



USAG Fort Irwin gains new commander

Story and photos by Kimberly Hackbarth

USAG Fort Irwin Public Affairs Office

FORT IRWIN, Calif. — Col. Jason Clarke relinquished command of U.S. Army Garrison Fort Irwin to Col. Lane Bomar during a ceremony June 21, at garrison headquarters, here.

Clarke assumed command in June 2021 and took on what Brig. Gen. Curtis D. Taylor, commander, National Training Center (NTC) and Fort Irwin, deemed the “hardest job in the desert.”

“Eighteen months of COVID restrictions had frayed the fabric of life, the thing that makes Fort Irwin such a great place at this remote installation,” Taylor said during his speech. “You and I both agreed that rebuilding a cohesive community was the most important thing that we could focus on together.”

According to Taylor, Clarke started a regular rhythm of community events that grew from interesting to world-class, culminating in a concert in April that had over half the post’s population in attendance.

“Your team also set out to transform our facilities, starting with where our Soldiers live and work,” Taylor said.

The transformation included a new community library, the renovation of Jackrabbit Park, a new casual dining restaurant and a new bar for Soldiers at the Epicenter, new and renovated community playgrounds, and a renovated troop pool, Taylor said.

“Ten years from now this post will look very different,” Taylor said. “It could not have happened without months of work that you invested.”

During Clarke’s speech, he acknowledged that when he took the job of garrison commander, he had different expectations.

“I thought this would be a simple 9 [a.m.] to 5 p.m. job,” Clarke said. “Turns out it’s more like 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. job with a couple calls after that, but it’s also the best job I never knew I wanted.”

During his time as garrison commander, Clarke saw true change happen to the Fort Irwin community, he said.

“My promise to you two years ago was to put COVID in the history books and bring back our community programs and reconnect with the outside community that we lost during the pandemic,” he said, mentioning the successes of the Child Youth Services and religious programs on the installation. “I’ve lost count of how many grand openings we’ve had, but we are breaking ground and renovating to improve the future of this community and to continue to improve quality of life.”

In his speech, Bomar addressed leadership from the National Training Center and Installation Management Command.

“I look forward to supporting your efforts of ensuring we provide a high quality of life to match the high quality of training this installation provides to the force,” Bomar said.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Col. Jason Clarke (second from right), outgoing garrison commander, receives the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Irwin colors from Command Sgt. Maj. David Palmer, garrison senior enlisted advisor, during a change of command ceremony at garrison headquarters on Fort Irwin, California, June 21, 2023. Clarke relinquished command of USAG Fort Irwin after taking command in June 2021.

Bomar also reaffirmed his commitment to the Fort Irwin community and partners.

“To the Fort Irwin garrison team, I’m excited for the next two years and I’m ready to begin this journey with you,” Bomar said. “To the friends, families and partners of the Fort

Irwin garrison, I look forward to working with you in ensuring Fort Irwin garrison remains committed to providing excellent and responsible quality of life to the NTC community.”

More USAG PHOTOS, Page 2

11th ACR welcomes new regimental CSM



Photos by 11th ACR Public Affairs Office

Leaders from 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment conducted an Assumption of Responsibility ceremony between Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Lawrence Shaiko, incoming command sergeant major, and Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Burg, outgoing command sergeant major, on Fort Irwin, California, June 22, 2023. Shaiko is the 26th regimental command sergeant major.

More 11TH ACR PHOTOS, Page 5

NTC/Fort Irwin celebrates Army’s birthday



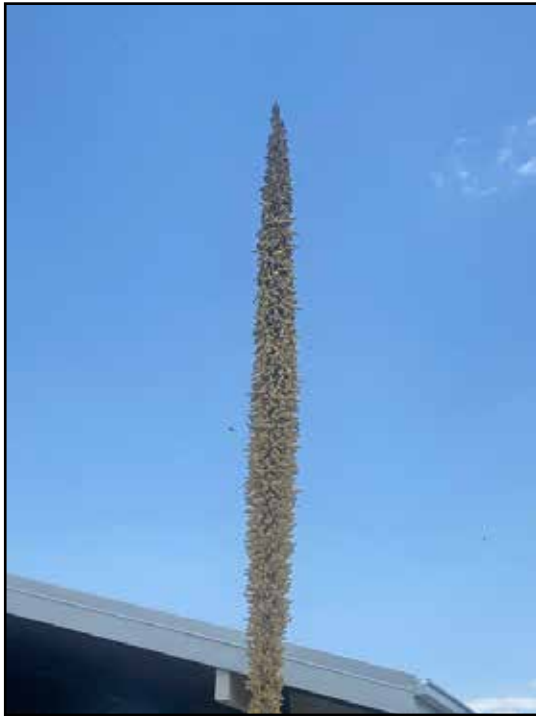
Photos by Jack J. Adamyk

The National Training Center and Fort Irwin celebrated the U.S. Army birthday with a cake cutting on Fort Irwin, California, June 14, 2023. Brig. Gen. Curtis D. Taylor, commander, National Training Center and Fort Irwin, gave a speech and he, along with the eldest and youngest Soldiers present, cut the ceremonial birthday cake.

More BIRTHDAY PHOTOS, Page 5

Desert Wildlife

Weird & wonderful desert denizens



Courtesy photos

By David Davis

Certified Wildlife Biologist

Today I received a call from a resident concerned about a “tarantula hawk nest.”

I informed them that the photo (photo on the left) was Our Lord’s Candle which is a Yucca species in the century plant family (Agavaceae). The tarantula hawks simply provide a service as important pollinators,

especially milkweeds, mesquites, and yuccas.

The tarantula hawk wasp gets its name because it hunts, rather like a bird of prey. In this case, the prey is a tarantula or a large and well-fed spider. The wasp doesn’t eat the tarantula but paralyzes it, drags it to its burrow, and lays an egg on it. When the egg hatches, the larva burrows into the spider’s body but is careful not to eat any vital organs until just before it pupates. Then, it emerges

like the ‘chest-burster’ in Alien; continuing the tarantula hawk’s life cycle.

In fact, tarantula hawks live in burrows underground (photo on the right).

I am glad that this person contacted me concerned about public safety. Tarantula hawks are fairly docile unless provoked. We both got to enjoy a close encounter of another desert denizen that’s weird and wonderful!

From USAG PHOTOS, Page 1



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Brenda Lee McCullough (right), director, U.S. Army Installation Management Command, Directorate-Readiness, passes the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Irwin colors to Col. Lane Bomar (left), incoming garrison commander, during a change of command ceremony at garrison headquarters on Fort Irwin, California, June 21, 2023.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Col. Jason Clarke, outgoing garrison commander, addresses the audience during a change of command ceremony at garrison headquarters on Fort Irwin, California, June 21, 2023. Clark relinquished command of USAG Fort Irwin after taking command in June 2021.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Col. Lane Bomar, incoming garrison commander, addresses the audience during a change of command ceremony at garrison headquarters on Fort Irwin, California, June 21, 2023.

WHO WE ARE

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HIGH DESERT WARRIOR

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2nd Place, 2017 U.S. Army IMCOM

Newspaper Competition — Feature Photograph

Honorable Mention, 2009 U.S. Army IMCOM-West

Newspaper Competition — Tabloid category

3rd Place, 2008 Dept. of the Army

Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware

Newspaper Competition — Tabloid Category

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Facebook (Public Affairs): @FtIrwin

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Matthew 11:28-30 Take my yoke upon you

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Ever melted a machine gun barrel? There are a variety of automatic weapons in service in our military, such as the classic M2 Browning, or the M240B. Fired nonstop at their full cyclic rate their barrels will melt and deform in a matter of minutes, quickly becoming useless. Given just a few seconds of rest between shots, and a few minutes of cooling after they become hot, and they can be used for thousands or even tens of thousands of rounds.

Rest is essential to our lives as mortal human beings. Without it, our performance flags, our joy fades, and our energy disappears. Prolonged periods without rest can cause us to seize up, like an engine without any oil to lubricate it, a phone that has gone too long without a charge, or a machine gun barrel running at its full cyclic rate without a break in fire.

Yet, life doesn't always cooperate with our need for rest. Sometimes, even when we try to maintain balance in our lives between our work and our need for rest, we may have to work past that breaking point, where weariness begins to tear us down and our limitations and weaknesses become exposed.

Jesus' message here is precisely for you in these moments. His invitation in this passage is to those who have been worn down by more than we can bear, who have carried burdens of any kind for further than we feel we are capable of carrying. To us, His promise is not always that He will make these burdens disappear, but that He will bear them with us.

- What burdens do you carry?
 - How can I take hold of this rest that Jesus promises?
 - Do I trust that Jesus Christ can and will bear my burdens with me?
- May you find rest from your burdens in Jesus Christ.

Chaplain's Corner



June National Training Center Community Box Tour



Photos by Dave Dupree

Thirty five community members attended the National Training Center Community Box Tour June 9 at Fort Irwin, California. The Community Box Tour provides members of Fort Irwin and surrounding communities an opportunity to learn about the mission of the National Training Center and Fort Irwin.

Fort Irwin Soldiers meet Nick Jonas at "Salute to Summer"



Courtesy photos

Soldiers from Fort Irwin, California, attended the taping of NBC's "Salute to Summer" concert to celebrate the U.S. Army and its "Be All You Can Be" campaign and met Nick Jonas at Universal CityWalk in Los Angeles, California, June 3, 2023. The "Salute to Summer" special was expected to start streaming July 7 on Peacock.

News

Fort Irwin breaks ground on Energy Resiliency Project



Photos by Jack J. Adamyk

Col. Jason A. Clarke, Fort Irwin garrison commander, launches soil during the groundbreaking event for the Energy Resiliency Project on Fort Irwin, California, June 15, 2023. The project has been actively worked on since the early 2000's and is anticipated to be completed within the next two years.

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From BIRTHDAY PHOTOS, Page 1



Community

Parole in place: Potential citizenship for undocumented family members

What is Parole in Place?

Parole in place is a legal status that allows a Family member to lawfully stay in the United States for a certain period of time (typically in one-year increments). It is granted on a case-by-case basis. Typically, it is granted for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit. However, it is also available to certain undocumented family members of qualified current and former U.S. military personnel.

What are the Benefits of Parole in Place?

The main benefit that parole in place offers is that the applicant possesses a valid legal status and is authorized to stay in the country. Also, once approved, the family member may apply for a work permit. Most importantly, it provides the family member with the possibility to adjust their status and become a lawful permanent resident (green card holder).

Who Can Apply for Parole in Place?

In order to qualify for parole in place, the applicant must have entered the country without inspection, and be physically present in the United States. Also, the applicant must be the spouse, widow(er), parent, son, or daughter, of a current or former member of the U.S. Armed Forces. The service member must be

a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, and must meet one of the following requirements:

- Serve on active duty orders;
- Serve as a member in the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve; or
- Service member is a military veteran, living or deceased, who served on active-duty orders or in the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve and was not dishonorably discharged.

Family members who were admitted by an immigration official upon entry to the U.S. are not eligible for parole in place.

What Documents Do I Need to Request Parole in Place?

All eligible applicants must fill out form I-131, Application for Travel Document, and submit it to their local USCIS field office. Applicants must also submit proof of their family relationship to the service member, such as birth certificate, or marriage certificate. In addition,



tion, the applicant must submit proof of the servicemember's citizenship or permanent residence, and proof of military service. Finally, it is important to submit proof of any favorable discretionary factors that support the parole in place application.

If Approved, How Long Can I Stay in the U.S.?

Parole in place authorizes the family member to stay in the United States for one year. The applicant may request a one-year extension by filing a new parole in place application.

What Happens After Parole in Place is Granted?

When a person enters the country unlawfully (i.e., without inspection), they are considered inadmissible for adjustment of status purposes. Usually, they must depart the U.S. in order to apply for an immigrant visa at the U.S. Consulate. Since parole is considered a lawful

admission for purposes of adjustment of status, parole in place allows the applicant to meet the requirement of being lawfully admitted. Thus, the applicant becomes eligible for adjustment of status and does not have to depart the U.S. to obtain a green card.

It should be noted that parole in place only overcomes an immigrant's unlawful entry. However, it does not overcome other grounds of inadmissibility. Please talk to a legal assistance attorney to discuss whether there are any other inadmissibility grounds in your case.

How Can the Legal Assistance Office Help?

The parole in place process is granted as a discretionary decision; therefore, it is crucial to submit a complete packet with all supporting evidence. Also, there are special situations in which parole in place may not be the best option. For assistance or advice on preparing your application packet, call the Fort Irwin Legal Assistance Office at 760-380-5321, or visit us in Building 230. Our attorneys are able to answer your questions and guide you through the process.

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Fort Irwin MWR hosts Freedom Fest

Fort Irwin Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation hosted Freedom Fest at Painted Rocks near Fort Irwin, California, June 24, 2023.



TV show filmed at Fort Irwin airs

Story and photos by Kimberly Hackbarth

USAG Fort Irwin Public Affairs Office

FORT IRWIN, Calif. — The first episode of “Downey’s Dream Cars”, Robert Downey, Jr.’s new show he partially filmed here in January, aired June 22 on the streaming platform Max, formerly HBO Max.

The show follows Downey, Jr. as his vehicles are retrofitted to be more environmentally friendly.

Rich Benoit, from the YouTube channel Rich Rebuilds, said he was called in as a subject matter expert on converting gas vehicles to electric.

“It was supposed to be a simple roundtable discussion about the future of transport,” Benoit said. “Two weeks later we were tapped on the shoulder to build a car for Robert Downey, Jr.!”

Benoit participated in the filming of the episode on Fort Irwin.

“I had an absolute blast filming at Fort Irwin and engaging with the Soldiers,” Benoit said. “They were very professional and supportive to all of our needs for the truck and filming.”

Brig. Gen. Curtis D. Taylor, commander, National Training Center (NTC) and Fort Irwin, showed Downey, Jr. and his crew around Fort Irwin during filming.

“It was great hosting the cast and crew of ‘Downey’s Dream Cars,’” said Taylor. “They were just as interested in the unique training mission we have at the NTC as we were with their electric vehicle conversion.”

Benoit said he was “shocked” at how accommodating the Fort Irwin Soldiers were.

“The curious engineer in me had a million questions on their military tanks, and they answered every one with a smile,” Benoit said. “Who knows, I may buy one.”

Benoit said electric vehicles can sometimes get a bad rap, and even though they have been around for several decades, there is a lot of confusion as to their capabilities.

“Many believe they are not as powerful as internal combustion engine vehicles, nor can they accomplish the same tasks,” Benoit explained.

During filming at Fort Irwin, Col. Chris Vitale, director, Operational Energy & Army Climate Directorate with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Installations, Energy and Environment, spoke with Downey, Jr. about the Army’s environmentally-friendly future.

“We discussed the significance of Army’s research, development, and testing related to tactical vehicle electrifica-

tion and the increased capabilities it can provide from the tactical to the strategic levels of warfare,” Vitale said. “The Army’s ability to push the needle on fuel demand reduction on the battlefield will place our fighting force in a position of advantage and reduce risk to our Soldiers.”

The U.S. military showcasing these advancements in technology and proving their capabilities for thousands of Soldiers speaks volumes, Benoit said.

“It certainly makes people think if our military, which is known for the most cutting-edge technology, supports it, maybe there is something there for the rest of us,” Benoit said.

Benoit said that his biggest takeaway from the military’s advancements in renewable energy sources shows that they are thinking about a sustainable future.

“On TV and recruitment commercials, we are used to seeing thousands of big trucks, and 6-wheeled military vehicles blowing smoke everywhere,” he said. “The fact that the military sees a need for quiet, more efficient, and more powerful vehicles shows that they are not only thinking of the safety of our nation, but the safety of the Soldiers that have to service, maintain, and operate the vehicles on a daily basis.”



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Robert Downey, Jr. (left) and Brig. Gen. Curtis D. Taylor (center), commander, National Training Center (NTC) and Fort Irwin, film a scene for “Downey’s Dream Cars” at National Training Center headquarters on Fort Irwin, California, Jan. 27, 2023.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Rich Benoit (passenger side), from the YouTube channel Rich Rebuilds, and Robert Downey, Jr. (driver side) speak with a Soldier from 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, National Training Center (NTC), during the filming of a scene for “Downey’s Dream Cars” on Fort Irwin, California, Jan. 27, 2023.

July Calendar

★ U.S. ARMY
JULY 2023

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					Karaoke Every Friday Night 2000-2300 hrs. SHOCKWAVE	1 COSMIC BOWLING Every Saturday Night 1830-2230 DesertWinds
2	3	4	5 BOSS Cards & Games Night	6	7	8
← 29 Jun - 16 Jul 23: BLOCK Leave →						
9	10 Movie Night @ Warrior Zone	11	12 BOSS Cards & Games Night	13	14	15
← 29 Jun - 16 Jul 23: BLOCK Leave →						
16	17	18 BOSS Pantry	19 MEDDAC PFPC Epi Center MEDDAC School Physical	20 Blood Drive (Sandy Basin)	21 BOSS Car Wash	22
23	24	25	26 MEDDAC School Physical BOSS Cards & Games Night	27 SVUSD State of the Schools (Sandy Basin)	28	29 Block Party
30	31					

National Training Center and Fort Irwin Highlights

- 04 JUL: Independence Day
- 19 and 26: MEDDAC School Physical
- 19 JUL: MEDDAC PFPC Epi-Center
- 20 JUL: Blood Drive
- 27 JUL: SVUSD State of the Schools
- 29 JUL: Block Party
- 29 JUN-16 JUL: Block Leave

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