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EDITOR'S NOTE

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920th RESCUE WING
ALMANAC 2009

Air Force Reserve Command

920th Rescue Wing

Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.

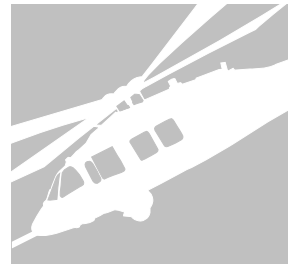
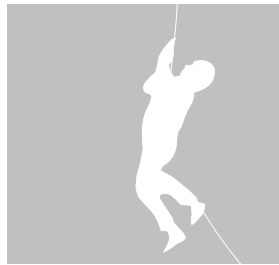






▲ AERIAL-REFUELING OVER TALIL AIR BASE, IRAQ DURING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM





inside

THE 920TH RESCUE WING 1

- Introduction

THE LEADERS 2

- Wing Commander
- Vice Commander
- Command Chief
- Group Commanders
- Rescue Squadrons & Flights

HEROES & HARDWARE 6

- Pararescue
- HH-60G Pave Hawk
- HC-130P/N Hercules

TRUE STORIES 18

- The Lone Survivor
- In the Blink of an Eye
- The Heart of Freedom
- Flight Risk
- Open Water
- Angels Over New Orleans

STATISTICS 32

- Timeline
- Impact on Local Economy
- Unit Awards
- Flight Safety Record
- Air Force Reserve Snapshot

THE STORYTELLERS 33

- Public Affairs Office Staff

THE TERMS 34

- Glossary of Acronyms & Lingo

CONTACT 37

- Telephone, Fax, Mailing Address, E-mail address & Web site

**All photos in this publication depict 920th Rescue Wing personnel & assets unless otherwise noted*

◀ HIGH-ALTITUDE, LOW-OPENING JUMP OVER TALIL AIR BASE DURING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

● HH-60G FLIGHT ENGINEER
OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM



THESE THINGS WE DO, THAT **OTHERS** MAY LIVE...

Based at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., the 920th Rescue Wing is an Air Force Reserve Command combat-search-and-rescue unit. Commanded by Col. Steve W. Kirkpatrick, the wing trains and equips approximately 1,300 Airmen to search for, locate and recover U.S. Armed Forces personnel during military operations. In addition, the 920th also provides rescue support for all NASA space shuttle and rocket missions, including safety and security surveillance of the Eastern Range during all launches from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station and Kennedy Space Center.

The 920th is responsible for a demanding and compelling array of missions, and the men and women who serve here must maintain a high level of proficiency and be ready to deploy at moment's notice. In addition to supporting the space program, the unit's other peacetime missions are to provide search-and-rescue support for civilians in distress at sea, in the desert or high in the mountains. The wing also provides worldwide humanitarian relief, supporting rescue efforts in the aftermath of disasters such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes.

The 920th Rescue Wing is comprised of 23 subordinate groups and squadrons, including two geographically-separated units—one at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., the other at Portland, Ore. The 920th was originally the 301st Rescue Squadron, which was activated in 1956, becoming the Air Force Reserve's first rescue squadron. The unit was based at Miami International Airport and made its first rescue in January 1957. In 1960, the unit relocated to Homestead AFB, Fla. The following year, the wing began a long relationship with NASA and the U.S. space program, providing rescue-contingency operations for the first Mercury launch. The wing mobilized to Afghanistan in 2005 for Operation Enduring Freedom, making 54 combat rescues, including Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell, who documented his ordeal in the best-selling novel, "Lone Survivor." The rescue wing has also been a mainstay in humanitarian relief, rescuing 137 South Florida residents during the 18 days following Hurricane Andrew (1992); saving 93 elderly residents from rising flood waters at their Tampa-area retirement community (1993); rescuing more than 200 people after Hurricane Floyd (1999) and pulling 1,043 people from New Orleans and the Gulf Coast after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (2005).



COL. STEVEN W. KIRKPATRICK

Wing Commander

Col. Steven W. "Wall Street" Kirkpatrick is commander of the 920th Rescue Wing. The wing is equipped with five HC-130P/N tanker aircraft and 15 HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters to support worldwide combat-rescue operations, NASA'S space shuttle program and the 45th Space Wing's range-clearing missions.

The wing has 1,250 personnel assigned to four groups, 10 squadrons, six flights, a headquarters section and two geographically-separated units—one in Arizona, and one in Oregon. Colonel Kirkpatrick provides leadership, management and supervision and is responsible for the organization, training and equipping of the wing. During wartime, the wing's assets are assigned to Air Combat Command.

Colonel Kirkpatrick was commissioned through the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1984. He is a command pilot with more than 5,400 flying hours, including combat time in Operations Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. He is an air reserve technician, a full-time federal civil service employee serving in a selected position within a military unit.

EDUCATION

1984 Bachelor of Science in management, USAF Academy
1988 Squadron Officer School, by correspondence
1991 Master of business administration, Louisiana Tech
1996 Air Command and Staff College, by seminar
1999 Air War College, by seminar

ASSIGNMENTS

1. August 1984 - June 1985, undergraduate pilot training, Vance AFB, Okla.
2. July 1985 - December 1985, B-52 CCTS, Castle A, Calif.
3. January 1986 - May 1993, Instructor Pilot, 596th Bomb Squadron, Barksdale AFB, La.
4. December 1993 - March 1996, training officer, 93rd Bomb Squadron, Barksdale AFB
5. March 1996 - February 1999, standardization and evaluation officer, 917th Wing, Barksdale AFB
6. February 1999 - October 2000, operations officer, 93rd Bomb

Squadron, Barksdale AFB

7. October 2000 - April 2004, commander, 93rd Bomb Squadron

8. April 2004 - March 2006, director of training, 10th Air Force, Naval Air Station - Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas

9. April 2006 - Present, commander, 920th Rescue Wing, Patrick AFB

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Command Pilot; Basic Parachutist (Airborne)

Flight hours: More than 5,400 flying hours

Aircraft flown: T-37, T-38, B-52G, B-52H, HH-60G, C-130, HC-130P/N

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Meritorious Service Medal

Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters

Aerial Achievement Medal

Air Force Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor Devices and four oak leaf clusters

Combat Readiness Medal with six oak leaf clusters

National Defense Service Medal with oak leaf cluster

Southwest Asia Service Medal with oak leaf cluster

Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal

Global War on Terrorism Service Medal

Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon

Air Force Longevity Service with five oak leaf clusters

Armed Forces Reserve Medal with two "M" Devices and oak leaf cluster

Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon (Pistol)

Air Force Training Ribbon

Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

Kuwait Liberation Medal (Government of Kuwait)

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant May 30, 1984

First Lieutenant May 30, 1986

Captain May 30, 1988

Major Sept. 10, 1997

Lieutenant Colonel Sept. 10, 2000

Colonel April 5, 2004



COL. PHILIP MANNING
Vice Commander

Colonel Philip J. Manning is the vice commander of the 920th Rescue Wing. Colonel Manning provides leadership, management and supervision and is responsible for the organization, training and equipping of the wing. During wartime, the 920th Rescue Wing's assets are assigned to Air Force Air Combat Command and Air Mobility Command.

After graduating from the University of Connecticut in 1980, Colonel Manning attended Officer Training School and was commissioned in early 1981. His assignments include duties as a mechanical engineer, F-15 instructor pilot, operational test and evaluation pilot, test program officer, HH-60G Pave Hawk pilot, flight commander, squadron commander, and deputy operations group commander. In his civilian occupation he flies as first officer for a major U.S. airline.

In 2003, Colonel Manning led the 301st Rescue Squadron as it prepared to deploy to Al Jabar Air Base, Kuwait prior to the initiation of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 301st became the first Air Force squadron to move into Iraq and operate from a captured enemy airfield. Colonel Manning led the first successful combat rescue when his flight of two HH-60G's picked up a seven-man Marine Force Recon Team whose position had been compromised.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Command Pilot

Flight Hours: More than 2,500 hours

Aircraft Flown: HH-60G, HC-130, UH-1, F-15, F-16, F-4, B727,

MD-11, B767, B757

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant February 4, 1981

First Lieutenant February 4, 1983

Captain February 4, 1985

Major February 4, 1995

Lieutenant Colonel February 4, 2002

Colonel July 1, 2006



CMSgt. GERALD DELEBREAU
Command Chief Master Sergeant

Chief Master Sergeant Gerald J. Delebreaux is the Command Chief Master Sergeant of the 920th Rescue Wing. As the wing's highest ranking enlisted member, he advises the commander on matters concerning the morale, health, welfare, effective use, training, and progress of the enlisted corp of the 920th Rescue Wing. He also serves as the commander's representative to numerous committees, councils, boards and military and civilian functions.

The chief was born in Green Bay, Wis., in 1962 and graduated from Bay Port High School in 1981. He entered the Air Force in August 1983. A career security forces member, his assignments include bases at Mather AFB, Calif.; Kelly AFB, Texas; Peterson AFB, Colo.; and Patrick AFB, Fla.

Chief Delebreaux has mobilized four times during his career and volunteered to augment the active duty security forces for the last 10 years due to security forces career shortfalls to include a deployment to Eskan Village Air Base, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the security forces manager.

EDUCATION

1985 NCO Preparatory Course, Kelly Air Force Base, Texas

1989 NCO Leadership School, Sheppard AFB, Texas

1991 NCO Academy, Tyndall AFB, Fla.

1995 USAF Senior NCO Academy, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

2004 Bachelor's degree, criminal justice, Columbia College

2006 Master's degree, public admin., Webster University, Mo.

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Airman First Class November 1983

Senior Airman (below the zone) July 1985

Sergeant July 1986

Staff Sergeant November 1988

Technical Sergeant March 1990

Master Sergeant March 1992

Senior Master Sergeant September 1996

Chief Master Sergeant November 2003



COL. JEFFREY MACRANDER 920th Operations Group

Colonel Macrander has four squadrons under his command: the 39th Rescue Squadron, 301st Rescue Squadron, 308th Rescue Squadron and 920th Operations Support Squadron, for which he provides overall management, policy formulation, standardization, planning and coordination for the operation, training and support. The 920th Operations Group is dedicated to combat search and rescue and is responsible for the overall combat training and readiness of nearly 300 aircrew, pararescue specialists and support personnel, employing HH-60G Pave Hawk Helicopters and specially modified HC-130P/N Hercules aircraft. He maintains tactical-formation night-vision goggle, aerial-refueling, and night water-operations flying currencies in the HH-60G and HC-130P/N weapons systems and is a combat-mission-ready aircraft commander and flight lead. He is both instructor and evaluator qualified. He is a command pilot with more than 4,000 flying hours in seven different aircraft.



COL. EROKROTOS (ERIC) SHIAKALLIS 920th Mission Support Group

Colonel Shiakallis is responsible for managing a variety of functions supporting the wing's flying operations. These functions include: information management, disaster preparedness, services, civil engineering, personnel, plans, security police, communications, supply and transportation. He also oversees command and control, planning, strategies, policy formulation and interface required by the group's subordinate units. Colonel Shiakallis was born in Larnaca, Cyprus, immigrating to the United States in 1956. Started his Air Force career in March 1969. In 1974 entered the Air Reserve Technician (ART) program with the 928th Airlift Group, Chicago, Illinois, where he served as the Plans Superintendent. In December 1980 he graduated with honors from Northeastern Illinois University. He was commissioned in December 1981. His career in the Air Force has spanned from the Vietnam War, through Operation DESERT STORM/SHIELD, to the present.



COL. GEORGE PIERCE 920th Maintenance Group

Colonel Pierce, a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colo., provides aircraft maintenance for Air Force Reserve Command's busiest wing. The maintenance group is responsible for worldwide rapid deployment and employment of combat-ready/mission-capable HH-60G Pave Hawk and HC-130P/N Hercules aircraft in support of Air Combat Command deployments, civilian search and rescue missions, and NASA launch support. He conducted flight operations for rescue and special-operations units in Idaho, Oregon and Arizona, including duty as an HH-3E pilot with the 71st Special Operations Squadron. Colonel Pierce also served as chief of the logistics management division at Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. The colonel is a senior pilot, also rated as a flight instructor and examiner, with more than 3,300 flying hours in such legendary rescue aircraft as the TH-55, UH-1H/N, CH/HH-3E and HH/MH-60G.



COL. ROBERT DUNN 943rd Rescue Group

Colonel Dunn directs the activities of the group's subordinate organizations, which include a flying squadron of six HH-60G helicopters; two Guardian Angel "Pararescue" squadrons, one of which is geographically separated and assigned to Portland Air National Guard Base, Ore.; a maintenance squadron; mission support flight; operations support flight; and a medical flight. He has seen worldwide duty in Air Combat Command, Air Force Special Operations Command and Headquarters Tenth Air Force as a unit training officer, instructor pilot, flight examiner, flight commander, operations officer and director of safety. He is a command pilot with more than 5,500 hours in the T-37, T-38A/B, A-10A, UH-1H, HH-3E and HH-60G. The group's mission is to provide leadership, management, policy formulation, planning and standardization for operations, training and support for the group.

squadrons & flights

PARARESCUEMEN

- 304th RQS / Portland, Ore.**
- 305th RQS / Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.**
- 308th RQS / Patrick AFB, Fla.**

Conducts day, night long-range, low-level operations providing combat-rescue capability to recover downed aircrew members in hostile environments. Rapid-deployment mission capabilities include night-vision, forward-looking infrared, air-refueling and precise navigation utilizing HH-60G and HC-130P/N aircraft. Also conducts peacetime, humanitarian search and rescue and disaster relief operations.

HELICOPTERS

- 301st RQS / Patrick AFB, Fla.**
 - 306th RQS / Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.**
- Conducts day and night, long-range, low-level missions to provide combat-rescue operations worldwide. Tasks include night, low-level and air-refueling operations using night-vision goggles(NVG). Provides rescue support for NASA space-shuttle program and conducts

range-clearing mission prior to all launches. Units use eight HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and associated personnel to perform these missions.

FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT

- 39th RQS / Patrick AFB, Fla.**
- Conducts joint-theatre taskings to include NVG-modified, contour low-level, airdrops, covert NVG landings into austere airfields, helicopter air-refueling and forward air refueling and re-arming for combat search and rescue operations worldwide. Supports rescue operations for NASA and other peacetime humanitarian operations. Uses five highly modified HC-130P/N aircraft to perform these missions.

AEROMEDICAL STAGING & FLIGHT MEDICINE

- 920th ASTS / Patrick AFB**
 - 943rd AMF / Davis-Monthan AFB**
- Medical facility/personnel, on or in the vicinity of an air base, that/who provide limited

medical care for intransit patients awaiting air transportation. The facilities often include “remain overnight” facilities, intransit facilities at aerial ports of embarkation and debarkation, and casualty-staging facilities in an overseas combat area.

AIRCREW SAFETY / SURVIVAL

- 920th OSF / Patrick AFB**
 - 943rd OSF / Davis-Monthan AFB**
- These units are responsible for inspecting and maintaining all aircrew and passenger life-support equipment such as parachutes, inflatable life preservers, life rafts, survival kits and flying helmets, as well as issuing and properly fitting and/or adjusting all life-support equipment to ensure comfort. These personnel also instruct aircrews on the purpose, operation, care and use of life-support equipment and chemical-defense equipment, which may include simulated aircraft ejection-seat trainers or the correct procedures to follow during a ditching or forced landing, which includes scenarios in which crews must “land” in open water.



PARARESCUE

Mission

Air Force Special Operations Command's pararescuemen, also known as PJs, are the only Department of Defense specialty specifically trained and equipped to conduct conventional or unconventional rescue operations. These Battlefield Airmen are the ideal force for personnel recovery and combat search and rescue.

A pararescueman's primary function is as a personnel recovery specialist, with emergency medical capabilities in humanitarian and combat environments. They deploy in any available manner, to include air-land-sea tactics, into restricted environments to authenticate, extract, treat, stabilize and evacuate injured personnel, while acting in an enemy-evading, recovery role. PJs participate in search and rescue, combat search and rescue, recovery support for NASA and conduct other operations as appropriate.

Pararescuemen

Pararescuemen are among the most highly trained emergency trauma specialists in the U.S. military. They must maintain an emergency medical technician-paramedic qualification throughout their careers. With this medical and rescue expertise, along with their deployment capabilities, PJs are able to perform life-saving missions in the world's most remote areas.

Their motto "That Others May Live" reaffirms the pararescueman's commitment to saving lives and self-sacrifice. Without PJs, thousands of service members and civilians would have been unnecessarily lost in past conflicts and natural disasters.

Training

Pararescuemen endure some of the toughest training offered in the U.S. military. Their training, as well as their unique mission, earns them the right to wear the maroon beret. They complete the same technical training as EMT-Paramedics, plus the following physical and specialized training.

Pararescue Preparatory Course, Lackland AFB, Texas --

This two-week course provides physical training under the oversight of sports physiologists and swimming trainers to familiarize and teach the trainees the required skills to succeed in the Indoctrination course to follow.

Indoctrination Course, Lackland AFB, Texas -- This 10-week course recruits, selects and trains future PJs through extensive physical conditioning. Training accomplished at this course includes physiological training, obstacle course, marches, dive physics, dive tables, metric manipulations, medical terminology, cardiopulmonary resuscitation,



weapons qualifications, PJ history and leadership reaction course.

U.S. Army Airborne School, Fort Benning, Ga. -- Trainees learn the basic parachuting skills required to infiltrate an objective area by static line airdrop in a three-week course.

U.S. Air Force Combat Diver School, Panama City, Fla. -- Trainees become combat divers, learning to use scuba and closed-circuit diving equipment to covertly infiltrate denied areas, conduct sub-surface searches and basic recovery operations. The six-week course provides training to depths of 130 feet, stressing development of maximum underwater mobility under various operating conditions.

U.S. Navy Underwater Egress Training, Pensacola Naval Air Station, Fla. -- This course teaches how to safely escape from an aircraft that has ditched in the water. The one-day instruction includes principles, procedures and techniques necessary to get out of a sinking aircraft.

U.S. Air Force Basic Survival School, Fairchild AFB, Wash. -- This two and a half-week course teaches basic survival techniques for remote areas. Instruction includes principles, procedures, equipment and techniques, which enable individuals to survive, regardless of climatic conditions or unfriendly environments and return home.

U.S. Army Military Free Fall Parachutist School, Fort Bragg, N.C., and Yuma Proving Grounds, Ariz. -- This course instructs trainees in free fall parachuting procedures. The five-week course provides wind tunnel training, in-air instruction focusing on student stability, aerial maneuvers, air sense and parachute opening procedures.

Paramedic Course, Kirtland AFB, N.M. -- This 22-week course teaches how to manage trauma patients prior to evacuation and provide emergency medical treatment. Upon graduation, an EMT-Paramedic certification is awarded through the National Registry.

Pararescue Recovery Specialist Course, Kirtland AFB, N.M. -- Qualifies airmen as pararescue recovery specialists for assignment to any pararescue unit worldwide. The 24-week training includes field medical care and extrication basics, field tactics, mountaineering, combat tactics, advanced parachuting and helicopter insertion/extraction.

History

The first medical corpsmen were airdropped in 1943 to a downed aircrew in a remote location on the China-Burma border. Pararescuemen, known at the time as para-jumpers or PJs, responded to the need for a highly trained rescue force. PJs begin to integrate scuba techniques into their tactics, jumping with more than 170 pounds of equipment. PJs proved to be the premier rescue force rescuing downed pilots in the Vietnam War. They also recovered Gemini mission astronauts in the 1960s and San Francisco earthquake victims in 1989.







▲ RAPPAL EXERCISE AT BAGHDAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, IRAQ

◀ HIGH-ALTITUDE, LOW-OPENING JUMP OVER KENNEDY SPACE CENTER

HH-60G PAVE HAWK

Mission

The primary mission of the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter is to conduct day or night combat search and rescue, or CSAR, operations into hostile environments to recover downed aircrew or other isolated personnel during war. Because of its versatility, the HH-60G is also tasked to perform military operations other than war. These tasks include civil search and rescue, emergency aeromedical evacuation, disaster relief, international aid, counterdrug activities and NASA launch support.

Features

The Pave Hawk is a highly modified version of the Army Black Hawk helicopter which features an upgraded communications and navigation suite that includes integrated inertial navigation/global positioning/Doppler navigation systems, satellite communications, secure voice, and Have Quick communications.

All HH-60Gs have an automatic flight control system, night vision goggles with lighting and forward looking infrared system that greatly enhances night low-level operations. Additionally, Pave Hawks have color weather radar and an engine/rotor blade anti-ice system that gives the HH-60G an adverse weather capability.

Pave Hawk mission equipment includes a retractable in-flight refueling probe, internal auxiliary fuel tanks, two crew-served 7.62mm or .50 caliber machine guns, and an 8,000-pound (3,600 kilograms) capacity cargo hook. To improve air transportability and shipboard operations, all HH-60Gs have folding rotor blades.

Pave Hawk combat enhancements include a radar warning receiver, infrared jammer and a flare/chaff countermeasure dispensing system.

HH-60G rescue equipment includes a hoist capable of lifting a 600-pound load (270 kilograms) from a hover height of 200 feet (60.7 meters), and a personnel locating system that is compatible with the PRC-112 survival radio and provides range and bearing information to a survivor's location. A limited number of Pave Hawks are equipped with an over-the-horizon tactical data receiver that is capable of receiving near real-time mission update information.

Background

The Pave Hawk is a twin-engine medium-lift helicopter operated by Air Combat Command, Pacific Air Forces, Air Education and Training Command, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command.



Pave Hawks have a long history of use in contingencies, starting in Operation Just Cause. During Operation Desert Storm they provided CSAR coverage for coalition forces in western Iraq, coastal Kuwait, the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia. They also provided emergency evacuation coverage for Navy SEAL teams penetrating the Kuwaiti coast before the invasion.

During Operation Allied Force, Pave Hawks provided continuous combat search and rescue coverage for NATO air forces, and successfully recovered two Air Force pilots who were isolated behind enemy lines.

In the aircraft's humanitarian relief missions, three Pave Hawks deployed in March 2000 to Mozambique, Africa, to support international flood relief operations. The HH-60s flew 240 missions in 17 days and delivered more than 160 tons of humanitarian relief supplies.

After Hurricane Katrina in September 2005, more than 20 active-duty, Reserve, and National Guard Pave Hawks were deployed to Jackson, Miss., in support of recovery operations in New Orleans and surrounding areas. Pave Hawk crews flew 24-hour operations for nearly a month, saving more than 4,300 Americans from the post-hurricane devastation.

Today, Pave Hawks continue to deploy in support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. HH-60 crews have logged hundreds of American, coalition and foreign national saves conducting CSAR and medical evacuations or MEDEVAC missions under low visibility, low illumination conditions at all altitudes.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Primary Function: combat search and rescue and military operations other than war in day, night or marginal weather conditions.

Contractor: United Technologies/Sikorsky Aircraft Company

Power Plant: Two General Electric T700-GE-700 or T700-GE-701C engines

Thrust: 1,560-1,940 shaft horsepower, each engine

Rotor Diameter: 53 feet, 7 inches (14.1 meters)

Length: 64 feet, 8 inches (17.1 meters)

Height: 16 feet, 8 inches (4.4 meters)

Weight: 22,000 pounds (9,900 kilograms)

Maximum Takeoff Weight: 22,000 pounds (9,900 kilograms)

Fuel Capacity: 4,500 pounds (2,041 kilograms)

Payload: depends upon mission

Speed: 184 mph (159 knots)

Range: 504 nautical miles

Ceiling: 14,000 feet (4,267 meters)

Armament: Two 7.62mm or .50 caliber machineguns

Crew: Two pilots, one flight engineer and one gunner

Unit Cost: \$9.3 million (fiscal 1998 constant dollars)

Initial operating capability: 1982

Inventory: Active force, 64; ANG, 18; Reserve, 23





AERIAL-REFUELING DURING SEARCH & RESCUE FOR MISSING PILOT
AND DOWNED AIRCRAFT NEAR BIMINI ISLANDS, BAHAMAS ▲

OPEN-WATER RECOVERY TRAINING ►
OFF THE COAST OF PATRICK AFB



HC-130P/N KING

Mission

The HC-130P/N is an extended-range, combat search and rescue version of the C-130 Hercules transport. Its mission is to extend the range of CSAR helicopters by providing air refueling in hostile or contested airspace if required.

Secondary mission capabilities include performing tactical delivery via airdrop or airland of pararescue specialist teams, small bundles, zodiac watercraft or four-wheel drive all-terrain vehicles; and providing direct assistance to a survivor in advance of the arrival of a recovery vehicle.

Other capabilities are extended visual and electronic searches over land or water, tactical approaches and unimproved airfield operations at day or night, using night vision goggles. A team of three pararescue specialists, trained in emergency trauma medicine, harsh environment survival and assisted evasion techniques, is part of the basic mission crew complement.

Features

Combat Air Forces HC-130 aircraft are undergoing extensive modifications. Ongoing modifications include night vision goggle-compatible interior and exterior lighting, a personnel locator system compatible with aircrew survival radios, forward-looking infrared systems and advanced integrated radios.

The HC-130 can fly in the day against a reduced threat; however, crews normally fly night, low-level, air refueling and airdrop operations using night vision goggles. It can fly low-level NVG tactical flight profiles to avoid detection. To enhance the probability of mission success and survivability near populated areas, crews employ tactics that include incorporating no external lighting or communications, and avoiding radar and weapons detection.

Background

The HC-130P/N is the only dedicated fixed-wing combat search and rescue platform in the Air Force inventory. The 71st and 79th Rescue Squadrons in Air Combat Command, the 102nd RQS and 210th RQS in the Air National Guard, and the 39th RQS in the Air Force Reserve Command operate the aircraft.

First flown in 1964, the aircraft has served many roles and missions. It was initially modified to conduct



rescue missions, provide a command and control platform, in-flight-refuel helicopters and carry supplemental fuel for extending range or air refueling.

In April 2006, the continental U.S. search and rescue mission was transferred back to Air Combat Command at Langley AFB, Virginia. From 2003 to 2006, the mission was under the Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field, Fla. Previously, HC-130s were assigned to ACC from 1992 to 2003.

They were first assigned to the Air Rescue Service as part of Military Airlift Command. They have been deployed to Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey in support of operations Southern and Northern Watch, Allied Force and Iraqi Freedom. HC-130s also support continuous alert commitments in Alaska, Iceland and Japan, and provide rescue coverage for space shuttle operations in Florida.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Primary function: Air refueling for combat search and rescue helicopters

Contractor: Lockheed Aircraft Corp.

Power Plant: Four Allison T56-A-15 turboprop engines

Thrust: 4,910 shaft horsepower each engine

Wingspan: 132 feet, 7 inches (40.4 meters)

Length: 98 feet, 9 inches (30.09 meters)

Height: 38 feet, 6 inches (11.7 meters)

Weight: 83,000 pounds (37,648 kilograms)

Maximum Takeoff Weight: 155,000 pounds (69,750 kilograms)

Fuel Capacity: 73,000 pounds (10,724 gallons)

Payload: 30,000 pounds (13,608 kilograms)

Speed: 289 miles per hour (464 kilometers per hour) at sea level

Range: beyond 4,000 miles (3,478 nautical miles)

Ceiling: 33,000 feet (10,000 meters)

Armament: countermeasures/flares, chaff

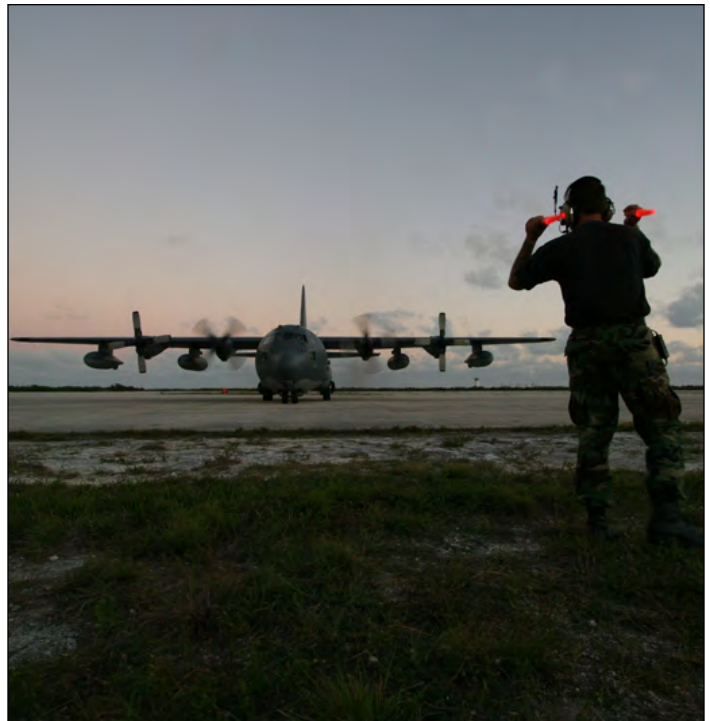
Crew: Three officers (pilot, co-pilot, navigator) and seven enlisted (flight engineer, airborne communications specialist, two loadmasters and three pararescuemen)

Unit Cost: \$18.4 million (fiscal 98 constant dollars)

Initial operating capability: 1964

Inventory: Active force, 13; ANG, 13; Reserve, 10

Military variants of the C-130 airframe: AC-130H/U Gunship; C-130D/D-6 ski-equipped for snow and ice operations; DC-130 Drone Control; ED-130H Compass Call (psychological operations/counterinformation and electronic attack); MC-130E/H Combat Talon (infiltration/exfiltration and resupply of special operations forces); MC-130P Combat Shadow (clandestine, low-visibility operations); WC-130 Hercules "Hurricane Hunter" (weather reconnaissance aircraft that provides tropical cyclone/hurricane forecasting by penetrating the cyclone or hurricane at altitudes ranging from 500 to 10,000 feet).







▲ ON THE FLIGHTLINE AT PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE

◀ PERFORMING A SIMULATED AERIAL-REFUELING
AT THE FLORIDA AIR & SEA SHOW



Master Sgt. Harley Doubet holds his son Breydon while responding to media queries after returning from a rescue at sea. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Eric Badger)

in Turkey
trick troops rescue F-16 pilot

three hours of a U.S. Air Force rescue operation in Turkey. The rescue was a success, and the pilot was safely returned to his base.



An HH-60 helicopter, like this one, was used for the rescue operation in Turkey. (Air Force photo)

pilots, navigators, flight engineers, PJs, maintainers and support people. "The rescue went like clockwork. The downed pilot was picked up in minimum time," said Lt. Col. J. Dunlap, commander of the 39th RQGW, who is deployed at the HC-130 unit command at Incirlik.

Two HH-60 helicopters and two HC-130 aircraft crews responded to the crash site on Tuesday. The 305th RQGW went to the crash site on an HH-60 recovered by the 39th RQGW, who was ultimately transferred to and downed by an F-16. The pilot was rescued.

PJs brave Atlantic to save sailor

By Lt. Col. K.E. Warren
920TH RQGW PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Members of Patrick's 920th Rescue Group rendered emergency medical care to a sailor 1,300 miles from shore. The rescue was a success, and the sailor was safely returned to his base.

"...It's a great feeling knowing you helped save someone and made it possible for him to see his friends and family again."
-Tech. Sgt. John Shiman

the vessel — the Super Servant used to ferry yachts. "Finding it wasn't a problem," said Hannold, aircraft commander. "We radioed our coordinators, Nelson Guadalupe, a communications operator helped us, too." The PJs jumped from the aircraft at 3,500 feet with medical supplies and communications equipment. They used a Rigged Alternate Method (RAMZ) package. They



DoD-led

By Alton...
David Deb...
Department...
personnel...
exercise in...
operations...
ensure their...
support upcoming...
The exercise, known as Mode VIII, the NASA designation for an astronaut bailout of the space shuttle, simulated the bailout of seven astronauts into the Atlantic Ocean 275 nautical miles from the Kennedy Space Center launch site. There are eight contingency modes for the space shuttle. Modes I-VII are led by NASA with support from the Department of Defense forces. Mode VIII is led by the Department of Defense since it relies heavily on the capabilities of DoD forces.

simulates shuttle bailout

HSPS chief of the 920th Rescue Wing based at Patrick Air Force Base provided an HC-130 and four HH-60 helicopters, while the 106th Rescue Wing based at Eglin Field Air Force Base provided an HC-130 and four HH-60 aircraft. The Marine Corps

provided a KC-130 tanker aircraft for the helicopters. U.S. Navy water survival instructors were provided by Detachment 2 of the 66th Training Squadron based in Pensacola, and the Coast Guard furnished an HU-25 Falcon jet, as well as the cutter Striker.



While HSPS organized the exercise, the U.S. Northern Command Joint Task Force headed command and control during the search, the first time NORTHCOM has done so, said Colonel Younes. After the "survivors" were plucked from the ocean, they were taken to Dillard Hospital in Daytona and Shands Hospital in Jacksonville. There, civilian medical workers reviewed the procedures for aiding people in the suits astronauts wear. Each survivor carried a card describing the injuries they'd received. "It was a great success," said James Sea-

Mourners honor heroic airman

Friends recall Eccleston as man who fought for job to save others

By John McCarthy...
FLORIDA TODAY
SATELLITE BEACH — Several hundred people crowded the sand at Politan Beach Park on Tuesday to remember a Patrick Air Force Base airman killed Friday during a humanitarian mission. Staff Sgt. Doug Eccleston, a pararescue specialist with the 920th Rescue Group, was killed after giving medical aid to a critically ill seaman aboard a super-tanker near Bermuda. He died when his inflatable boat capsized and he was thrown back into the water.

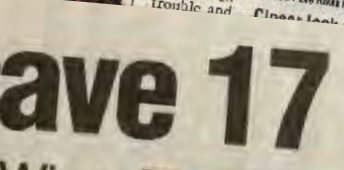
Stacie Eccleston, widow of Staff Sgt. Douglas Eccleston, watches as members of the 920th Rescue Group at Patrick Air Force Base swim out on their surfboards to place the wreath in the ocean. Eccleston, who died on a rescue mission, was an aviator. The ceremony, sponsored by the 920th Rescue Group, took place Tuesday morning at Politan Beach Park in Satellite Beach.



Patrick airmen fly 7 Marines to safety

By R. Norman Moody...
FLORIDA TODAY
PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE — An elite group of combat rescuers from Patrick Air Force Base went deep into Iraq to help seven Marines in trouble and

chick said. "He was pre-stoked, his adrenaline pumping. He hadn't slept for about 48 hours." Tardick said he could recall few details about the rescue mission because it was classified. "Our guys did a great job," he



Patrick unit helps save 17 in Iraq

Morale high among airmen of 920th Rescue Wing

War with Iraq 2 PAGES INSIDE
920th went in with HH-60G Pave Hawks and a C-130 to help rescue the 10 shot down by Saddam's forces. The airmen had to fly a little bit to help seven Marines in trouble and

920th RQG saves coastie at-sea

By Lt. Col. K.E. Warren...
920TH RQGW PUBLIC AFFAIRS
A 920th Rescue Group aircrew diverted from aerial patrols in conjunction with safeguarding Vice President Dick Cheney Tuesday to save an ailing Coast Guardsman's life. While about 40 miles off the coast of Cape Cod, the crew was alerted to a distress call from a Coast Guard cutter. The crew responded quickly, and the Coast Guardsman was safely returned to his base.



They climbed on board and treated the stricken man. After he was stabilized, they placed him on the litter and he was hoisted up to the helicopter. "He was having severe chest pains, had a fast heart rate and rapid respirations," said Bradshaw, combat rescue officer. It was about a 12-minute flight to Melbourne where they landed on a field near Holmes Regional Medical Center. The crew was transferred to paramedics



More inside
Marines capture Tikrit; fighting winds down
Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit falls with unexpectedly light resistance, the last Iraqi city to succumb to overpowering U.S.-led ground and air forces. 4A.
Vets compare Baghdad joy to fall of Berlin decades ago
World War II veterans compare the jubilation in the streets of Baghdad to the celebrations signaling the end of the Nazi regime in Berlin 60 years ago. 5A.



TRUE STORIES



A brief glimpse
at some of the
incredibly-heroic,
absurdly-dangerous,
truly-noble missions
carried out by the
dedicated Air Force Reservists
at the **920TH RESCUEWING**

Navy SEALs (Sea, Air, Land) operating in Afghanistan. From left to right: Matthew G. Axelson, Daniel R. Healy, James Suh, Marcus Luttrell, Eric S. Patton, Michael P. Murphy. With the exception of Luttrell, all were killed by enemy forces while supporting Operation Redwing.



Lone survivor

After the other members of his team were killed in a brutal firefight with the Taliban, Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell's only job was to find a way to stay alive until the 920th Rescue Wing could save him

by R. Norman Moody
Florida Today

A laser beam from the fighter jet shot through the clouds into the pitch dark, momentarily illuminating the narrow ledge in a terraced Afghan village 7,000 feet up a mountainside.

There, the lone U.S. survivor of an ambush deep in al-Qaida territory in northeastern Afghanistan was waiting, injured and weary, penned in by armed Taliban fighters moving in on the village that had served as refuge.

A team of 920th Rescue wing Airmen from Patrick Air Force Base and other troops were engaged in one of the largest combat rescue operations since the Vietnam War, a heroic maneuver on the eve of July 4, 2005, that until now has been shielded in relative secrecy for much of the past two years.

Evading enemy fire under the cover of darkness, with the help of ground forces, the troops plucked Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell to safety, and two days later returned to the hostile territory to recover the bodies of his comrades.

"I could see the A-10 come down and strafe the ridge and pull up in front of me," recalled Lt. Col. Jeffrey Macrander, Operations Group commander for the 920th Rescue Wing, who circled the village as another helicopter swooped in for the rescue.

"We got our Fourth of July fireworks provided by Uncle Sam."

Much of the information about the operation had been kept under wraps as is generally the case with special operations forces. But now, the brutal battle that led to the rescue is generating buzz thanks to last month's publications of "Lone Survivor," a book by Luttrell.

"Luttrell was one of those names that they didn't talk about publicly," said Macrander, who lives in Melbourne. "Now that the book is out, it's opened up."

Luttrell said in a telephone interview with Florida Today that he will forever be grateful to his rescuers. Taliban fighters had encircled the Afghan village when, in the distance, he spotted the helicopters coming for him.

"It was a huge risk for them to come in like that," the 31-year-old Texan said.

In June 2005, the U.S. Navy dropped an elite four-man SEAL team deep into northeastern Afghanistan. Their mission, dubbed Operation Redwing, was to capture or kill the Taliban warrior who commanded the burgeoning new force of Osama bin Laden's army.

But the mission was compromised.

Some 150 al-Qaida and Taliban mountain fighters attacked the four SEALs in what escalated into a brutal battle. For nearly three hours, the fighting raged.

A Chinook helicopter flying in reinforcements was shot down, killing all 16 people onboard.

By the end, only one from the four-man SEAL team—Luttrell—survived. Lt. Michael Murphy and Petty Officers Matthew Axelson and Danny Diets were killed.

Almost 100 Taliban were also killed.

Badly injured with a gunshot wound to his leg, the 6-foot-5 Luttrell hiked through the mountain with the help of villagers.

Back as his deployed base in Kandahar in southern Afghanistan, Macrander was getting ready to return home when the rescue order came in.

The crews knew only that a Chinook helicopter had been shot down and they were headed into the same area.

"Oh, God, please don't let me screw up," Macrander recalled thinking. "Please make sure we get everybody out."

The two helicopter crews, led by Macrander, and an A-10 fighter jet searched under the cover of night, while a ground crew, including pararescuers from the 920th Rescue Wing, hiked through a mountain rife with enemy fighters.

"It was pretty emotional for me that I was able to do that," said rescue pilot Lt. Col. Paul Nevius, a former Navy pilot. "I was pretty antsy about getting into the fight."

The pilots believed the survivor or survivors must have been seriously injured or otherwise unable to communicate. Later they found out the antenna on Luttrell's transmitter was broken off, so he could hear them but couldn't transmit.

"I could see the helicopters the whole time," Luttrell said. "They never gave up."

As they searched, the team continued hearing radio noise. Was it the survivors or an enemy trying to lure them into an ambush?

Hovering to listen more closely to the radio noise could expose them to more enemy fire. Daylight also gave the enemy an advantage. Not wanting to give up, the crews stayed about two hours after sunrise on the first day, Macrander said.

"We would say, 'give us a double click for a yes,'" Macrander said.

Later, word came through an Afghan that Luttrell was being cared for in a nearby village. Plans were made. Ground forces, helicopter crews and the fighter jet set out.

As Macrander circled overhead and an A-10 strafed the mountainside nearby, helicopter pilot Maj. Jeff Peterson swept down to pick up Luttrell.

"We're ready, we train for this every day, but there are a lot of unknowns," said Peterson, who is based in Tucson with the 305th Rescue Squadron, part of the 920th Rescue Wing headquartered at Patrick Air Force Base.

Heart pounding, excited about the mission but still terrified, Peterson precariously lowered the helicopter as the dust and darkness blinded him.

"I don't know how I landed on that ledge and held it there," he said. "I wouldn't land there even during the day."

In just 45 seconds, they had picked up Luttrell and an Afghan who was helping him and were back in the air, speeding down canyons and out of reach of the enemy.

"I haven't had a chance to thank any of these guys," Luttrell said. "They saved my life. I will forever be in their debt."

With Luttrell safe, the crews had to return July 4, 2005, to recover the bodies of Luttrell's comrades.

In their helicopters, they carried two American flags that would be draped over the body bags of those recovered. The third SEAL was recovered later by ground forces.

One of the flags was presented to the Navy UDT-SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce. The rescue crew wants the other to go to Luttrell.

"That was one flown on the Fourth of July," Nevius said. "I couldn't think of anybody better to give this flag to but Marcus."



In the blink of an eye

In the search-and-rescue business,
the difference between life and death
can sometimes be measured in milliseconds

by Master Sgt. Chance Babin
& Tech. Sgt. Paul Flipse

If Staff Sgt. Bruce Slamin had blinked at the wrong time, John Burkhalter might not be alive today.

That was the consensus from reservists at the 920th Rescue Wing after Mr. Burkhalter was rescued Sept. 20 from his disabled boat, adrift two days in the Gulf of Mexico.

John Burkhalter, 54, and his 37-year-old nephew Chris, set out Sept. 18 from a marina in Steinhatchee, Fla. The boat's engine failed while the two were still close to shore, but a strong current and steady wind took the craft out to sea.

Chris Burkhalter's spouse phoned the Coast Guard the next day around midnight to report the men missing, and an official search-and-rescue began the following morning.

However, as often happens during ocean rescues, the weather was threatening to become a factor. A tropical depression was nearing the search area, and Coast Guard officials decided to bring in reinforcements. They placed a call for help to the 920th Rescue Wing, and at approximately 12:15 p.m., one of the unit's HC-130P/N Hercules aircraft—referred to as a 'King' in rescue lingo—lifted off the runway at Patrick Air Force Base en route to the Gulf.

Once there, the aircrew began a standard search-and-rescue pattern—the pilots held the King at an altitude of 750 feet and airspeed of 120 knots (roughly 140 mph) while six crewmembers scanned the waters—three from the left side of the aircraft, two from the cockpit and one from the back. But the rough seas from the impending storm made for a difficult search.

"We knew we were looking for a blue-and-white, 19-foot boat, but there were so many whitecaps that everything began to look like a boat," said Staff Sgt. Jennifer Drake, the aircraft's radio operator.

Hours later, there was still no sign of the boat, and the crew was fighting the inevitable fatigue that sets in after staring for long stretches into an endless sea.

"Your eyes get tired," said Staff Sgt. Bruce Slamin, loadmaster on the flight. "You try not to look at one spot. I was tired but stayed positive—I never gave up hope."

With the storm closing in, there wasn't much time remaining, and the aircraft would soon have to break off the search. That's when something caught Sergeant Slamin's eye.

He'd been scanning the choppy water through a window in one of the aircraft's rear doors when he thought he saw a small boat amid the waves.

At first he did nothing—sure that someone up front had seen the boat. From his position in the back of the aircraft, he would be the last to see anything that passed below. But after a few moments passed with no chatter on the intercom, Sergeant Slamin began shouting excitedly into his radio.

"Boat ... mark, mark, mark" he yelled, prompting another crewmember to release a flare from the aircraft that pinpointed the boat's location.

The Hercules immediately circled back—flying just 200 feet above the choppy waters below ... and there he was. Standing in the small, blue-and-white boat, holding an oar and waving his arms, was John Burkhalter.

"I was ecstatic," said Sergeant Drake. "It was a miraculous find ... a needle in a haystack."

More like a needle in a needlestack. To illustrate how easy it would've been to **not** see the tiny ship, imagine standing on the roof of a seven-story building while trying to spot a dime on the gray sidewalk below. Now imagine the sidewalk moving past at 100 mph.

If Sergeant Slamin had simply blinked, yawned, rubbed his eyes, even shifted his weight at the moment the aircraft overflew the tiny, blue-and-white boat, John Burkhalter would likely never have been found.

"I was lucky to catch him," said Sergeant Slamin. "I said a prayer about 30 minutes prior. I said, 'God, this guy has a family.' I even made a little ditty out of my prayer to stay focused. About a half hour later I spotted him."

"Sergeant Slamin was (Mr. Burkhalter's) last hope," said Sergeant Drake. "We were going to be the last aircraft in that search area, and the storm was about 20 minutes away."

In order to make sure they stayed clear of that storm, the crew quickly radioed the 347th Rescue Group at nearby Moody Air Force Base, Ga. for helicopter support to complete the rescue. Twenty minutes later, three HH-60G Pave Hawks arrived and two pararescuemen (PJs) leapt into the rolling sea.

But the same vicious current that pulled the Burkhalter's boat so far from shore now took hold of the PJs. After 10 minutes of thrashing against the relentless waves, they had made little progress and had to be hoisted back into the helicopter.

In order to execute the rescue, they would have to lower a PJ directly into the boat—no small feat considering the conditions. Wind, waves and rotor wash—the immense cyclone of sea water sent airborne by the furious downdraft of the Pave Hawk's rotors—made the maneuver exceedingly difficult.

Carefully, the pilot held the 11-ton helicopter in a hover while a PJ rode the hoist down to the little ship, which was bobbing like a cork in the rough surf.

"(It) was amazing to witness," said Sergeant Drake. "It took incredible finesse and precision—it was really windy, and it was a small space to get into."

But any elation from executing such a difficult rescue was overshadowed when it became clear there was only one man on the boat.

"When we realized the nephew wasn't onboard, we were a bit stricken," Sergeant Drake said.

According to John Burkhalter, his nephew decided to swim to a buoy approximately 24 hours into the ordeal—while the boat was still near land. He took a GPS and jumped overboard wearing two life jackets and using a cooler top as a flotation device.

Tragically, Chris Burkhalter was never found. The Coast Guard suspended their search for him three days later.

After being pulled safely onboard the helicopter, John Burkhalter was airlifted to Shands Hospital in Gainesville, Fla., where he was treated for dehydration and mild hypothermia.

Incredibly, the Airman who spotted him that day was the one with the least experience in the rescue business—it was Sergeant Slamin's first official rescue mission.

But afterward, the 920th loadmaster's attention wasn't so much on himself as it was the man he saved.

"I'm glad he was able to get back to his family," he said.



The heart of freedom

Just four weeks after deploying to Iraq, a member of the 920th Rescue Wing became only the fifth woman in the history of the Air Force Reserve to be wounded in combat

by Tech. Sgt. Paul Flipse

It wasn't until she tasted blood in her mouth that she realized she'd been bombed.

Senior Airman Diane Lopes, a security forces specialist with the 920th Rescue Wing, had been walking quietly through the evening darkness at Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq. She'd been at the base only a short time—barely a month into a six-month deployment—and was on her way to the dining hall after finishing her shift. Then an 80 mm rocket tore through the darkness, over the perimeter fence and slammed into the earth just 25 from Airman Lopes.

"I can picture it like it was yesterday," she said. "I started to turn, then I heard the blast on my right side—it was the loudest thing I've ever heard. All I saw were sparks and a flash. The flash went through me—I thought I was on fire."

The 'flash' she saw was a blast wave, a wall of high pressure that radiates outward at high speed from a powerful explosion. In Airman Lopes case, the wave carried a hail of razor-sharp shrapnel. Yet for the first few moments, she didn't know she was hurt. Not until she tasted the blood.

"I didn't feel the shrapnel go in, I didn't feel anything cut me," she said. "I didn't feel anything until I came to on the ground and spit the blood out of my mouth—and kept spitting it out because it kept bleeding. Within a second, it hit me—I've just been bombed."

Though Airman Lopes initially felt no pain, her wounds were substantial. Shrapnel from the massive explosion snapped the tibia and fibula of her left leg, slashed 80 percent of the tendons in her right wrist, collapsed one of her lungs, burned her legs, perforated her right eardrum and peppered her body with shrapnel.

When the numbness began to fade and the first shock of pain took hold of her, so did a cold, deep fear that she may not make it home alive. At that moment, Airman Lopes said, she felt something within her push back—*defiantly*—against the fear. As she described how her instincts took over, her clear, firm voice began to tremble and crack under the weight of her emotion.

"I said, 'Hell no, I'm not dying here today. No way.'"

And so, resolved not to die, Airman Lopes fought to sway the odds of survival in her favor. Knowing she was hidden by the darkness and low clouds of smoke from the blast, she screamed for help until someone found her. When base medical personnel arrived, she latched onto the stretcher and drug herself on before the medics could take hold of her.

Next, she focused on lowering her heart rate by slowing down her breathing. By slowing her heart rate, she reasoned, she would lose less blood from her numerous wounds. Then, once inside the medical center, she began chanting her blood type to one of the technicians, saying "I'm O positive, I'm O positive" again and again to ensure she would get the right stuff. In all, the act of helping herself survive was an exercise in utility.

"I wasn't going to sit there and die," she said.

Airman Lopes had done everything in her ability to keep herself alive. But she'd lost a lot of blood and needed surgery, which could only happen at the other end of a 100-mile helicopter ride to Balad Air Base. While the smoke from the explosion dissipated in the evening air, the medical team at Kirkuk Air Base worked frantically to stabilize Airman Lopes...

As Autumn begins to descend on Washington D.C., the city's abundance of trees become resplendent in jackets of fall color. Red oaks, American elms, sugar maples and honey locusts spend

the days shedding their gaudy leaves into the brisk October wind, and the grounds of Walter Reed Army Medical Center are covered daily by a fresh blanket of vivid reds, fiery oranges and bright yellows.

On the southeast edge of the medical center's expansive lot sits a gabled, red-brick building with a facade resembling a Greek temple. Named after a former Walter Reed commander, the Mologne House was intended to provide short-term lodging for servicemembers and families visiting Walter Reed, and serve as a first-class hotel for active and retired military. Now it's home to 300 battle-wounded troops convalescing and rehabilitating a myriad of injuries—amputations, post-traumatic stress, severe head trauma, third-degree burns ... the list goes on.

And in room 257, an Airman with a cast on her broken left leg, stitches on the reattached tendons in her right wrist, bandages covering a constellation of shrapnel wounds, breathing with her re-expanded lung says five little words: "I'm lucky to be alive."

Originally from Connecticut, the 37-year-old now calls Tampa home. Her easy smile and genial nature belie an underlying toughness. Once a corrections officer, she had just completed training to become a Tampa police officer before leaving for Kirkuk. She joined the 920th two years ago and wants to stay in spite of the attack.

"It's not going to keep me from doing this," she said of her job as an Air Force reservist.

After being airlifted to Balad for the first of two surgeries, she passed through Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, then to Walter Reed, where doctors gave her a sunny forecast.

"They said I should make a full recovery," she said. "But I have a lot of physical therapy ahead of me."

Ten weeks to be exact, during which time she'll spend countless grueling hours straining to teach the damaged parts of her body to work again.

"It's painful," said Airman Lopes. "But I have to do it if I want to get better. I know it's only temporary, so I just deal with it."

Most days, her mind wanders back to that night at Kirkuk, and she still can't speak for long about it without shedding tears. Understanding, she said, is her key to handling the stress.

"I know I'm going to have good days and bad days," she said. "I knew I was going to have nightmares. I knew I was going to get depressed. If you know what you're going to go through, it's easier to deal with."

One way she deals with things is through a rather blunt sense of humor, which she displays on personalized T-shirts. One proclaims, "I went to Iraq and all I got was blown up," while another asks wryly, "got shrapnel?"

She's also comforted by her many visitors—family, friends, fellow-wounded and hospital staff; she's met a handful of generals ("all really funny, down-to-earth people") and a celebrity (Gary Sinise, aka Lieutenant Dan from *Forest Gump*).

"Everywhere I've been people have been coming to see me ... people I don't even know. It's so nice to have so many people care," she said.

Through her actions and instincts, Airman Lopes is a survivor. She's also a realist, clearly evident in her reaction after Air Force Reserve commander Lt. Gen. John Bradley pinned a Purple Heart Medal to her shirt, making her just the fifth woman in Air Force Reserve history to earn one.

"I'm just happy I was present for that ceremony," she said.



Flight risk

Air Force Reservists at the 920th Rescue Wing earn their keep making one of the world's toughest, most-exclusive jobs look easy

by Master Sgt. Chance Babin

Lifting skyward in a plume of fire and smoke, the space shuttle leaves Earth's atmosphere in a matter of minutes. For the search-and-rescue professionals at the 920th Rescue Wing, endless hours of training each year prepare them for the possibility of performing a high-profile search-and-rescue (SAR) mission that would have the world's eyes upon them.

Since the early Mercury missions, Reserve rescue Airmen have been involved with NASA and the space mission. Today the mission is much larger and remains high profile with continuing media interest. But the mission for the 920th remains the same—rescue and recovery of astronauts. It's also a mission that brings with it an enormous responsibility.

"It's huge," said Senior Master Sgt. Mike Ziegler, 920th para-rescue operations superintendent. "Anytime something goes in the air, whether it's our pilots overseas or the shuttle, you need search and rescue."

When things go right, which they most-often do, the rescue crews simply head back to base, another successful mission behind them.

Yet the hours of preparation and hard work are not wasted. Rather, they ensure Sergeant Ziegler and his fellow rescue crewmembers will be prepared in the event of a true disaster.

"When it goes bad—that's what we're here for."

The wing brings all their SAR assets to the table for the shuttle mission: HC-130P/N Hercules long-range refuelers; HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and teams of pararescuemen. In all, the 920th sends more than 50 SAR experts to support each launch.

These combat-rescue warriors must train throughout the year to maintain their readiness for such a complex mission. They also train with NASA, participating in exercises that simulate conditions the Airmen may face during a launch-related emergency.

A Mode 7 exercise simulates a downed shuttle—on or near the landing strip, while a Mode 8 simulates a scenario involving the astronauts bailing out of the shuttle over and into the Atlantic Ocean, both of which are similar in makeup to the unit's usual fare.

"It's an operational mission," said Lt. Col. Phillip Kennedy, a safety officer with the 920th. "You don't have threats to worry about, but (the shuttle mission) can be more complex. What it comes down to is, we're still doing a rescue where we find, locate and extract a survivor."

For the PJs, working with the shuttle program is yet another skill among dozens they already practice that, but that is essential to perform their job.

"Rescue and recovery of astronauts requires an immense amount of training, and it's just one-tenth of what we do," said Sergeant Ziegler. "It's a very exclusive mission."

According to Sergeant Ziegler, PJs have to use specialized equipment for the mission, which requires additional safety training.

Sergeant Ziegler first worked with the shuttle program in 1988 while overseas at a trans-oceanic abort landing site (TAL)—in case the shuttle can't make it to space and needs to land.

Today, you may find members of the 920th manning one or both of two, remote TAL stations during every launch, including Airmen from geographically-separated units at 943rd Rescue Group, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., and the 305th Rescue Group, Portland, Ore. They also routinely come here to support the shuttle.

Sergeant Ziegler said some of the younger guys working the shuttle mission get excited about watching the shuttle liftoff.

"When the novelty wears off, it's just another alert," he said. "You still have to be prepared. But you have to be just as prepared for any alert."

To Sergeant Ziegler, it doesn't matter *who* needs help—only that they need it.

"I work just as hard for that fisherman as I would for that astronaut," he said.

One of the major challenges for wing Airmen in relation to the space program is when missions are postponed, like the Space Shuttle Atlantis mission scheduled to launch in early December but was delayed until January.

"You have to be flexible working with NASA," said Colonel Kennedy.

In addition to providing SAR support, the 920th plays a vital role during both shuttle and rocket launches by clearing boaters, fishermen, scuba divers and the like from the waters off Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

In all, despite the long hours, constant training and large responsibility, it's a job these Airmen cherish.

"There are a lot of benefits to space travel and we are helping in our own way," said Kennedy. "A lot of us grew up interested in space, and this is our way of contributing."



Open water

The 920th Rescue Wing spends a day at sea training for one of NASA's worst-case space shuttle launch scenarios

by Tech. Sgt. Paul Flipse

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 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 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 look-outs, 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 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, including a GPS feature that allowed the SAR team to pinpoint an astronaut in record time.

“I found him in twenty seconds,” 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.”



Angels over New Orleans

The Hurricane Katrina Relief Mission

In August 2005, a small tropical storm formed over the Atlantic Ocean just southeast of Miami. It was the 11th named storm of 2005.

It would grow into the third-strongest and third-deadliest hurricane ever to make landfall in the United States.

Six days after it was born, Hurricane Katrina would strike New Orleans.

Roughly one million people fled the city in the days before the storm. But no less than 20,000 people stayed behind to ride it out. Some stayed by choice. But many were simply too ill, too poor or too frail to leave. All they could do was wait for Katrina to pass and hope for the best.

Early morning, August 29. The massive storm cuts a deep path through the eastern edge of New Orleans, pushing a churning wall of water over the city's aging levees.

By the time Katrina is done, 80 percent of the city was under water, some areas covered to a depth of 20 feet.

In the days that followed, people in local shelters were evacuated to safe zones outside the city. But thousands remained trapped in their homes with dwindling supplies, cut off by mountains of debris and toxic flood waters.

Again, they were left to wait, and hope...

While Hurricane Katrina raged through New Orleans, Airmen from the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, quietly readied themselves for the largest rescue operation in U.S. Air Force history.

Incredibly, they had returned from a deployment to Afghanistan just two weeks prior—barely enough time to unpack and begin reconnecting with loved ones.

Yet soon after the storm subsided, three of the unit's HH-60G Pave Hawk rescue helicopters lifted off the flightline at Patrick, bound for the devastated Gulf Region.

In the days and weeks that followed, 920th rescue teams worked around-the-clock to reach the scores of people stranded in the wreckage of New Orleans.

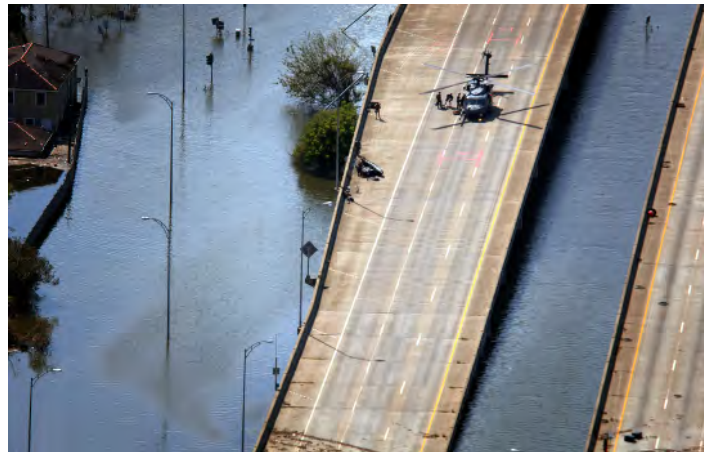
By the time they were through, they had saved the lives of 1,043 people, more than the combined number of rescues in the unit's distinguished 51-year history.

In all, the Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Coastguardsmen of Joint Task Force Katrina successfully evacuated roughly 66,000 people from the communities ravaged by the deadly storm.

For their heroism and meritorious achievement, each of the 32 Airman from the 920th Rescue Wing who took part in the Katrina rescue mission received an Air Medal, the fourth-highest Air Force award.

They represent the heart of the Air Force Reserve, the soul of the 920th Rescue Wing, and the selfless spirit of a Guardian Angel.

The impact of their brave and tireless service will be felt throughout New Orleans and America's Gulf Coast for generations to come.



920TH RESCUE WING

CURRENT STRENGTH

- More than 1,500 personnel (nearly 1,000 at Patrick AFB)

UNIT TIMELINE

- 1956** - Activated at Miami Intl. Airport (first Reserve rescue unit)
- 1957** - Unit records first save
- 1960** - Relocated to Homestead Air Force Base
- 1992** - Hurricane Andrew destroys Homestead
- 1992** - Unit relocates to Patrick Air Force Base
- 1992** - Operation Southern Watch (Kuwait)
- 1994** - Operation Southern Watch (Kuwait)
- 1997** - 920th Rescue Group Activated
- 1998** - Operation Northern Watch (Turkey)
- 1999** - Icelandic Rotation for Humanitarian Assistance
- 1999** - Hurricane Floyd - 217 Saves
- 2000** - Operation Northern Watch (Turkey)
- 2001** - Operation Southern Watch
- 2002** - Operation Enduring Freedom (Southwest Asia)
- 2002** - Joint Task Force Olympics (Salt Lake City)
- 2003** - 920th Rescue Wing Activated on April 1
- 2003** - Operation Iraqi Freedom - 26 Combat Saves
- 2003** - Joins Air Force Special Operations Command
- 2005** - 305th Rescue Squadron converts to 943rd Rescue Group
- 2005** - Operation Enduring Freedom (SWA) - 54 Combat Saves
- 2005** - Hurricane Katrina - 1,043 Saves
- 2007** - Returned to Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom
- 2008** - Returned to Operation Enduring Freedom - 132 Saves
- 2008** - Hurricane Ike - 17 Saves

UNIT AWARDS

- 1999, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006 - Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
- 2005 - Jimmy Doolittle Fellow Award for Outstanding Contributions to Search and Rescue
- 2003 - Maj. Gen. Tom Marchbanks Award for Heroism (Iraq)
- 2003 - Jolly Green Association for Rescue of the Year (Iraq)
- 1998 - Maj. Gen. Tom Marchbanks Heroism Award
- 1998 - Jolly Green Association for Rescue of the Year
- 1998 - American Helicopter Society Capt. William Kossler Award
- 1998 - Aviation Week Operations "Laureate"
- 1998 - Air Force Association President's Award
- 1993 - Maj. Gen. Tom Marchbanks Heroism Award (93 saves)

IMPACT ON LOCAL ECONOMY

Unit Payroll	\$35,442,276
Unit Expenditures	\$17,886,239
Value of Jobs Created	\$14,665,630
Total Impact	\$67,994,145

AIR FORCE RESERVE

RESERVE BASICS

- **Established:** April 14, 1948
- **Designated as MAJCOM (AFRC):** February 17, 1997
- **Selected Reserve Strength (FY08):** 67,500
- **Command Structure:** 33 flying wings, 7 flying groups, 1 space group with 10 space associated units and 620 mission-support units.

KEY LEADERS

• AF Secretary	Michael B. Donley
• AF Undersecretary	Vacant
• AF Chief of Staff	Gen Norton A. Schwartz
• AF Vice Chief of Staff	Gen Duncan McNabb
• Chief Master Sgt of the AF	CMSgt Rodney J. McKinley
• Commander, AFRC	Lt Gen Charles E. Stenner
• AFRC Command Chief	CMSgt Troy J. McIntosh

BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR 2008

• Ops and Maintenance	\$2,815.4 million
• Military Personnel	\$1,363.8 million
• Procurement	\$45 million

RESERVE MISSION CAPABILITY

Aerial Spray	100%
Weather Reconnaissance	100%
Port Mortuary Affairs	75%
Aeromedical Evacuation	60%
Aerial Port	54%
Combat Flight Inspection	50%
Strategic Airlift	46%
Aerial Fire Fighting	25%

*PERSONNEL RECOVERY 23%

Tanker	23%
Theater Airlift	21%
Intel	19%

AIR FORCE RESERVE FACILITY FOOTPRINT

Locations: 75

- 5 Air Reserve Bases
- 5 Air Reserve Stations
- 1 Navy Tenant Location
- 1 Air National Guard Tenant Location
- 44 Air Force Tenant Locations
- 8 Miscellaneous Locations
- 3 Ranges

Facilities: 3,009 (1,270 Buildings)

- 14.635 million square feet
- Average age - 29.6 years

* The 920th Rescue Wing is the only Personnel Recovery unit in the Air Force Reserve

publicaffairsoffice



NAME / RANK / TITLE: Cathleen Snow, Captain, Chief of Public Affairs
STATUS / TIME IN SERVICE: Air Reserve Technician, 23 years
EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in communications (cum laude), Robert Morris University, Pittsburgh, Pa. (Communications Student of the Year); Academy of Military Science, McGhee Tyson ANGB, Tenn.
ACHIEVEMENTS: 2000 AFRC Series Writer of the Year; 2000 AFRC Public Affairs Specialist of the Year (NCO); member of 1997 Joint Armed Services Presidential Inaugural Committee, Washington, D.C.



NAME / RANK / TITLE: Jaime Pinto, 1st Lieutenant, Assistant Director of Public Affairs (military)
STATUS / TIME IN SERVICE: Traditional Reservist, 3 years
EDUCATION: Master's degree (summa cum laude, valedictorian) in organizational communication, Marist College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; Bachelor's degree in computer information systems (magna cum laude), Valdosta State University, Valdosta, Ga.; Academy of Military Science (distinguished grad), McGhee Tyson ANGB, Tenn.
CIVILIAN JOB: Program Execution Group Action Officer, Air Armament Center, USAF



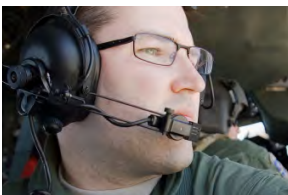
NAME / RANK / TITLE: Raymond Padgett, Master Sgt., NCOIC
STATUS / TIME IN SERVICE: Traditional Reservist, 19 years
EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in computer science from Limestone College, Gaffney, S.C. (2002); master's degree in educational leadership from National Louis University, Tampa, Fla. (2006)
ACHIEVEMENTS: 2002 AFRC Award for Single-Event Coverage
CIVILIAN JOB: Assistant Principal at Orange Grove Middle School, Tampa, Fla.



NAME / RANK / TITLE: Bryan Ripple, Master Sgt., Public Affairs Specialist
STATUS / TIME IN SERVICE: Traditional Reservist, 21 years
DEPLOYMENTS: Iraq
ACHIEVEMENTS: 2000 AFRC News Article of the Year; 1997-99 AFRC Outstanding Contribution to PA Programs Award; 1997 AFRC Stand-Alone Photo of the Year
CIVILIAN JOB: Chief of Public Affairs, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI)



NAME / RANK / TITLE: Paul Flipse, Tech. Sgt., Editor of ANGEL'S WINGS magazine Asst. Dir. of PA (civilian)
STATUS / TIME IN SERVICE: Air Reserve Technician, 14 years
DEPLOYMENTS: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Bosnia-Herzegovina
ACHIEVEMENTS: 2006 AFRC News Article of the Year; 2006 Air Force News Article of the Year; 2006 Department of Defense Thomas Jefferson Award for news article of the Year; 2007 AFRC Graphic Artist of the Year; 2007 AFRC Feature Article of the Year



NAME / RANK / TITLE: Jeremy Allen, Tech. Sgt., Public Affairs Specialist
STATUS / TIME IN SERVICE: Traditional Reservist, 6 years
EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree from Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark. (1998); associate degree in digital photography from International Academy of Design and Technology (2007)
ACHIEVEMENTS: Photographic assistant to ESPN Magazine and Tampa Bay Buccaneers football team
CIVILIAN JOB: Senior analyst, L3 communications in support of U.S. Special Operations Command



NAME / RANK / TITLE: Heather Kelly, Staff Sgt., Public Affairs Specialist
STATUS / TIME IN SERVICE: Traditional Reservist, 11 years
EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in political science/communications from the University of Central Florida, Orlando (2003)
ACHIEVEMENTS: 2003 AFRC News Article of the Year; 2004 AFRC News Article of the Year
CIVILIAN JOB: Media Relations Manager, Lockheed Martin Corporation

COMMON ACRONYMS & AIR FORCE JARGON



AFRC

Air Force Reserve Command

AFRC provides the Air Force approximately 20 percent of their capability at four percent of the total Air Force budget. The Air Force Reserve performs two missions no other military service does: fixed-wing,

aerial-spray missions and hurricane forecasting. AFRC also supports the space program, flight test, special operations, aerial port operations, civil engineer, security forces, intelligence, military training, communications, mobility support, transportation and services missions.

AGR *Active Guard Reserve*

National Guard and Reserve members who are on voluntary active duty providing full-time support to National Guard, Reserve, and Active Component organizations for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training the Reserve Components.

ART *Air Reserve Technician*

A full-time Department of Defense civilian who is required, as a condition of employment, to be an Air Force reservist and perform the same duties as a civilian as he/she does during monthly Reserve training.

AT *Annual Training*

The minimum period of Active Duty Training or Annual Field Training a Reservist member must perform every year to satisfy annual training requirements.



CRO {kroh}

Combat Rescue Officer

Before 2000, there were no officers in pararescue. The first to become CROs were 920th pararescuemen Capt. Greg Lowdermilk and Capt. Rusty Bradshaw.

CSAR {see-sahr} *Combat Search and Rescue*

The Air Force's preferred mechanism for personnel recovery in uncertain or hostile environments and denied areas.

DRILL

The required, two-day, monthly training period of reservists, scheduled for the first or second weekend of each month.

JOLLY

Nickname/call sign of any CSAR helicopter. The term originated during the Vietnam War, in reference to the helicopters used by combat rescue personnel Sikorsky HH-3E during the Vietnam War. Troops began calling the large, green aircraft, "Jolly Green Giants," and the nickname stuck.

GREEN FEET

Common in the rescue community, green feet represent the "footprints" of a Jolly Green Giant helicopter, the aircraft used for combat search and rescue. The logo is embraced and displayed both by pararescuemen and helicopter pilots & crewmembers. Typically, feet with five toes represent helicopter crew, while those with four toes represent pararescuemen.



KING

Nickname/call sign of the HC-130P/N aircraft, the extended-range, combat-rescue version of the C-130 Hercules. The King logo features a large letter 'K' adorned by a crown.



HALO {hey-loh}

High Altitude - Low Opening

Jump missions that begin by exiting an aircraft at altitudes up to 35,000 feet, then freefalling to about 2,500 feet before opening the canopy.

HOSE & DROGUE

The hose is a flexible, retractable tube that trails from an aircraft during aerial-refueling. The drogue, a small parachute, stabilizes the hose during flight and acts as a 'funnel' for the probe of the aircraft being refueled. The HC-130s used by the 920th have two hoses each and can aerially-refuel two helicopters simultaneously.



MODE 8

NASA term for a worst-case, survivable, shuttle launch during which astronauts must bail out into the Atlantic Ocean.



PJ {pee-jey}

Pararescueman, from *para-jumper*.





PROBE

Retractable, 14-foot refueling tube attached to the front of an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter. The probe is inserted into the hose of a HC-130P/N tanker

during flight, allowing helicopters to refuel without landing.



RAMZ {ramz}

Rigging Alternate Method Zodiac

A system of folding and packing an inflatable 14-foot Zodiac watercraft so that it may be fitted with a parachute

and dropped from an HC-130 Hercules aircraft safely into open water. RAMZ packages, which include air tanks to inflate the Zodiac, are strapped to the aircraft's cargo ramp. After the HC-130 reaches an altitude of 2,500 feet, the package is pushed out of the aircraft. Seconds later, pararescuemen jump from the aircraft, deploy their parachutes and attempt to make visual contact with the RAMZ, which has chemical lightsticks attached to its parachute rigging for better visibility. Once their canopies open, the PJs will steer themselves toward the RAMZ, following it into the water below, where they will secure, unpack and inflate the Zodiac, then proceed with their mission.



SERE {seer}

Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape

The Air Force SERE program enables military, civilian, contractor and other designated personnel to return to friendly control after isolation due to enemy actions, aircraft emergency, or other unforeseen events. The goal of the program is to prepare personnel to return with honor, regardless of the

circumstances of isolation. The course highlights techniques designed to ensure a servicemember's health, mobility, safety and honor in anticipation of or preparation for their return to friendly control.

TR Traditional Reservist

Airmen who work and perform readiness training with their Reserve unit one weekend per month (24 days), plus an additional two-weeks of active-duty training per year. TRs at the 920th Rescue Wing, most of whom also have full-time civilian jobs, average nearly 70 days of Reserve duty per year. Reservists are also sometimes referred to as "Citizen Airmen."

AIR FORCE RANK & INSIGNIA

ENLISTED / NCOs

-no insignia-

Airman Basic / E-1



Airman / E-2



Airman 1st Class / E-3



Senior Airman / E-4



Staff Sergeant / E-5



Tech. Sergeant / E-6



Master Sergeant / E-7



Senior Master Sergeant / E-8



Chief Master Sergeant / E-9



Command Chief Master Sergeant

OFFICERS



2nd Lieutenant / O-1



1st Lieutenant / O-2



Captain / O-3



Major / O-4



Lieutenant Colonel / O-5



Colonel / O-6



Brigadier General / O-7



Major General / O-8



Lieutenant General / O-9



General / O-10



(PHOTO COURTESY BRUCE ELY)

920RQW HEADQUARTERS

WING COMMANDER

Col. Steven W. "Wall Street" Kirkpatrick

VICE COMMANDER

Col. Philip J. Manning

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Maj. M. Douglas Knight

COMMAND CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT

Chief Master Sgt. Gerald Delebreau

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Ms. DeAnn Houck

ADMINISTRATION

Tech. Sgt. Emily Lizak

Ms. Nicole Culla

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

Capt. Cathleen Snow

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS (military)

1st Lt. Jaime Pinto

NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER IN CHARGE

Master Sgt. Raymond Padgett

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS (civilian)

EDITOR, ANGEL'S WINGS MAGAZINE

Tech. Sgt. Paul Flipse

STAFF WRITERS / PHOTOGRAPHERS

Master Sgt. Bryan Ripple

Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Allen

Staff Sgt. Heather Kelly

943RD RESCUE GROUP PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Master Sgt. Ruby Zarzyczny

304TH RESCUE SQUADRON PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Senior Airman Adam Hoffman

CONTACT INFORMATION

920th Rescue Wing

Public Affairs Office

1225 Jupiter Street

Suite 1-202 / Bldg. 425

Patrick AFB, Fla. 32925-3339

TEL 321.494.0535/6

FAX 321.494.1309

DSN 854.0535/6

public_affairs@rescue.patrick.af.mil

www.920rqw.afrc.af.mil

920TH RECRUITING OFFICE

Senior Master Sgt. Gary Johnson

321.494.3002

PARARESCUE RECRUITING

Chief Master Sgt. Peter Callina

321.494.6891





▲ PARARESCUE SWIFTWATER TRAINING, WEST VIRGINIA



THE AIRMAN'S CREED

**I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN
I AM A WARRIOR
I HAVE ANSWERED MY NATION'S CALL
I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN
MY MISSION IS TO FLY, FIGHT AND WIN
I AM FAITHFUL TO A PROUD HERITAGE
A TRADITION OF HONOR
AND A LEGACY OF VALOR
I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN
GUARDIAN OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE
MY NATION'S SWORD AND SHIELD
ITS SENTRY AND AVENGER
I DEFEND MY COUNTRY WITH MY LIFE
I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN
WINGMAN, LEADER, WARRIOR
I WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AIRMAN BEHIND
I WILL NEVER FALTER
AND I WILL NOT FAIL**

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EDITOR'S NOTE

**THE ANGEL'S WINGS ONLINE PDF IS BEST VIEWED
USING THE "TWO-UP" OR "SIDE-BY-SIDE" OPTION
IN THE TOOLBAR AT THE TOP OF THE SCREEN.
IF THE OPTION FOR TWO-UP DOES NOT APPEAR
IN THE TOOLBAR, RIGHT-CLICK ON ONE OF THE VIEW
OPTIONS THAT ARE IN THE TOOLBAR AND SELECT
IT FROM THE MENU THAT POPS UP**