforcement Administration for a day-long look at the Persistent Threat Detection System and Persistent Ground Surveillance System platforms under test at the proving ground. Young believes the systems can be converted to peacetime use by agencies like the Border Patrol. “If you have a real world U.S. government mission to protect the border, why not take advantage of an asset that the government already has?” Young said.**

have tremendous value when they started to bring them back to the states out of theater,” said Col. Reed Young, YPG commander. “It’s the kind of system that really doesn’t fit well into a peacetime Army because it is expensive to maintain and train Soldiers on and not the kind of thing that is easily operated in a peacetime environment. It just seems to me that if you have a real world U.S. government mission to protect the border, why not take advantage of an asset that the government already has?”

Toward this end, Young recently hosted representatives from the Yuma and Tucson sectors of the U.S. Border Patrol, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Drug Enforcement Administration for a day-long look at the PTDS and PGSS systems under test at the proving ground.

“We have very similar technologies with respect to integrated fixed towers and mobile surveillance systems with these types of camera systems along

SEE **AEROSTATS** page 2

Dollars donated to improve Price School playground  
/Page 4



Asian Pacific Islanders shine at luncheon  
/Pages 6-7



IMCOM welcomes new commander  
/Page 9





(PHOTOS BY MARK SCHAUER)

**YPG test officer Quang Ho (right) briefs visitors in a mission control room after the attendees watched a scenario in which simulated Border Patrol agents apprehended a group of simulated smugglers many miles from the platforms' cameras based on instructions radioed to them from the aerostats' camera operators. (AT RIGHT) The visitors got an up close look at the PTDS, a helium-filled lighter-than-air craft that floats thousands of feet above ground level.**

## AEROSTAT

FROM PAGE 1

with ground-based radar," said Felix Chavez, deputy chief patrol agent of the Tucson sector.

Among other things, the visitors crowded into a mission control room to watch a 20 minute-long scenario in which simulated Border Patrol agents apprehended a group of simulated smugglers many miles from the platform's cameras based on instructions radioed to them from the aerostats' camera operators. Further, in a real-life situation, an agent in a truck could watch the same video and radar feed supplied by the aerostat cameras from a laptop computer in their truck.

"Based on what I've seen of the system and what I've been briefed today, it seems to me that we could get oriented very quickly on the equipment and be able to implement it and execute with it," said Chavez. "It doesn't seem like it would be a far stretch with respect to what we have in terms of our integrated fixed towers."

The ground control stations for the sensor and camera payloads aboard the aerostats are capable of keeping weeks of archive footage. Thus, controllers can review old footage in

an effort to track exactly where perpetrators came from.

"Using it is a much better option than putting it in storage," said Young. "You could maintain the readiness for the next time you deploy somewhere. That way all the cost and expense during peacetime provides a legitimate benefit to the U.S. government but provides a springboard to use it the next time you go to war."

For their part, the visitors were impressed with their visit and the systems' capabilities.

"The hospitality was amazing, first and foremost," said Chavez. "The capability of the PTDS and PGSS is definitely something we can use in the border security mission."

As for going above and beyond his normal duties as commander of YPG to showcase the systems' capabilities to domestic law enforcement agencies, Young is philosophical.

"I'm not doing this as the commander of YPG or as a previous project manager for the program office," he said. "I'm doing it as a patriotic American that sees a way to do something good for Americans for a valuable, viable mission that our country has. Part of being an American is to take these opportunities and be the impetus for ideas like this."



## THE OUTPOST

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News may be submitted to:  
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# CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

## Role Model

By Chaplain Douglas (Maj.) Thomison

Good day Yuma Proving Ground. Yesterday, we recognized Mother's Day. The Holy Bible gives reference to encouraging women. The Bible says, "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you [Timothy] also." (2 Timothy 1:5) Some people can relate to having encouraging mothers and overall positive influences in their lives such as Timothy had. Do cherish these current or past memories.

Soon we will recognize dads on Father's Day. A man named Job appears to have been a good father. The Bible says, "In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. He had seven sons and three daughters..." (Job 1:1-2) Thinking of fathers, do take the time to appreciate dads past and present.

It is nice when we can celebrate special days with those around us or reflect on fond memories of those

who came before us. However, many people do not have an abundance of warm memories to glean from and certain holidays can feel awkward and even sensitive. We cannot do anything about changing the past, but we can try and improve on self, so we can be the Lois' and Eunice's and Job's of today and tomorrow.

So how do we become a positive role model (parent or otherwise)? I think the first thing is to simply be present. The old adage that "80% of life is just showing up" has merit. Go the extra mile in attending activities with friends and family. Once you arrive, pay close attention. Listen to those around you. Express interest. Leave on a positive note. These steps will make a considerable difference to loved ones.

Indeed, we cannot change from where we came and our initial life circumstances. However, we can change how we influence those around us today, which may be our very own children. Have a blessed day!

## SOCIAL SECURITY

update from Carolyn W. Colvin Acting

Commissioner of Social Security

"I have directed an immediate halt to further referrals under the Treasury Offset Program to recover debts owed to the agency that are 10 years old and older pending a thorough review of our responsibility and discretion under the current law to refer debt to the Treasury Department.

If any Social Security or Supplemental Security Income beneficiary believes they have been incorrectly assessed with an overpayment under this program, I encourage them to request an explanation or seek options to resolve the overpayment."

**Next Outpost deadline is noon**

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# "I sure do love my morning Sun!"



*"I was born in Yuma 79 years ago. My parents had twelve children, and I'm number seven. I don't remember ever being without "the Sun". My dad would come home after work and he would sit in the living room and open up the newspaper before anything else. He would read the entire paper. I'm sure this is where we learned our love for the Sun.*

*After I married, I briefly left, came back to Yuma and subscribed to the Yuma Daily Sun. I haven't been without the Sun since!*

*To this day, I'm the same; I start at the beginning and read it all! I go to daily Mass and when I return home, I make a cup of coffee, a piece of toast and sit in my recliner and read my Sun. This is my morning ritual.*

*I have seen the many changes in the Sun through the years and I really think it gets better and better.☺☺*

Elisa Ahurero

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# Dollars donated to improve Price School playground

School officials presented a \$10,000 check

By Yolie Canales

The playground at Yuma Proving Ground's Price Elementary School will soon have covered shades, trees, new outdoor lighting, and picnic tables, all thanks to a generous donation made by IHG Army Hotels and Lend Lease during a ceremony at the school.

School officials were presented with a \$10,000 check to help pay the cost for the playground additions.

"We have had the privilege of donating funds in support of Price School on numerous occasions since we became part of the YPG community in 2009," said Kate Alger, senior development manager for Lend Lease.

Alger said they have a special fundraising relationship with the school. "All Privatization of Army Lodging locations have specific, localized charity partnerships varying from Fisher House to the Wounded



(PHOTO BY YOLIE CANALES)

**Top row from left: Jennifer Harrington PTO President, Kate Alger, senior development manager for Lend Lease; Jody Sessions, general manager, IGH Army Hotels Candlewood Suites; Rick Martin, Garrison manager; Karl Koenig Yuma School District One Board Member, Amanda Stoermer, Price School Administrator, Dr. Darwin Stiffler, Superintendent for Yuma School District One and Gordon Rogers, deputy manager for Garrison. Front row from left students: Victoria Ivey, Sophia Rosa, David Currier, Payton Crawford and Taylor Alonzo.**

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Warrior Project based on location and need," said Alger. "Price School has been a special partnership specific to YPG."

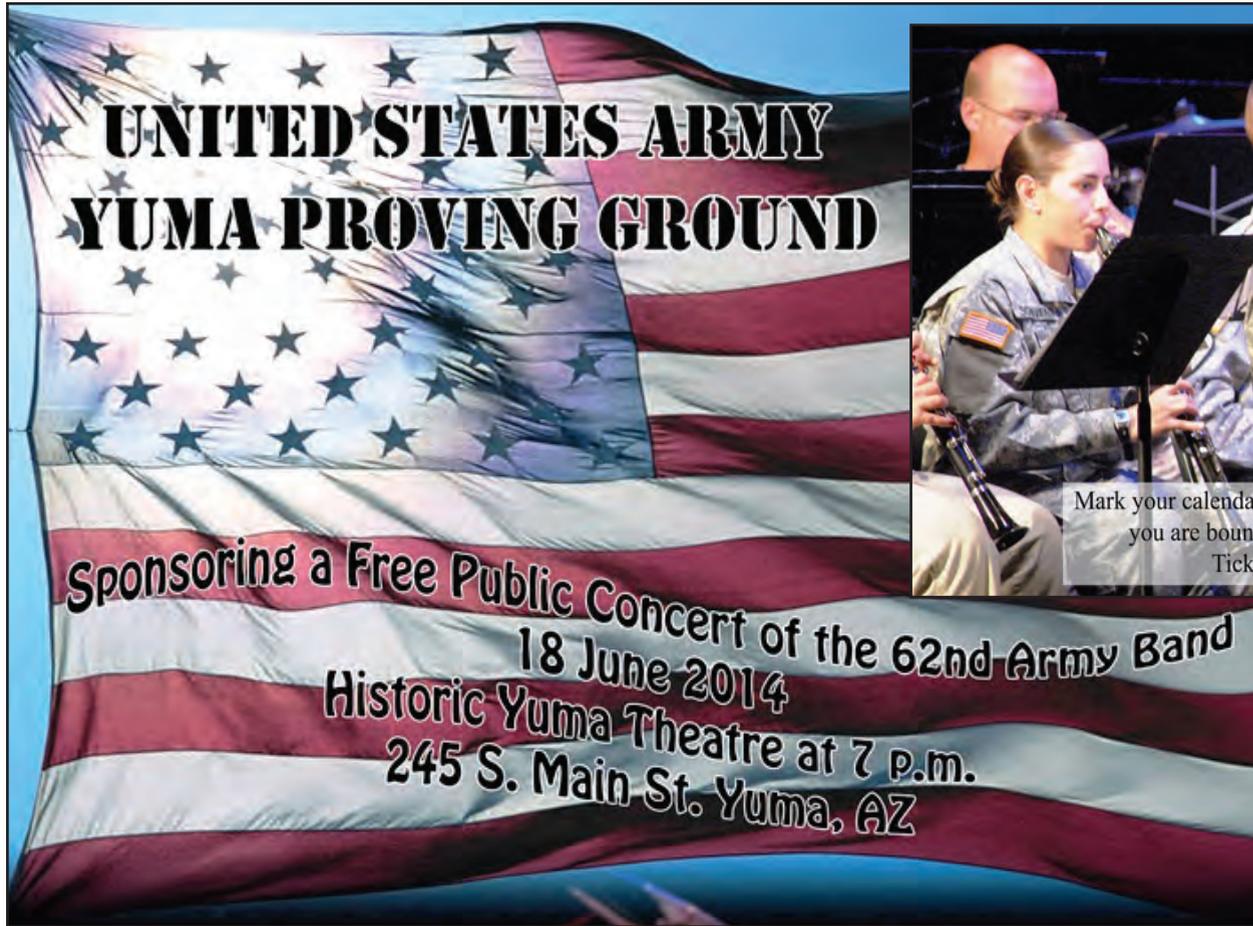
IHG maintains a strong year-round commitment to support the military men and women who are guests, work at its properties, and live in the communities where Lend Lease and IHG employees live and work. The firm supports growth and development by funding projects that address community challenges in the areas of housing, education, health, economic development, and environmental sustainability, and creates or supports programming to improve the quality of life for military families who sacrifice so much, said Alger.

"Price School educates the children of those that contribute to making the YPG community strong and irreplaceable," she said. "These children are the future Military Free Fall School instructors who will train

elite service members that stay in our hotels, testers who will work on the latest equipment and teachers who will teach the next generation of YPG residents."

Price Elementary School principal Amanda Stoermer said the money will go toward needed, productive uses. "We plan to purchase a set of walkie talkies for emergencies and lighting around our school that is so necessary when we have evening functions," said Stoermer. "We also plan to purchase ten mature trees for the playground so kids can have an area to play without being in the hot sun." School officials also will provide irrigation for the trees and install picnic tables.

"I am so grateful for the generous donation," said Stoermer with a smile. "The students will be excited to see that when they return back to school next year, the trees will be up and the added additions will be there for their use."



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# Asian Pacific Islanders **shine** at luncheon

By Yolie Canales

Since 1977, this month has been set aside each year as Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month to celebrate and pay tribute to the contributions generations of Asian and Pacific Islanders have made to American history, society and culture.

This year's celebration at Yuma Proving Ground included a cultural fashion show, entertainment and a delicious Polynesian buffet prepared by the Cactus Cafe. Dancing was performed and sumptuous gowns were worn and displayed to show the historical dress of people thousands of miles away. Attendees were especially delighted by authentic dance numbers performed by Cpt. Leilani Davis of YPG's health clinic.

Guest speaker Sgt. Charina Hocog, NCOIC at the veterinary clinic, shared an inspirational speech on life in her native country---the Philippines. "I know it's not Dr. Martin Luther King Day, but I love his famous quote, 'I have a dream,'" said Hocog. "We all have dreams and for most Asians, it's the dream of coming to America, the land of opportunities, land of possibilities."

She went on to say that the United States has been "the place to be for most of us who are hoping for a better life." From the early pilgrims aboard the Mayflower, to the many immigrants documented and undocumented today, there is always room for more, in her estimation.

Hocog came to Rota Island in 2001, which is part of a U.S. territory called the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas. "Upon arriving, I immediately found employment and worked in three different establishments," she said. In 2008 she joined the military and became a veterinary technician.

"We all know it's daily life is not always easy, especially now that we are facing shaky economics," said Hocog. "While it is imperative for our country to provide opportunities for our growing population, we, as individuals, should create opportunities for ourselves and for others. We islanders can make a difference. Let us be proud of our heritage."



**Julita Greek, models a Mestiza dress. The dress was made more popular by former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos. Some even called it the Imelda dress, or Terno. Mestiza dress is known for its elegance, and butterfly sleeves. It is usually worn for formal occasions.**



**Sgt. Charina Hocog, speaks to the audience at the recent Asian Pacific Islanders Luncheon at the Cactus Café.**



**Maj. Leilani Davis (below) is dancing to the beautiful "He Me-le No Li-lo" which you may recognize from the 2001 Disney animation movie, Lilo & Stitch. The song gives tribute to King David Ka-la-ka-ua and Queen Li-li-u'-o-ka-la-ni. They both made it their mission to preserve their Hawaiian culture in music and dance. At left, "Listening to the wind traveling down the mountain range, the fragrance of a yellow ginger lei, is the setting of the sun off of Waikiki Beach. These are the words that bring back visions of home in Hawaii.....Here is "I MISS YOU MY HAWAII."**



**Back Row, left to right: Sgt. Chasidy Tenison, Staff Sgt. Lisa Wood, Julita Greek, Sgt. Gwendolyn Cavalier. Bottom Row, left to right: Megan Brown, Sophia Rosa, Bradford Walk.**

(PHOTOS BY CHUCK WULLENJOHN)



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## VIEWPOINTS

Yumans like going to San Diego or Phoenix for a weekend getaway, but what about people in Panama City? We asked members of the Tropic Regions Test Center workforce what they do for a weekend getaway.



**Julio Villegas**  
Electronic engineer

My family has a farm in the mountains. In the dry season it is cold and has a lot of wind, so it's cool at night. We are building a house there and we would go there on weekends and holidays. You can spend the night in the house, then go to the beach in the morning.

**Carlos Mora**  
Civil engineer

I usually go to the beach and the mountains. I have a passion for photography, and take a lot of photos in the jungle. For the last five or six years I've been able to afford the equipment. My father has a small farm in the mountains, so I enjoy going there and walking and hiking and taking pictures. It's about 25 minutes from the beach, too, so you can go back and forth.



**Eric Nicolaisen**  
Subject matter expert

Most people go to the beaches and the mountains. I go to my farm and to the beach. If you want you can go over to Contadora Island or Taboga, which is like a day trip over and back. There are numerous beaches in Panama. People with children like to go to Summit Gardens to the zoo.



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IMCOM

# IMCOM welcomes new commander

By Amanda Kraus Rodriguez  
U.S. Army Installation Management Command

Lt. Gen. David Halverson took command of the U.S. Army Installation Management Command from Lt. Gen. Michael Ferriter during a ceremony on MacArthur Parade Field, Joint Base San Antonio -- Fort Sam Houston.

Halverson, who also took over as the Army's Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, came to IMCOM from the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, where he served as deputy commanding general for almost two years.

"When we go to war, it is IMCOM that stays home and takes care of our families," said U.S. Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. John Campbell, who presided over the ceremony. "So, we put our best and brightest to that task. I have full faith in this new team," Campbell said, congratulating Lt. Gen. Halverson on his accomplishments and ability to carry on, facing the challenges of today's Army.

The ceremony was attended by JBSA senior leaders, civic partners from the City of San Antonio and IMCOM region and garrison command teams, headquarters staff, employees and families.

In his first address as ACSIM and IMCOM commanding general, Halverson expressed gratitude for his family and the opportunity to lead IMCOM. Halverson pledged to continue unwavering in the service of Soldiers and families.

"Karen and I are so pleased and proud to be here today," Halverson said. "We're excited to continue to



(LOANED PHOTO)

**Army Lt. Gen. David D. Halverson assumes duties as commanding general of the U.S. Army Installation Management Command and Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management.**

serve. To Mike and Margie [Lt. Gen. and Mrs. Ferriter], I would like to especially thank you both for your hard work. IMCOM and ACSIM set the conditions of Army success."

Halverson concluded his remarks by saying that both he and his wife, Karen would put every effort into ensuring the continued success of the command and looked forward most to getting to know the team.

A West Point graduate, Halverson served tours of duty in both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Prior to joining TRADOC, he served as the commanding general of the U.S. Army Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill, Okla.

# New Social Media Platform: ArmyFit™

A new social media platform: ArmyFit™ was launched in January, giving you a powerful new tool to take charge of your comprehensive fitness and readiness. The Physical Dimension has been added to the Global Assessment Tool (GAT 2.0), providing a better graphical display of your results in each dimension of strength – social, emotional, spiritual, family and physical. You will also see how they perform in Sleep, Activity, and Nutrition – elements of the Performance Triad. In addition, you will receive your RealAge®, a metric that looks at all five dimensions of strength and tells you your biological age compared to your calendar age.

In time, GAT 2.0 will integrate medical and APFT data to deliver the most comprehensive physical fitness score possible. ArmyFit™ is a secure social media platform that Soldiers, Family members and Army Civilians can use to actively improve their resilience and performance based on their GAT 2.0 results. Once you complete the GAT 2.0, you'll have full access to all of the self-development resources within. You can then follow recommended experts and organizations.

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3. Fax your RSVP to PTAC. Complete the below form and FAX to: (480) 491-5719
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The Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) is funded in part through a cooperative agreement from the Department of Defense (DoD) through a program that is administered by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). The content of any written materials or verbal communications of the PTAC does not necessarily reflect the official Views of or imply endorsement by DoD or DLA.

## SAFETY CORNER

# Motorcycle safety: not just for May

**Julie Shelley, Directorate of  
Communication and Public Affairs  
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety  
Center**

While Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month kicked off nationally May 1, Army officials are urging leaders across the force to treat rider safety as a year-round imperative in response to rising PMV-2 fatalities.

As of May 4, Soldier motorcycle deaths were up 56 percent from the same date in fiscal 2013, a marked contrast to the decline seen at the end of last year.

"An increase is worrying in its own right, but this year's is exceptionally so considering the long winter we've had," said Brig. Gen. Timothy J. Edens, director of Army Safety and commanding general, U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center. "Riding season has been delayed for many Soldiers, yet we're already looking at more fatalities. With spring here and summer just around the corner, we've got to get a handle on things."

Indiscipline remains the single-greatest threat to Army motorcycle riders, according to USACR/Safety Center statistics. Speeding, alcohol, lack of training or personal protective equipment, or a combination thereof have been cited in at least eight of the 15 fatalities reported this fiscal year.

"With the resources the Army provides our motorcycle riders, it's astounding that we're still losing Soldiers to indiscipline," Edens said. "There's no excuse for it; progressive training, mentorship programs and many other tools are available to help our riders stay safe. This is where leaders need to step in and hold their Soldiers accountable to the standard."

Adding to the complexity of the

issue, though, is leader involvement in motorcycle accidents. Using May 4 as a baseline, 11 of the 15 Soldiers who have died on motorcycles this fiscal year have been leaders at the rank of sergeant and above.

"It's not just junior Soldiers who need to be held accountable, it's our leaders too," said USACR/Safety Center Command Sgt. Maj. Leeford C. Cain. "Curbing indiscipline starts with leadership. Whether it's passive noncompliance through lax enforcement or active, willful disregard for the standard, the end result is the same. We're failing our Soldiers if we don't correct this problem now."

While indiscipline is the top issue facing Army motorcyclists today, both Edens and Cain agreed riders must assume personal ownership of their safety by taking their training seriously and knowing their limits.

"Even in accidents where another driver is at fault, we have to ask if there was something the rider could've done differently," Edens said. "That's a big question in our training programs, because there are always going to be outliers like distracted drivers and wildlife. We want our Soldiers to be as prepared for and responsive to those potentialities as possible."

Several tools, including an updated Motorcycle Mentorship Program guidebook, are available at <https://safety.army.mil> and will be highlighted during May. Cain encouraged leaders and safety professionals to keep visiting the site, since new tools and programs are constantly being added to the Army's motorcycle safety arsenal.

"Many, many of our Soldiers can ride year-round thanks to the Army's various locations," he said. "It's time to stop thinking of motorcycles as a spring and summer problem. Like the rest of safety, it's a 24/7 commitment."



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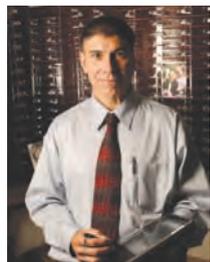
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# PROTECTING YOUR EYES

UV rays can also penetrate the structures of your eyes and cause cell damage. According to the Center for Disease and Control, some of the more common sun-related vision problems include cataracts, macular degeneration, and pterygium (non-cancerous growth of the conjunctiva that can obstruct vision).

## FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR EYES FROM THE SUN ALL YEAR LONG:

Sun damage to eyes can occur anytime during the year, not just in the summer time. Be sure to wear UV-blocking sunglasses with 99% or higher UV block. Effective sunglasses should block glare & 99 to 100% of UV rays. Wear a broad-brimmed hat that keeps your face and eyes shaded from the sun at most angles whenever you're outside.



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Dr. Class specializes in routine vision care and ocular diseases.

- Don't be fooled by clouds: the sun's rays can pass through haze and thin clouds.
- Never look directly at the sun. Looking directly at the sun at any time including during an eclipse, can lead to solar retinopathy, which is damage to the eye's retina from solar radiation.
- Don't forget the kids and other older family members: everyone is at risk, including children and senior citizens. Remember to protect their eyes with hats and sunglasses as well.

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