

ANGEL'S WINGS

VOL. 5 NO. 6

920th RESCUE WING • PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, FLA. • AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND

JULY 2007



OPEN WATER

THE 920th RESCUE WING TRAINS FOR ONE OF NASA'S WORST-CASE SHUTTLE-LAUNCH SCENARIOS

PG.8

ANGEL'S WINGS

VOL.5 / NO.6 JULY 2007

920th RESCUE WING EDITORIAL STAFF

wing commander
COL. STEVEN KIRKPATRICK

chief of public affairs
CAPT. CATHLEEN SNOW

asst. chief of public affairs
2nd LT. JAIME PINTO

ncoic
MASTER SGT. RAYMOND PADGETT

editor
STAFF SGT. PAUL FLIPSE

staff
MASTER SGT. CHANCE BABIN
STAFF SGT. HEATHER KELLY
STAFF SGT. MARIA EAMES



contact

920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs Office
734 Spacelift Avenue MS9213
Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. 32925
tel. 321.494.0535; fax 321.494.1103
e-mail: editor@920rqw.afrc.af.mil
Online: www.920rqw@afrc.af.mil

This funded Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of **ANGEL'S WINGS** are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force. The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs office of the 920th Rescue Wing. All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

cover photo illustration / STAFF SGT. PAUL FLIPSE



THE INSIDE SCOOP

news&features



OPEN WATER pp.8-12

Question: you're a NASA shuttle astronaut whose had to make an open-water bailout shortly after liftoff ... now what do you do? Answer: nothing—the 920th Rescue Wing is on the way.



SAVING A LIFE IN THE FAST LANE pg.6

As the parachute section supervisor for the 308th Rescue Squadron, Tech. Sgt. Juan Duharte is used to having people's lives in his hands. This time, it happened before he got to work.



A DAY IN THE LIFE pg.4

Rescue Wing reservists invited their bosses to see what life is like during a typical drill weekend with the 920th. What their employers got was an experience that was anything but typical.

pointsofinterest

COMMENTARY pg.3

NEWS BRIEFS p.4

NEWS pp.5-7

FEATURE pp.8-12

SPOTLIGHT pg.14

SAVE OF THE MONTH pg.15

SALUTES pg.15

PARTING SHOTS pg.16

timemanagement

UTA SCHEDULE

August 4-5

September 8-9

October TBD

November TBD

December TBD

January TBD

February TBD

March TBD

DINING FACILITY

Br. 6 - 8 a.m. (weekdays)

Br. 7 - 9 a.m. (weekends)

Ln. 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Dn. 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

FITNESS CENTER

Mon/Fri 5 a.m. - 11 p.m.

Sat/Sun 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.

BARBER SHOP

Mon/Fri 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sat 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sun 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

CLASS VI / SHOPETTE / GAS STATION

Mon/Sat 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Sun 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.



CAPT. HARLEY "HOG" DOUBET

Combat Rescue Officer, 308th Rescue Squadron

Nothing so stable as change

I just wanted to inform everyone that I have been selected for an assignment to the 22nd Training Squadron at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., in the Extended Active Duty (EAD) program. I will officially leave my AGR tour on June 29 and enter active duty on June 30.

This brings to close a very long, rewarding tour of duty with the 920th Rescue Wing. I first joined the 301st Rescue Squadron June 13, 1996 and have seen things grow to what they are today—it is truly amazing!!

In this 11-year journey, I have met some wonderful people, developed some very close friendships, and have had some of the best times in my military career—I thank you for that.

For those of you who I have had the pleasure to work with, I wanted to thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me such fond memories. It was an honor to work with so many of you, to share in the good times and the bad.

Rescue has been my life for more than 22 years now and I could not imagine doing any-

thing but. It's what's inside of all of us in this business that makes rescue so special ... "That Others May Live."

A special thanks goes out to the 920th Pararescue Team (PJ's/CRO's), for those that worked so hard to ensure the proper foundation was laid for the 308th Rescue Squadron so it could grow to what it has become today.

There was a lot of preliminary groundwork that went into the squadron—some of the hardest, most rewarding moments of my life, moments that would have been impossible to have done alone.

Tomorrow will be my last day at work, and then it's all over except for the memories.

Thanks again for all you do for this wing and for your country. Everyone has such an important role in making things happen in this business.

I will be yesterday's news shortly, so I wanted to take this little bit of time to say thank you to all of you for having such an impact on my life.

Your brother in Rescue,

Harley "Hog" Doubet

NEWS BRIEFS



A **COMBAT DINING-IN** is scheduled for September 8 at 5:30 p.m. As September is the month the Air Force will celebrate its 60th birthday, the theme of the dining-in will be "Celebrating 60 Years of Air Superiority." All officers and enlisted personnel are welcome to attend. The cost of the event is \$10 per person, which includes dinner.

Tickets may be purchased from any of the following individuals: Capt. Jon Connerton (920 MSS); Capt. Tamara Lee (920 ASTS); Senior Master Sgt. Craig Kennedy (920 RQW); Senior Master Sgt. Phyllis Daniel (920 MSG); Master Sgt. Sherry Boswell (920 RQW); Master Sgt. Karl Owens (920 MXS); Tech. Sgt. Lori Steele (920 MXS).

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Capt. Jon Connerton at jon.connerton@rescue920.patrick.af.mil or call him at 494-0842.

WITH HISPANIC HERITAGE

Month starting September 15, volunteers are needed to serve in the Hispanic Heritage Committee.

If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Staff Sgt. Nikki Bonilla at 494-7147.

ontherecord

“The penalty good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men.”

-Plato



photo/Airman 1st Class Kenny Holston

MAJ. LAURIE TURNER, 435TH AEROMEDICAL SQUADRON, describes Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility (CASF) missions to Col. Steve Kirkpatrick, 920TH Wing Commander, during his June 22 visit to Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

BLUEPRINT FOR FAMILY PLANNING

All Air Force members with family members must take the initiative to use all available military and civilian resources at their disposal to ensure their family members receive adequate care, support and supervision in a manner compatible with the member's care when they're unavailable.

Family care plans must cover all reasonable practical situations, both short term and long term, and must be sufficiently detailed and systematic to provide for a smooth rapid transfer of responsibilities to another individual during the absence of the military sponsor.

Failure to make and maintain such arrangements will subject the applicant to disciplinary or involuntary separation action or both.

You are required to maintain a family care plan and/or complete an Air Force Form 357 if any of the following applies to you:

1. You're either a single parent or have a military spouse and have family members residing in your household who are:
 - a. Unmarried children under the age of 19.
 - b. Unmarried children 19 years of age or older incapable of self-care.
 - c. A parent or other related person, by blood or marriage who depends on you for over half of his or her support, is incapable of self-care and resides in your household.
 - d. In a unique family situation where a Family Care Plan would be required (i.e., civilian spouse is away in another state for training or a job).
2. You have a military spouse and you have stepchildren, regardless of legal obligations, residing in your household.
3. It is your responsibility to notify your commander or first sergeant within 60 days if changes in your personal status of family circumstances require you to maintain a family care plan.
4. You should have arrangements for your designees to have access to adequate funds for support of family members during absences. Such arrangements should include a bank account in the name of your family members or designees and/or completing an allotment form, to be prepared to start the process.
5. You're required to have on file at the unit level a power of attorney for each designee listed along with your AF Form 357.
6. As part of your family care plan, you're required to recertify your Air Force Form 357 annually.

If you have questions about your family care plan, please contact your first sergeant or customer service at 494-6983.



SEEING IS BELIEVING // Employers of 920th Rescue Wing reservists visited Patrick Air Force Base June 2. About 40 bosses turned out for the chance to experience life in the Air Force Reserve. They rode in a rescue wing HC-130 Hercules and HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter, and were given a demonstration by the pararescue squadron. The Air Force Reserve has about 75,000 members, nearly 50,000 of whom are traditional reservists—those who have civilian jobs and serve one weekend per month with their Reserve units.

Bosses get a day in the life

BY MASTER SGT. RAYMOND PADGETT

920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Nearly 40 employers of reservists assigned here braved a heavy downpour and tornado warnings to take part in the 920th Rescue Wing's annual employer's day, held here June 2.

The civilian employers were nominated by their employees who serve in the Rescue Wing for this program in conjunction with the Florida Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

Their morning started with a welcome and mission brief from 920th Wing Commander Col. Steven Kirkpatrick, after which employers were treated to lunch at the Riverside Dining Hall with their reservists.

Thanks to a lucky break in the weather, the employers were given rides over Cape Canaveral in HH-60G Pave Hawk helicop-

ters and an HC-130P/N extended-range refueling aircraft.

Employer Robbie Bogner, a service manager at Walt Disney World, said he was fascinated by the search and rescue mission and how his reservist, Staff Sgt. Chris Tice, a maintainer with the 920th Maintenance Squadron, was integral in keeping aircraft ready for the mission.

"You hear all about the Army Rangers, Special Forces and SEALs, but the Air Force Pararescuemen are actually the ones to rescue the other forces when no one else can," he said.

"Employers are vital to enabling Citizen Airmen to serve their country," said Colonel Kirkpatrick. "Moreover, their active support and encouragement are key to the successes of our reservists.

"We recognize the sacrifices civilian employers make to enable their employees who serve, to do so wholeheartedly," he said.

Colonel Kirkpatrick also spoke of the rescue capabilities of the 920th, and the wing's recent contributions to both combat operations around the globe and

humanitarian missions such as Hurricane Katrina here in the U.S.

Then Doug Corbett, executive director of the Florida committee for ESGR, explained the purpose of their organization in helping employers and reservists as a non-biased mediator through their Ombudsman Program. Corbett pointed out the three tiers of service, family and employment that reservist struggle to keep balanced.

"We are finding more and more employers are seeking our guidance which is a fairly recent trend," he said.

The 920th Rescue Wing is one of the most called-upon units in the Air Force Reserve, and the only Reserve rescue wing in the U.S. The wing's primary mission is combat rescue, with members deployed worldwide in support of the Global War on Terror.

But it also supports a variety of state-side, peacetime missions, such as Space Shuttle and rocket launches, humanitarian aid to victims of natural disaster, and rescue support to mariners off the Florida coast and hikers on Mount Hood.



Saving a life in the fast lane

On his way to work, a rescue-wing reservist comes to the aid of an injured motorist in the wake of a fiery head-on collision

BY STAFF SGT. HEATHER KELLY
920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

When Tech. Sgt. Juan Duharte got into his car on the morning of May 16, calamity was the last thing on his mind.

The daily drive to Patrick Air Force Base from his home in Palm Bay was a commute he had grown accustomed to as the parachute section supervisor with the 308th Rescue Squadron.

Responsible for the care and maintenance of unit pararescuemen's parachutes, Sergeant Duharte was familiar with how crucial attention to detail and rapid response is to the rescue mission. His experience and training as an Air Force Reserve rescue wing member would be equally as critical in saving a life—not during combat, but during his morning commute.

"It started as a typical day," Sergeant Duharte said. "Around 6:15 a.m.,

I was on I-95 headed toward the base when, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a vehicle begin to cross over the median. In that split second, I thought, 'my God, he's going to hit somebody.' Moments later, that's what happened."

A truck crossed the median and collided with another truck right in front of the rescue reservist, who then swerved to avoid the accident. Sergeant

Duharte parked his car on the shoulder of the road and dialed 9-1-1.

"The truck that had crossed over hit the other vehicle with such force that it flipped over the top and landed behind it," said Sergeant Duharte. "They both were on fire."

In the midst of the chaos, a minivan drove off the road and into the woods on the side of the highway.

"She was bleeding, but breathing and conscious ... she begged us not to let her die there."

TECH. SGT. JUAN DUHARTE
920th Rescue Wing Parachute Section





photos/Tim Walters-Florida Today

SOLEMN AFTERMATH II (clockwise from above left) The vehicle on the right was traveling northbound on I-95 when the vehicle on the left, which was traveling southbound, crossed the median. The two collided head-on, killing both drivers; to avoid becoming part of the crash, a woman driving a minivan swerved into the trees off the highway shoulder, where she became trapped by her steering wheel after the minivan slammed to a stop; state troopers investigate the charred remains of one of the trucks involved in the accident, which exploded shortly after colliding. Tech. Sgt. Juan Duharte of the 920th Rescue Wing witnessed the accident and stopped to provide aid to the woman in the minivan, staying with her until help arrived even after the vehicles exploded and flames engulfed the area.

"I saw the minivan smoking and heard a voice yelling for help," he said. "When I got to the van, I could see the dashboard had crumpled and the driver was pinned in."

Sergeant Duharte and a good samaritan attempted to open the mini-van-driver's door—to no avail.

"She was bleeding, but breathing and conscious," he said. "She begged us not to let her die there."

Sergeant Duharte reassured the victim he wouldn't leave her and stayed close, waiting for the fire department to arrive.

A crowd formed around the accident scene, and a state trooper began yelling at them to back up. Moments later, both trucks exploded, sending debris flying across the highway and knocking the samaritan off his feet, according to Sergeant Duharte.

Although both drivers involved in the collision were killed, the fire department was able to put out the flames

and safely extract the woman from the minivan.

"They put her in a first-flight helicopter, and she was flown to Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne," he said.

Sergeant Duharte's supervisor, Master Sgt. Mark Spillers, said he wasn't surprised at the sergeant's initiative.

"He is the type of person who would always stop to help if you needed it," Sergeant Spillers said. "I saw the accident later that night on TV ... it was pretty horrific. It reminded me of the war zone."

Having returned from deployment in March, Sergeant Duharte credits his training for his ability to react quickly to the crash.

"If you aren't prepared to deal with a situation like that, you can be more of a hindrance than a help," he said.

"There were people who stopped who weren't doing anything; they were just looking."

Later, the sergeant checked in on the woman he helped.

"She was going to spend some time in the ICU but was recovering," he said. "It made me feel good to know she was going to be OK. I think we can all do our part to help each other more."

Sergeant Spillers agreed.

"When it comes to things that aren't necessarily our jobs, the members of this unit help—because they want to, not because they have to," he said. "Nobody here stands around."

While not content to think of himself as a hero, Sergeant Duharte reflected on the experience.

"When your getting ready in the morning for work, you never think you are not going to make it," he said. "I was just happy I was able to help." 🙏



CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN // Capt. Gregory Lowdermilk, a combat rescue officer with the 920th Rescue Wing, pulls on his wetsuit before plunging into the Atlantic some 40 miles off Port Canaveral. The former chief master sergeant was one of nearly 1,000 personnel from NASA, the Air Force Reserve and active Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy and Coast Guard who participated in the exercise.



“Houston...we no longer have a problem.”

If a NASA shuttle crew discovers a fatal flaw with their craft just after launch but before they reach orbit, they have the option to bail out over the Atlantic Ocean. Of course, this creates another problem ... how do you find seven astronauts floating somewhere in the shark-infested vastness of the world's second-largest ocean? Simple. Pick up the phone, call the 920th Rescue Wing and say two little words: Mode VIII.

by Staff Sgt. Paul Flipse
920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs



According to NASA, the term “Mode VIII” refers to the worst-case, survivable shuttle-launch scenario involving an open-water bailout. In short, the shuttle encountered a problem during liftoff and doesn’t have the means to make it to a landing site, which means the crew must parachute from the disabled craft into the Atlantic Ocean.

On May 31, the reservists of the 920th Rescue Wing, along with NASA, the Army, Coast Guard, Marines and Navy, participated in an exercise that simulated just such a scenario.

As part of its peacetime mission, the 920th provides NASA with rescue services every time the Space Shuttle lifts off from Kennedy Space Center (KSC). So the exercise was an opportunity to hone the art of locating and retrieving downed astronauts, then delivering them to a local medical facility.

At 4:30 a.m. on the day of the exercise, NASA’s solid rocket booster recovery ship, the Freedom Star, and the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Shrike motored some 40 miles off the coast from Port Canaveral.

Once there, the astronauts were driven to their “drop zones” on the back of personal watercraft driven by 920th pararescuemen. The astronauts were placed in a “string,” a line stretching six miles from end to end, simulating the random, linear spacing of a crew who parachuted from a falling shuttle.

Once the astronauts were in place, the simulation had begun. Monitors at the 45th Space Wing’s Human Spaceflight Support office displayed a

recording of an actual shuttle launch, beginning 30 minutes prior to liftoff. A few minutes after liftoff, the call came that all was not well with the shuttle, that the crew would be initiating an open-water bailout and that the 920th was needed to bring them home. The Mode VIII was on.

Looking for a person floating in the world’s second-largest ocean is roughly like searching for a basketball in the Sahara Desert. Yet the 920th Rescue Wing’s contract with NASA says they must locate all astronauts within three hours and deliver them to a hospital within six, according to Lt. Col. Tony “T.C.” Cunha, chief of training for the 39th Rescue Squadron, home of the 920th’s HC-130P/N Hercules long-range, search and rescue refueling aircraft.

Colonel Cunha was the “air boss” for the Mode VIII—the on-scene commander in charge of every participating search-and-rescue (SAR) asset. Affable and lively, the colonel explained through a broad smile how well the 920th has fared against NASA’s tight time constraints.

“I’ve been doing this fifteen years, and the standard has been two hours to the hospital,” he said.

Search-and-rescue (SAR) teams utilize several items and tactics to produce such impressive numbers. First, they have a good idea where the astronauts will land and position themselves accordingly. On launch days, you’ll find a 920th HC-130 turning slow circles over the Atlantic about 175 nautical miles from KSC. By using the launch azimuth, or path, as a guide, SAR teams can potentially eliminate time en route to the astronauts.

“It’s a good, wet-finger guess as to the place they’ll need help,” said Tech. Sgt. Robert Grande, airborne communications and electronics systems specialist for the 920th. During a SAR, Sergeant Grande oversees radio operations onboard an HC-130 and utilizes equipment that help take some of the guesswork out of locating people in need of rescue.

Once the call for help comes, the



FAILURE TO LAUNCH // NASA astronauts wait to be located by a prearranged “drop sites,” where the astronauts would parachute.

aircraft begins its search by assuming a SAR configuration.

According to Sergeant Grande, they’ll drop to an altitude of 3,000 feet, set the aircraft’s flaps out for low airspeed and post lookouts, or “scanners,” at each window.

Then they’ll fly a sector search, painstakingly covering all the airspace in a given sector, overlapping the previous path on each pass—like mowing



lowered into the choppy Atlantic, where 920th pararescuemen (PJs) circle, shark-like, in anticipation. The PJs would later cart the astronauts to perform survival training while waiting to be found and rescued. (photo/Staff Sgt. Paul Flipse)

a lawn—until every bit is searched.

Even if the search takes all day, the astronauts are prepared for a wait. The survival suits they wear during takeoff and landing are designed to sustain a conscious person for 24 hours and an unconscious one for 6, according to Ketan Chhipwadia, part of the team that oversees the critical job of testing and designing those suits for NASA.

“Everyone understands how critical

it is,” he said. “We are the owners and leaders of spacecraft survival ... we need to be the best at what we do.

“We can’t sleep at night unless we know we’ve done the right thing.”

Part of the equipment his team provides is a survival radio called the AN/PRC-112. Typically, it takes a SAR crew 20 to 30 minutes to make radio contact with a downed astronaut. Once they make contact, the crew can

find the astronaut by following the radio signal.

However, during this particular Mode VIII exercise, NASA tested a new version of the radio—the 112G, which boasts substantial upgrades to the old model (see *‘No haystack too big,’* pg. 13), including a GPS feature that allowed the SAR team to pinpoint an astronaut in record time.

“I found him in twenty seconds,”

STORY CONTINUES NEXT PAGE →



photos/Staff Sgt. Paul Flipse

VIII IS ENOUGH (left to right starting from top left) A 920th HH-60G Pave Hawk buzzes low over the bow of NASA's solid rocket booster ship, the Freedom Star, en route to an astronaut; a PJ catches air while moving rapidly toward his target; an HC-130P/N circles overhead, scanning for astronauts in the choppy seas below; a PJ clings to an astronaut to an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter during a hoist; some of the tools of the pararescue trade; a PJ floats with an astronaut until aerial transport arrives; Navy rescue swimmers ferry exercise astronauts to a rendezvous with their PJ escorts; PJs close in on their would-be astronaut casualties, ready to escort them to their "drop zones," astronauts share a light moment while waiting to "bail out" into the Atlantic.

said Sergeant Grande, who then used the GPS identifier emitting from the astronaut's radio to mark the exact point the astronaut was floating when they made contact.

While waiting for help to arrive, one astronaut reflected on just how isolated and exposed one can feel bobbing in the surf 40 miles from dry land.

"It's an eerie feeling," said Joe Acaba, one of the astronauts pulled from the water that day. "You're bobbing up and down and you're wondering what's bumping into you—a wave or a shark."

As each astronaut was located, the HC-130 crew passed the information to the units' helicopters, HH-60G Pave Hawks, who then sped toward the relayed coordinates.

When the Pave Hawks arrived, the pararescuemen (also called *PJs*) leaped into action—*literally*, out the doors of the helicopters and into the sea, where they assessed the astronauts' conditions and helped hoist the orange-suited crew members to safety.

"Those PJs were very impressive," said Mr. Acaba, a biology specialist who once taught at Melbourne High

School here. "It was seamless ... those guys were very smooth. It's a testament to the training and what they do every day.

"We're grateful to have them."

Colonel Cunha stressed the authenticity and depth of the training scenario and conditions of the exercise.

"Every piece of our combat capability is used in this exercise," he said. "The skills we employ during a Mode VIII are skills we use in combat ... the only difference is, we're not getting shot at." 🇺🇸

No haystack too big, no needle too small

BY MASTER SGT. CHANCE C. BABIN
920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Search and rescue (SAR) is dynamic and dangerous. Each second may be the difference between life and death. Any time gained or technical advantage rescue specialists can exploit greatly enhances their ability to save lives.

In the recent Mode VIII exercise conducted with NASA and other Department of Defense assets, the wing helped test a new—or at least greatly improved—piece of SAR equipment: the AN/PRC-112G survival radio and portable/hand-held QUICKDRAW interrogator.

Mode VIII is defined as a “worst case” survivable, in-flight emergency requiring the crew to bail out over open water.

The General Dynamics AN/PRC-112G combat search and rescue (CSAR) survival radio sends encrypted global positioning coordinates, two-way messages and identification, providing essential, quick and accurate information to air crews, forward air controllers and properly-equipped SAR personnel.

“We’ve been approved by Space Shuttle management to upgrade our current AN/PRC-112, which we’ve been using since ‘91 with the new AN/PRC-112G,” said Ketan Chhipwadia, NASA manager for Space Shuttle Crew Escape Equipment at Johnson Space Center, Texas.

Missions beginning with Space Shuttle Discovery STS-112, currently scheduled for December, will be flown with the

AN/PRC-112G; a version of a SAR radio recently introduced and currently in use by the Department of Defense and other NATO forces.

“The new radio will significantly improve interoperability with Department of Defense rescue assets,” Mr. Chhipwadia said, “allowing NASA’s crew survival



readiness a truly global level currently not achieved.

“The MODE VIII exercise is an important opportunity to evaluate and test the AN/PRC-112G’s full capability with all Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security assets that are tasked to be ready to locate and rescue Astronauts should an

unfortunate event occur requiring the crew to bail out from the orbiter in flight,” Mr. Chhipwadia said.

“This test is being used as an evaluation milestone at the integrated level to support one of many milestones before the planned September 2007 certification.”

After the exercise, Mr. Chhipwadia gave the systems extremely high praise, indicating his entire team was excited and passionate about the significant enhancement it should provide to crew survivability.

“It was our first time using the AN/PRC-112G in our exercise, and it performed outstanding,” he said. “It’s going to help us locate and extract the crew faster than ever before and provide search-and-rescue teams much better situational awareness.”

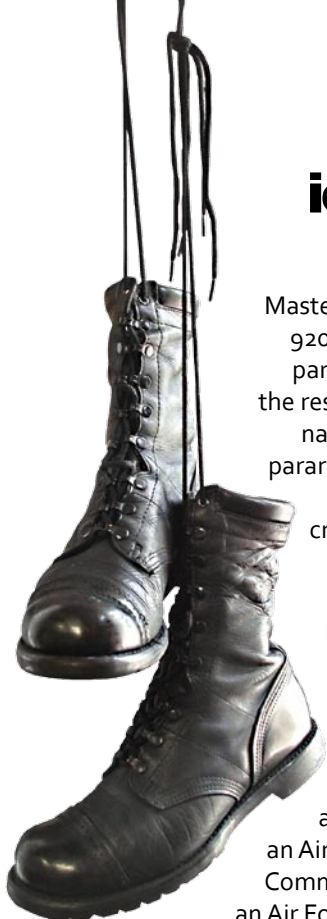
For Tech. Sgt. Robert Grande, a 39th Rescue Squadron airborne mission specialist, the new technology makes his job more of a science and greatly enhances the accuracy of locating survivors.

“The (old model) only allowed us to talk to the survivor—who may or may not be conscious” Sergeant Grande said.

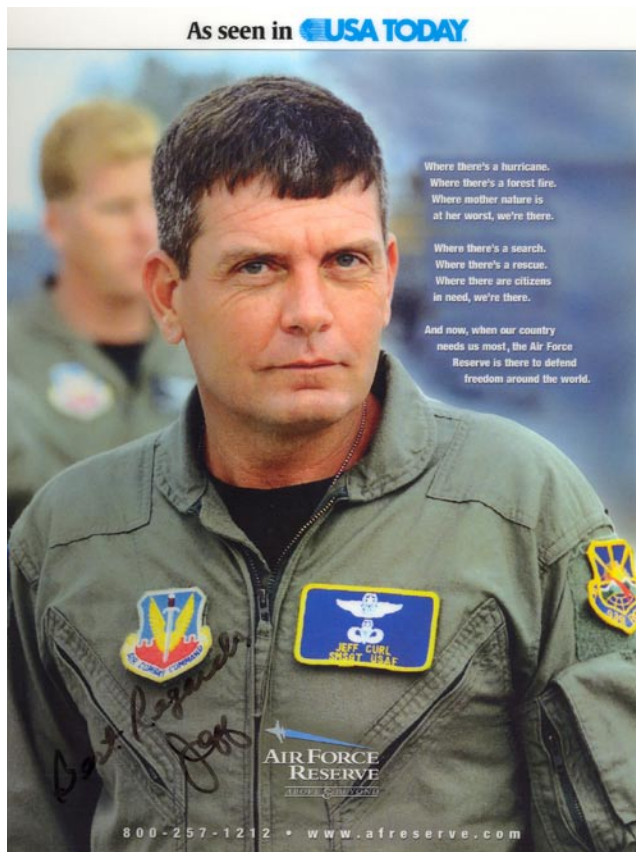
The new radio provides GPS coordinates, sends and receives encoded messages and sets off a homing beacon, according to Sergeant Grande.

“It’s a tremendous leap in capabilities for the mission because it allows us to see survivors coordinates without saying a word,” he said. “We’ve been using these technologies for years in combat. It’s a fantastic system.”

A pararescue icon says goodbye

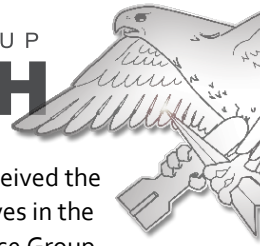


Air Force Reserve pararescueman Chief Master Sgt. Jeff Curl made his final jump with the 920th Rescue Wing June 21 (below). The senior pararescueman has been the “poster child” for the rescue wing, as his image was used on several national Air Force Reserve advertisements for pararescue (right). Chief Curl began his career on active duty here as weather observer, then cross-trained into pararescue in the Air Force Reserve. He spent the final 15 years of his 28-year career at Patrick. The chief said he plans to seek employment in the local area. As a pararescueman Chief Curl performed 54 combat missions supporting operations in Panama, Iraq and Afghanistan. He also had a major part in rescue operations for hurricanes Floyd and Katrina. Chief Curl’s awards include a Meritorious Service Medal, an Air Medal with 3 oak leaf clusters, an Air Force Commendation Medal with 1 oak leaf cluster and an Air Force Achievement Medal. He also received a congratulatory letter from President George W. Bush.





920TH MAINTENANCE GROUP
SAVE OF THE MONTH



Tech. Sgt. Raymond McCaig and **Staff Sgt. Lisa Alimenti** received the Save of the Month Award for April by distinguishing themselves in the performance of outstanding service for the 920th Maintenance Group.

When aircraft 65A0976 returned from a flight with a #1 engine gearbox oil pressure indicating fluctuation, both Sergeant McCaig and Sergeant Alimenti began troubleshooting the problem.

Initially, they determined the transmitter was the problem and replaced the part accordingly. However, this failed to cure the problem. After studying the wiring diagram, they took multimeter readings of the wiring to determine if any of the wires were defective. Most of the readings were normal except one, which was so abnormal it defied logic.

For several hours they continued to take readings for verification. However, they were still perplexed with the results of the tests. They then decided to regroup and think "outside the box" in order to find a solution to the problem. They decided the best course of action was to trace the wires from the load side of the fuse, at which point they found the wires going to this fuse holder were not the wires for the system. Upon further research, they found the wires had been swapped with the wires on the fuse holder above it.

Upon completion of the repair, the system checked out and the aircraft was used at the Fort Lauderdale Air and Sea show.

Save of the Month for May was awarded to **Tech. Sgt. Claude Rubright** for the performance of outstanding service to the 920th Maintenance Squadron.

On 5 May 2007, while working in the structural shop, Sergeant Rubright was assigned the task of "de-milling" approximately 50 oxygen and carbon-dioxide bottles for the life support section.

This process involves first drilling a hole through the bottles, then removing stamped markings, rendering them unusable prior to their being turned in. Although the bottles were marked "empty," Sergeant Rubright's sharp eye and attention to detail allowed him to notice four of the bottles were fully charged.

Drilling into a fully-charged bottle could cause rapid loss of oxygen, which would send it rocketing in any direction. Through his sharp eyes and attention to detail Sergeant Rubright corrected a potentially dangerous situation that may have caused serious injury to personnel or severe damage to equipment.

PROMOTIONS

technical sergeant
CHRIS JIMENEZ

staff sergeant
JEREMY BALLARD
GUILLERMO DELLOSSIE
CHRISTOPHER GUILLEY
IDA MARRERO
RANDALL QUINONES
NOEL SOSA
SIMONE THOMAS

senior airman
STEPHEN FRESHLEY
CRAIG LEHMAN JR.
JESSICA PANICO
ISRAEL STALEY

RETIREMENTS

CAPT. HARLEY DOUBET
CMSGT. JEFFREY CURL
SMSGT. CHERYL KING
MSGT. JAINI KING
MSGT. JOHN WAITE
TSGT. TAMALA MYGRANT
TSGT. JOAN SUTTON

NEWCOMERS

MAJ. MICHALE LEONE
CAPT. GABRIEL HENSLEY
CAPT. WILLIAM PERRY
TSGT. NATHAN AHOLA
TSGT. CECILE BEAUMONT
TSGT. ANTHONY KNAUS
TSGT. CHRISTOPHER PARSONS
TSGT. SARA PICKENS
SSGT. MARIA EAMES
SSGT. DIANA ALCIVAR
SSGT. AMBER CAIN
SSGT. MARIA CROSBY
SSGT. JOSEPH KOCH
SSGT. SARAH MCKEE
SSGT. NICOLE PECK
SSGT. ARGENIS SAMBOIS
SSGT. CRAIG WARD
SSGT. TIANA WILLIAMSON
SRA PATRICIA BAEZ
SRA JASON BUZARD
SRA JONATHAN ENGLER
SRA GINA HANCOCK
SRA MICHELLE LAWRENCE

Training mission results in life-saving rescue

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. -- If not for a lot coincidences and a keen Air Force Reserve helicopter crew from the 920th Rescue Wing, 66-year-old Floridian Russell Alger would not be alive today.

Several miles off of the coast of Daytona Beach, Fla., Lt. Col. Paul Nevius and his

crew were piloting an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter back to Patrick Air Force Base when they spotted a 21-foot boat moving up the Atlantic Ocean at full-throttle with no one aboard...

...to find out what happened next, visit us online at: www.g2orqw@patrick.af.mil





photo/STAFF SGT. PAUL FLIPSE

LET'S DO LAUNCH

An hour after liftoff, a delicate curl of pastel colors is all that remains of the smoke trail left by Space Shuttle Atlantis, which launched without incident from Kennedy Space Center June 8.

Waiting in the wings to provide support in case things went awry, as always, were reservists from the 920th Rescue Wing. As for the shuttle, the seven-member crew of the 117th shuttle mission made their way to the International Space Station, where they began a joint mission to increase the complex's power generation capability. Eleven days after safely landing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., June 22, Atlantis returned safely to Kennedy Space Center on the back of a modified Boeing 747, also known as a Shuttle Carrier Aircraft (right). STS-118 is scheduled to launch August 7.



photo/NASA-KEN THORNSLEY