

ANGEL'S WINGS ONLINE

920TH RESCUE WING

FEBRUARY 2019

Notes of Interest

920TH COMMAND CHIEF MASTER SGT DOUG ISAACKS RETIREMENT, FEB 9

Col. Kurt Matthews, 920th Rescue Wing commander, invites you to a ceremony in honor of CMSgt. Douglas C. Isaacks, 920th Rescue Wing command chief on the occasion of his retirement on Sat., Feb. 9 at 3:00 p.m. in the Base Theater. See story, pg. 4 - 5.

APPEALS MODERNIZATION ACT GOES INTO EFFECT IN FEBRUARY

The Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 is effective February 19, 2019. Under the new law, any Veteran who receives an initial VA claim decision after February 2019 can choose from three, easy-to-understand review choices. All three choices provide Veterans with faster resolution of disagreements with VA decisions.

FREE YOGA CLASSES AVAILABLE

Innovation Yoga offers a free weekly yoga class to currently serving military members, veterans and families on Saturdays at 1100. Their address is 714 South Patrick Drive, Satellite Beach, Fla.

AIR FORCE ENDS PROMOTION TESTING FOR E-7 AND ABOVE

The Air Force announced that it is removing the Weighted Airman Promotion System testing requirement for active-duty promotions to the grades of E-7 through E-9, beginning this fall with the 2019 E-9 promotion cycle. The memo, signed Jan. 31, 2019, removes the phase one requirement for senior noncommissioned officers to test for promotion, allowing promotion boards to identify the best qualified Airmen to promote into the senior noncommissioned officer corps.

MILITARY ONESOURCE: FREE TAX PREP AND FILING SOFTWARE

MilTax Preparation and e-Filing Software is designed to address situations specific to the military. This self-paced tax software allows you to access free technical assistance to complete and electronically file your federal return and up to three state tax forms.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The theme for National Black History Month February 2019 is "Black Migrations." This year's theme emphasizes the movement of people of African descent to new destinations and subsequently to new social realities. While inclusive of earlier centuries, this theme focuses especially on the 20th century through today. Black History Month is an annual celebration of contributions that African Americans have made toward our American history despite the struggles for freedom and equality.



Bradley, 301st Rescue Squadron Service dog, and one of his handlers, performed functional task training, such as climbing onto unsteady tables, turning on light switches and opening refrigerator doors at the Merritt Island Home Depot, Feb. 5, 2019. This training allows the handler and dog to form a foundation of trust and learn which commands to use. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Kelly Goonan)

News & Features

AIR FORCE RESERVE STRATEGIC GROUP LOOKS TO THE FUTURE



The Air Force Reserve Future Force Framework, commonly referred to as AF3, is a year-long project directed by Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee, Air Force Reserve Command commander, to reform the organization's priorities.

AID DELIVERED: 1 WEEKEND, 3 COUNTRIES, NEARLY 130K PEOPLE HELPED



Over a weekend-long combined humanitarian and training mission, three C-17 Globemaster III aircraft and their Reserve Citizen Airmen crews from Joint Base Charleston's 315th Airlift Wing delivered humanitarian aid to Guatemala, Haiti, and Honduras.

CMSAF TALKS PROMOTION CHANGES



Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth Wright discusses the upcoming changes to senior noncommissioned officer promotions.

FOLLOW THE
920TH RQW
ONLINE



A Somber Mission: Recovery on Mt. Hood



By Andre Trinidad, 943rd Rescue Group Public Affairs

PORTLAND AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ore. -- On the morning of Jan. 30, the 304th Rescue Squadron supported a rescue operation on Mt. Hood after a downed aircraft was spotted earlier this week.

Twelve personnel from the 304th Rescue Squadron, Air Force Reserve, participated in the rescue efforts. During the course of the operation it was discovered that there were no survivors and they would be assisting in the recovery.

The Hood River Crag Rats and the Oregon Air National Guard's 125th Special Tactics Squadron were also called to recover the body of George Regis, whose plane wreckage was found on Jan. 29.

A Combat Rescue Officer (CRO) from the 304th Rescue Squadron said the recovery went very well.

"The incident was pretty far up the mountain," said the CRO. "With these civilian search and rescue missions the Hood River Crag Rats were the primary, so we up there to support them."

Members from the 304th Rescue Squadron left Portland Air National Guard base Wednesday at 4:30 am.

Once arriving to Mount Hood, "we pushed up the Mountain from 6,000 feet up to 9,000 feet" said the CRO.

Once recovered, the team began their trek back down the mountain. "We skied Regis down the glacier until we hit a ridgeline" said the CRO. The ridge required the team to traverse 500 feet up, using a mechanical advantage rope system.

The team quickly set up the system and raised Regis to continue the movement down the mountain. The CRO said "in total we moved about six miles."

"It was some pretty tricky terrain," said the CRO. "I've been on several crash recoveries; you always learn a lot from conducting real-world missions."

The 304th Rescue Squadron supplements civilian rescue operations when the mission requirements are beyond their capabilities.

"The civilian agency really needed us there for the extra manpower and support because it was such a tricky mission." The CRO said "We really appreciate the 920th Rescue Wing and 943rd Rescue Group's support in this recovery mission."



(Courtesy photos)

THE ELK INSTITUTE

FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH & PERFORMANCE

The Elk Institute is a non-profit 501(c)3 #46-4359660, that was established to provide mental health education, consultation, treatment, and clinical research service to our military and veteran communities. Specializing in the treatment of psychological trauma (PTS, PTSD, shell shock, battle fatigue, etc.), services are provided at no cost to the service member or veteran.

The Elk Institute is designed to serve as an alternative or adjunct to VA and military behavioral health services for those who choose not to access treatment at those facilities or are seeking another approach to treatment for PTSD and related issues.

Dr. Carrie Elk has been in the mental health field for more than 20 years. She earned her BS in Education and Psychology at Towson State University in 1991, M.Ed. in Counseling from The Penn State University in 1995, and her Ph.D. in Human Science from Florida State University in 1999. She has been involved in many local, national, and international activities supporting military and veterans. She is the founder and CEO of The Elk Institute for Psychological Health and Performance, providing education, treatment, and clinical research consultation on psychological trauma and other mental health and psychological performance topics to civilians, service members and veteran organizations and individuals.

Dr. Elk served as a Clinical Services Supervisor for Military One Source until 2010 and continued to do outreach for the organization beyond that time. Dr. Elk then had a two-year contract (2010-2012) as a visiting faculty member with the USF College of Nursing to serve as co-investigator on the initial studies of a treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. During this time, she lobbied for and served as USF Health's 1st Military Liaison, was instrumental in the development of a Military & Veteran Health course, and represented the college as an active member of the Veterans Reintegration Steering committee.

Dr. Elk served as a Subject Matter Expert to USSOCOM, where she has been an adjunct faculty member at the Joint Special Operations Forces Senior Enlisted Academy, provides consultation, education & treatment to USSOCOMs Care Coalition as needed, and has worked in various entities within USSOCOM in this capacity. Elk Institute for Psychological Health & Performance is a professional member of (SOMA) Special Operations Medical Association.

In January 2014, Elk Institute for Psychological Health & Performance was established as a 501(c)3 organization.

Dr. Elk who is an Honorary Wing Commander for the 927th Air Refueling Wing at MacDill Air Force Base, also serves as a member of the (ESGR) Employers Support of the Guard and Reserve, and the Florida Behavioral Health Alliance. She travels around the country speaking on mental health and performance topics, offers treatment to warriors and their families in need, collaborating with military and veteran organizations worldwide. You may recall Dr. Elk from her previous recurring radio segment "Training for Tactical Athletes" on "Tipping Point" or her current "Military Minute" segments on WFLA/WTTA. She is frequently quoted as an expert in combat veterans mental health issues by the media.

For more information, visit www.ElkInstitute.org or call (813) 310-6686.

Editors note: No federal endorsement intended.

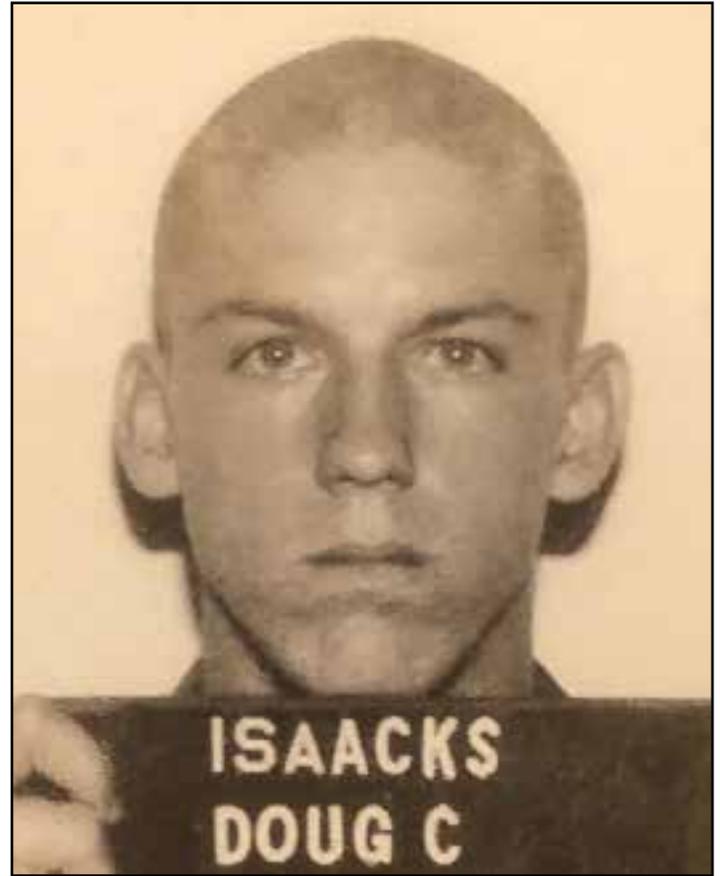
Command Chief Leaves Behind Legacy of Resilient Leadership

By Maj. Cathleen Snow
920th Rescue Wing, Public Affairs

Attaining the rank of Chief Master Sergeant, the Air Force's highest enlisted rank, is usually the pinnacle of an Airman's career, but for Command Chief Master Sgt. Douglas C. Isaacks, a 20-year pararescueman, his career has been a daisy chain of successes leading to his rise to the top in the most-deployed, and only Reserve Rescue wing in the nation.

After an initial stint as a security forces specialist for five years, Isaacks not only met and sustained the skills and abilities as an Air Force pararescueman, considered the most physically challenging Air Force career-field charged with rescuing injured combatants from battle, but he collected a slew of accolades along the way- namely, a 2001 Bronze Service Star earned from a combat static-line jump into Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, which led to follow-on coalition forces arriving in Western Afghanistan.

Carrying hefty rucksacks weighted with multiple weapons and rescue gear served to condition the veteran pararescueman for the heavy responsibility he would bear mentoring troops while setting the bar high ensuring



their morale, health and welfare was on par with the 920th Rescue Wing's effectiveness.

Less than a month after being appointed 920th RQW command chief, the sting of what combat can do to a person hit home when a seasoned NCO took his own life from post-traumatic stress - catching the wing off guard, but Chief Isaacks' strong leadership was just what was needed. The harsh loss quadrupled the size of the corps Isaacks would serve during his tenure because he ensured every wing member's family was brought into his fold of leadership.

Earlier that summer, the 920th RQW's annual flight plan portfolio logged two 1,000-mile roundtrips over the vast sea to save two men whose sailboat caught fire and sunk, and a cruise ship passenger who became gravely ill—a trek to Texas to evacuate 235 citizens displaced by the ravages of Hurricane Harvey—and several stints up Oregonian mountains to pick up hikers





trapped by weather events—all the while surpassing the intense scrutiny of an inspection and sending multiple personnel out the door to combat.

Checking off these seemingly immortal feats led to multiple accolades and awards for rescue warriors to celebrate, however tears brought on by more tragic news of loss, were shed along the way.

The rescue community received a major blow when 7 Airmen were killed aboard Jolly 51, an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter that crashed in Iraq March 15, 2018. Isaacks fostered resiliency throughout the wing during that time.

Leaving a 20-year storied career behind, Isaacks will hang up his maroon beret and command chief stripes to run his own company and pursue more time enjoying his wife and two boys and getting back to flying on four wheels. The chief picked up the art and action sport of skateboarding again after nearly going pro in school.



Selfless Dedication; Rescue Spouse Receives Command Nomination

By Tech. Sgt. Kelly Goonan, 920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – When Lisa Fernandez became the Key Spouse for the 308th Rescue Squadron, she never imagined her efforts would lead to her nomination by Air Force Reserve Command for the 2019 Joan Orr Air Force Spouse of the Year award.

“I feel very blessed and honored, but I don’t do this for recognition,” Fernandez said. “I don’t do it alone. I have a very strong team that helps me.”

The Key Spouse program is an official unit program designed to enhance readiness and establish a sense of Air Force community that promotes individual, family and unit readiness, establishes continuous contact with spouses and families, provides an informal sounding board and links to troop leadership.

Fernandez says her husband, Master Sgt. Erick Fernandez, 308th RQS Material Manager, has served as combat support for Guardian Angel Weapon System comprised of Combat Rescue Officers, Pararescuemen, and SERE specialist, for more than 17-years and has gone above and beyond to make himself available to help her in her endeavors.

“My husband is very supportive of my role,” she said. “He’s always ready to help when there’s a need, even if it’s just to fix a sprinkler or help put up hurricane shutters.”

As Key Spouse, Fernandez made significant contributions to the 308thRQS and the mission of the AFRC. She remarked that one of the most important things she does is keep in constant contact with spouses and loved ones, especially during last year’s combat deployment which saw nearly every member from the 308th deployed across three separate geographic locations.

“The 308th is extremely proud of Lisa,” said Lt. Col. Timothy Hanks, 308th RQS commander. “Her love for our mission and our Reserve Citizen Airmen is unlike anything I have witnessed in my career. She is an operator with the mission for advocating for our families, friends and significant others.”

She did more than just talk to family members over the phone, she also coordinated multiple events every month to bring everyone together and keep morale high.

“We had beach parties, picnics, wine tastings, raffle prizes,” she said. “Just a lot of different activities to reaffirm the support that was available to them while their loved one was away.”



Through those events and her constant contact, families and loved ones become more like a family and less like strangers, allowing a foundation of trust to be forged.

However, Fernandez's support didn't end there. With the help of the Elk Institute and Troop Rewards, both non for profit entities, she also helped organize a five-day, all-expense paid vacation for several returning unit members and their loved ones which helped them re-adjust to life back home. Further, she helped organize a fundraising effort for The Elk Institute, a non-profit that was established to provide mental health education, consultation, treatment and clinical research service to military and veteran communities, which paid for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder sessions for five veterans in need.

"Families are the foundation to the success of the unit," she said. "Our unit operates in a high tempo environment and we not only need our families to know they are supported, but it eases the mind of the unit member to know there is someone available for their loved one to call in a time of need."

Her concern for the well-being of troops and their families also extended to those who were impacted by the destruction of Hurricane Michael which devastated Tyndall Air Force Base in October 2018. Her initiative to lead a "Team Patrick" donation drive provided more than 1,000 families in need more than 4 tons of supplies in less than one week.

Fernandez credits much of her success to the enthusiastic support of unit leadership and the support of her Key Spouse Mentor, Heather Hanks, spouse of Lt. Col. Hanks.

"The Commander and Chief have always made the Key Spouse program and our families a priority," she said. "Without his support, none of this would have been as successful and I'm grateful for that because I've never served in the military so this is how I can serve and give back."

Hanks explained how the history of this award reflects the dedication and commitment that Fernandez has continuously displayed to the Airmen, mission and local community.

"This was a tough year for the 308th," Hanks said. "We completed the most challenging deployment in the history of our unit and, without a doubt, we could not have done it without Lisa's leadership in taking care of our families."

For additional information on the Key Spouse Program, please contact your local Airman and Family Readiness Center.

BIRDS OF PREY FLY SOUTH FOR TRAINING

Just in case you missed it, Airmen from the Air National Guard's 180th Fighter Wing and the 104th Fighter Wing trained above Florida's Space Coast all week flying their F-16 Fighting Falcons and F-15 Eagles, respectively, from Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Zoe Thacker)



920th FSS Airman & Family Readiness Center

Patrick AFB, FL

Informed
Reserve
Families



920th Reservists and Family Members – We want to keep you informed of Patrick AFB current events & Reserve specific
Sign up for our E-Mail program to get up-to-date information

For more information:

Visit the 920th Airman & Family Readiness Center

Bldg 425, 2nd floor, west end

Call us at 321-494-5980

E-mail: Kelly.Linfert@us.af.mil

Upcoming Yellow Ribbon Dates

Orlando, FL	February 15 - 17
Costa Mesa, CA	March 22 - 24
Orlando, FL	March 29 - 31
Costa Mesa, CA	April 12 - 14



Helping maintain resiliency during all stages of deployment is paramount to the morale and welfare of our Airmen and families. The Air Force Reserve Yellow Ribbon Program is a series of events designed to provide members and families with essential resources prior to departure (pre-deployment), a level of stability and support while deployed (during deployment), and successful re-integration techniques after the deployment cycle ends (post deployment).