



# ANGEL'S WINGS



Volume 4, No. 4

920th Rescue Wing, Patrick AFB, Fla.

April 2006



**New era  
for rescue  
ranks**

## Angel's Wings

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### On the Cover:



**Maj. Gen. Richard Collins** (left), commander of the U.S. Air Force Reserve, presided over **Col. Steven Kirkpatrick's** (right) assumption of command ceremony in March.

# To the Airmen of the U.S. Air Force

*By General T. Michael Moseley  
USAF Chief of Staff*

March 19 marked the 3rd anniversary of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and the removal of an oppressive, dangerous regime. This was the culmination of a joint and coalition intense effort on land, sea, and air. I want to take this moment to say thanks for all your sacrifices. . . and to let you know that you are doing awesome work.

In OIF, within the Joint Force, our Total Force - active, guard, and reserve Airmen - grounded the Iraq Air Force, destroyed the combat effectiveness of the Iraqi ground forces, blinded the Hussein leadership and paved the way for a series of ground battles that saw Baghdad fall in 22 days. Your innovation and flexibility made the difference.

Your contributions to the spread of freedom and democracy did not begin three years ago; the Air Force has been at war continuously for over fifteen years - since the opening rounds of Operation DESERT STORM and through twelve years of no-fly zone operations. And although Iraq is receiving the majority of attention, Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and Operation NOBLE EAGLE remain critical to winning this Long War.

The Global War on Terror has now lasted 10 months longer than our Nation fought in World War II. This is a joint fight, across the world where we have a vital role. Meanwhile, things have been fairly quiet on the home front, and that's good. That means we are doing our job well. You are protecting America by monitoring intelligence, sitting alert, and flying



patrols over our cities. By protecting our homeland and fighting the enemy on their turf, you are keeping your

family, friends, and the American public safe. Our mission is to fly and fight and win our nations' wars - and you're doing just that.

You are making a difference. I am proud of you. America is proud of you.

You are helping to rebuild countries and protect fledgling democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan, while keeping America out of harm's way. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Pakistani earthquake, Philippine landslides and, most recently, floods in Hawaii, brought out your best as well, as you pitched in side by side with allies and joint partners providing humanitarian relief across the globe and in our own backyard. You are the most combat experienced, battle-hardened Airmen since WWII.

You are successfully doing whatever is asked of you across the domains of air, space, and cyberspace - you are always there.

Thanks for all that you're doing - it matters. Your tireless efforts keep this the best Air Force the world has ever seen, ready to lead or support the joint fight anywhere, anytime. You are making it happen in Iraq, Afghanistan, in the skies over America, and anywhere our Nation needs us. Keep it up and keep 'em flying!

# Rescue wing kicks off traffic safety program

**By 1st Lt. Cathleen Snow**  
**920th Rescue Wing**  
**Public Affairs**

In more ways than one, the Air Force Reserve's 920th Rescue Wing is living up to its motto, "that others may live."

This past year, in addition to rescuing more than 1,000 Hurricane Katrina victims, rescue wing members have initiated a traffic safety program to help save lives.

The program is called Operation NOW and stands for Not on Our Watch. Its mission is similar to the rescue wing's motto, with a twist, not on our watch will another teenager die due to lack of knowledge on the perils of driving.

It will kick off April 11 - 13 to create awareness about dangerous driving, especially driving distracted. Last year Brevard County lost eight teenagers due to auto accidents.

Col. Timothy E. Tarchick, 920th RQW Commander, initiated the program after he returned from a trip to Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, NY where he observed a regional traffic safety program they put on and decided to adopt it at his wing.

"During this 3-day program we will host 7,000 Brevard County high school seniors. They will experience an emotionally filled day with real-life re-enactments geared toward traffic safety," said Senior Master Sgt. Rene Rubiella, Operation NOW program director and father of one of the eight. His teenage daughter, Allie, died in an auto accident last spring.

This life saving program is designed for the student and addresses matters that will

impact their future driving experiences.

"Our program keeps the student's attention and the content empowers them with a new respect for traffic safety," said Rubiella.

The program will last 3 hours and exhibits will include motivational media and a reenacted 911 call after an auto accident, complete with two unveiled wrecked cars and live actors portraying the victims, for effect.

"This ever increasing number of community partnerships and participating schools and the expansion of community involvement is a fine testimony to the success of

this unique safety event that we will host here at the base," said Colonel Tarchick.

"The timing of this program is critical. As the school year comes to an end, students want to reflect on and celebrate their accomplishments. This program is intended to raise their level of awareness while on the roadway. The students will leave the program with the experience of learning about traffic safety issues that affect them most directly in their daily lives," said Rubiella.

"If next year, no students die due to auto accidents, we have succeeded," said Rubiella.



*"Your prom should be an everlasting memory...  
 not a roadside memorial"*

# OpSec no party, but it can still save lives

By Tech. Sgt. Jason Tudor  
457th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

With the number of things to keep in mind when dealing with operations security—from computers to paperwork to conversation—it's no wonder some of us stand around, scratch our heads, and ask, "What exactly is OPSEC?"

So, I give you a birthday party.

It is a surprise party. It may be for a friend. It may be for a son or daughter. But let's just say you are the one planning and carrying it out. On your credit card. At your expense. And time.

Needless to say, you are really into the whole surprise factor. You have found out the honoree's favorite kind of cake and what he wants for his birthday; and you have bought so many little pointed hats, you can wardrobe 100 tiny witches.

Now, in order to really make this party the Oscar-like extravaganza you have in mind for the person, you will need help.

So, you get four friends. One is in charge of location. One will choose the décor. Another will go buy the gift. Another is the cake go-to person.

You gather for the first planning meeting. You all decide on the restaurant with the large rat on the sign as the venue. You'll only need a small amount of decorations, but they all have to be NASCAR-oriented. A large chocolate cake with the Bear in the Big Blue House is appropriate. You've got a handle on the rest—invitations and clean up.

With these words, you dispatch your crew, "Not a WORD to our esteemed honoree or I will break each and every one of your fingers. This means a lot to me and to him."

And they are off. As they go, one after another bumps into others' said friends. And bit by bit, sure enough, they start drooling out the best details of the party. All

those things make the rounds until finally, the one for whom the surprise was important knows damn near everything, including the show



time and what to wear.

There you are, bumping around the department store one day when the honoree rolls up and says, "Hey, man. I've got my NASCAR-themed toga and I'll love the Jeff Gordon food processor as a gift! Is 2 pm rather than 3 pm OK, though? The Lakers are on."

Suddenly, that vein that has been recessed in your forehead for at least a good six months rises up like an oil pipeline, and you can actually feel your body temperature increasing four degrees.

Not only does he know, but he also has invited all the people you planned to invite. And now they are changing the plans for you, moving the location, changing the cake, and even asking Crackles the Pie-Crust-Wearing Clown to do the floor show. This is nothing like you've planned. The whole thing is ruined.

Get the point now?

OPSEC means not leaking even the smallest bits of information. And this is no party. If the wrong information gets mishandled, or the smaller bits are turned into mission-critical bits, people can die. The war is not over yet. There is still the chance that harm can be done to any of us.

## Air Force realigns combat search and rescue

Administrative control for select active-duty Air Force combat search and rescue assets is transferring from Air Force Special Operations Command to Air Combat Command.

“Our military must always have the combat capability to rescue its people ... our warriors ... wherever and whenever required,” said Gen. T. Michael Moseley, Air Force chief of staff. “I’ve given ACC, (Pacific Air Forces) and AFSOC commanders 30 days to develop a transition plan.”

This change ensures this critical Air Force capability is directly linked to the combat air forces and the personnel they support, thus consolidating the management of limited Air Force resources.

Under ACC, these assets can be mobilized faster during a national crisis, integrated into combat training and tasked to support all air and space expeditionary force rotations.

Assets affected by this realignment include the HC-130P/N and HH-60G Pave Hawk aircraft and most of the combat rescue officers and pararescuemen. Pacific Air Forces and U.S. Air Forces in Europe active-duty units will remain separate from this action.

Except for PACAF, Guard and Reserve units will remain under administrative control to their respective units until they have been mobilized, at which time they will become ACC units.

This change will be transparent to the affected commanders. They will continue to gain personnel



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shane A. Cuomo

recovery capability through the joint forces air component commander as they have before.

*(Courtesy of AFNEWS)*

## Intel Airman wins AFRC top honors

Tech. Sgt. Jenny L. Ball was named Outstanding Air Force Reserve Intelligence Non-commissioned Officer of the Year in March.

Assigned to the 308th Rescue Squadron, Sergeant Ball is the Non-Commissioned-Officer-In-Charge of her section.

Cited as a hard-charging team player, Sergeant Ball is credited with performing expertly as a combat search and rescue intelligence analyst by providing critical intelligence support during 35 combat mission sorties for Joint Search and Rescue Center taskings and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM personnel recovery objectives.

“She is my first choice for combat intelligence support,” lauded Lt. Col. Coy R. Speer, 308th Rescue Squadron Commander.

In addition to her performance during real world combat situations, Sergeant Ball’s efforts were commended by the Air Force Special Operations Command Intelligence Inspector General, citing her as a “superior performer” during Phase I of the Operational Readiness Inspection.

“She is always willing to step up and take the initiative” Colonel Speer said. “Her drive and superior performance led her to be my hands-down choice as NCOIC of Intelligence for the 308th,” said Colonel Speer.

“This award only reinforces that,” he added.



Col. Jeffrey Macrander (left), 920th Rescue Wing Operations Group Commander, congratulates Sergeant Ball (right) on her accomplishments.

# 920th RQW wins consecutive Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

**By Master Sgt. Raymond Padgett**  
**920th Rescue Wing**  
**Public Affairs**

The 920th Rescue Wing was awarded its second consecutive Air Force Outstanding Unit Award in March for its efforts during the period of Oct. 1, 2004 through Sept. 30, 2005.

The wing qualified for the AFOUA for outstanding service that increased the Department of Defense and Air Force's abilities to optimally perform their peacetime and wartime contingency missions.

"I am always surprised and amazed at the lengths our people will go to accomplish the mission," said Colonel Tim Tarchick, 920th Rescue Wing Commander. "These

things we do, that others may live', is more than just a unit motto to us, it is a total commitment to saving lives."

The 920th RQW is equipped with five HC-130 "Hercules" aircraft and 14 HH-60G "Pave Hawk" helicopters supporting search and rescue operations around the globe.

During the award period, the wing performed combat search and rescue missions in hostile Afghanistan territory, with overwhelming service and valor, saving 54 lives including the high profile rescue and recovery of a Navy Sea, Air, Land team during Air Expeditionary Forces five and six.



"I had thought our finest hour was saving lives in combat," Colonel Tarchick said, "I had no idea we would be facing the worst

natural disaster in recent American history," speaking of the events

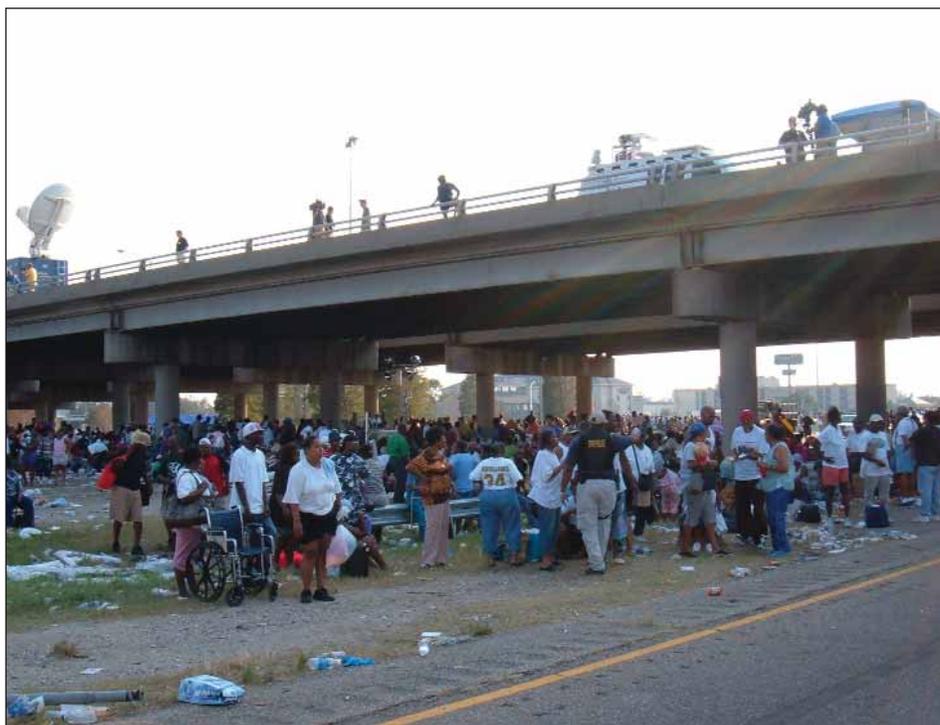
that occurred August 29, 2005, when Hurricane Katrina made its way onto coasts of Mississippi and Louisiana.

The wing was the first Air Force asset on the scene and was credited with saving more than 1,043 lives in the aftermath of the storm. In all, more than 200 wing personnel and seven helicopters were forward deployed to the disaster area. The units HC-130 crews provided round the clock refueling capability in the sky.

"It's what we do. We have done it in war, away from the homeland," said Colonel Tarchick. "When Mother Nature slammed New Orleans, it was not an option for us not to go."

Other unit accomplishments included flawless support for 25 National Aeronautics and Space Administration and Air Force Space Command missions including the first space shuttle launch since the Columbia tragedy, training Tajikistani search and rescue officers, and hosting an international search and rescue exercise with a rescue squadron from Winnipeg, Canada.

Colonel Tarchick concluded that the award just validates what he already knew about the unit stating, "We are the premiere combat search and rescue wing in the Air Force."



U.S. Air Force Photo

**The 920th Rescue Wing rescued 1,043 lives in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The wings efforts in New Orleans and Afghanistan helped earned its members the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.**

# Ceremony ushers in new era for wing

**By Tech. Sgt.  
Shane Smith  
920th Rescue Wing  
Public Affairs**

A change of command ceremony March 5 at the base theater heralded a new era for the 920th Rescue Wing.

Col. Steven W. Kirkpatrick replaced Col. Timothy E. Tarchick, who served as commander of the 920th Rescue Wing from Sept. 9, 2001, to March 31, 2006.

Col. Kirkpatrick will take command, effective April 1.

Colonel Tarchick will replace Col. James J. Muscatell Jr. as commander of the 934th Airlift Wing at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station.

Colonel Kirkpatrick formerly served as the director of training for the 10th Air Force, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, Texas.

He graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1984 with a bachelor of science degree in management.

He spent nine years on active duty after pilot training. He entered the Air Force Reserve in 1993 and has seen duty as an instructor pilot, flight examiner, training officer and operations officer for the 93rd Bomb Squadron and the 917th Wing. He is a command pilot with more than 5,400 flying hours of flight time in the T-37, T-



Photo by Jim Laviska

**Col. Steven W. Kirkpatrick addresses members of the 920th Rescue Wing after assuming command of the unit. Colonel Kirkpatrick, former director of training for 10th Air Force and B-52 bomber pilot, praised members for their accomplishments.**

38, B-52G and B-52H aircraft, including combat time in operations Operations DESERT STORM, ENDURING FREEDOM, and IRAQI FREEDOM.

Colonel Kirkpatrick is married and has two sons.

He is an avid golfer and likes to spend his off duty time in and around the water.

During the change of command ceremony, the colonel expressed his desire to continue to develop the 920th and take the unit to the next level.

A self-described "work hard, play hard kind of guy," the colonel said he also leads by example and likes to get into the trenches.

Colonel Kirkpatrick brings invaluable knowl-

edge and war experience with him to the 920th. An account of one of his more memorable missions took place the first night of Operation DESERT STORM.

It was a "black" mission and he was a command pilot in a seven ship formation of B-52s.

"We were all loaded with cruise missiles as we took off from Barksdale, La.," he said. "We flew nonstop to the Persian Gulf and released our weapons in the middle of the night to begin the attack on Iraq."

Due to the nature of the mission, the seven-ship formation was unable to land.

They returned to their home base at Barksdale after burning a total of one million pounds of fuel and flying 36 hours non-stop.

According to Colonel Kirkpatrick, to this day, the mission is on the books as the longest combat mission in U.S. history.

As 920th Rescue Wing commander, Colonel Kirkpatrick will provide leadership, management and supervision, and will be responsible for organizing, training and equipping the wing.



# Life Support shops team up to teach survival skills to cadets

By 1st Lt. Cathleen Snow  
920th Rescue Wing  
Public Affairs

The 920th Rescue Wing life support duo, Master Sgt. Thomas Vawter, 39th Rescue Squadron, and Master Sgt. Roy Dougherty, 301st Rescue Squadron, masterminded a weekend of survival training for the Civil Air Patrol Composite Squadron stationed at Patrick Air Force Base.

The two called on volunteers from their respective shops and went to a heavily wooded area at Burton Smith Park in Brevard County March 10 through 12 to set up camp.

The location of this bivouac was selected because it is the same location where the life support shops train 920th aircrews.

The training was open to all CAP squadrons located in east central Florida. The Cocoa Beach CAP unit sought the training to prepare cadets and senior members with the skills necessary to successfully manage emergencies and survival situations.

"The training included, keeping a positive attitude, and the agenda for the weekend was full of subjects such as how to live on one meal-ready-to-eat (MREs), constructing and sleeping in shelters made from palm fronds and sticks, building campfires, and fishing using bait and tackle made from the land," said Mr. Victor Casella, CAP public relations officer.

Master Sgts. Vawter and Dougherty were sought out for their experience and dedication training aircrew in combat survival, water survival, chemical defense, aircraft egress, and para-



Courtesy photo

**Local Cocoa Beach Civil Air Patrol cadets receive survival skills training from 920th Rescue Wing life support technicians during a bivouac in March.**

chute decent training.

Although the CAP training did not include any combat related training, the training met their needs.

"It was a very fun and educational experience and they enjoyed learning their new survival skills in the wild without any modern conveniences," said Mr. Casella,

"If surviving in the middle of nowhere ever became a reality, we'd be better prepared now."

The 920th Life Support shops offered a unique perspective to students because they train at the same schools aircrew members are required to attend prior to starting their flying career.

These include the Basic Survival School, Water Survival School, and can also include the Army Parachuting and Arctic Survival Schools.

Additionally, they are required to attend the Air Force Instructor School.

Once that is completed, each Life Support technician has to go through upgrade training as part of the normal on-the-job training prior to becoming a certified Life Support Instructor.

In addition to training, life support provides and maintains 920th aircrews with life sustaining equipment for use in flying rescue missions.

"Lt. Natalie Femia, CAP project officer, is credited with coordinating the event," said Mr. Cassella.

"Every time the 920th helps us on these events we really enjoy it. We thank them for their participation and the time they spent with us. It means a lot to us to have the Air Force Reserve help us," he said.

# Military ball honors silent ranks

**Story and photos by 1st Lt. Cathleen Snow  
920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs**

Symbolizing the colors of combat rescue, gold and green was the predominant decorating scheme at the 920th Rescue Wing's first annual military ball Saturday March 4 at the Manatee Cove Golf Club.

Green programs with gold writing, green and gold balloons and confetti in the shape of green feet and sparkling gold crowns festively adorned the tables as the Wing Commander, Col. Timothy E. Tarchick further set the festive tone with his address, "What a fabulous and historic night! We are literally making history," he said.

It was the night of the Rescue Wing's first ball set to honor the military spouse. And it would be Col. Tarchick's last hoorah with the Wing as he sets his sites on his new assignment at the 934th Rescue Wing in Minneapolis, Minn.

Keynote speaker, Maj. General Craig Collins, 10th Air Force Commander started things off with one word, "Rescue. It's a simple word; it's your bread and butter," he said.

As a command pilot of the F-16 Fighting Falcon he said, "I'm just a guy who hauls iron." He explained why the rescue mission means so much to him. "In every brief all we ever talk about if anyone of us goes down, is how they'll initiate the SAR (search and rescue) effort."

"Thank you for giving me that piece of mind that you guys would always be there," said General Collins.

Furthermore, he said, "The fabric of every organization is its men and women...All spouses out there day in and day out allow us to go. I'm proud to serve with you and be one of you."

Col. Tarchick also addressed the spouses, "Without your support and sacrifice we would not be the premier combat rescue unit in the United States Air Force. We simply could not accomplish our mission without your love and support...and tonight, we heartily salute you!"

"...it is because of you that we can put on our angel's wings and live up to our motto: These things we do, that others may live. Yes, you too are life-savers," said Col. Tarchick.

Lt. Col. Julio Lopez, wing executive officer, organized the entire event. Everything from a welcoming saber team, to professional photography and music to an engraved wine glass as a parting gift, was staged appropriately and unfolded like a well thought out battle plan. He even recruited his wife

Rebecca to make the confetti, punching out every green foot and gold crown by hand.

There was ceremony, recognition, remembrance, patriotism, entertainment and dancing. Maj. Gen. Collins and Senior Airman Weger, 920th MSS, representing the oldest and youngest people at the ball stood side-by-side stage center to cut the celebratory cake, with a saber.

The Air Force Reserve Jazz Band traveled from Robins Air Force Base, Ga. And one of the 920th's own, Senior Airman Jennifer Drake, 39th Rescue Squadron, graced the dining experience with her angelic voice as the band played the sounds of jazz.

"These are indeed great times for the men and women of the 920th Rescue Wing. And when I say that, I don't just mean those of us wearing the blue uniform, because in reality, we are only half of the team. Our better halves...our spouses, are equal members of the 920th's dynamic combat rescue team," said Col. Tarchick.



**Lt. Col. Dale Lewis, 920th Rescue Wing Maintenance Squadron Commander and his wife Marilyn take command of the dance floor at the 920th RQW military ball.**

# Around The Pattern



Col. David K. Dingley (Ret.) administers the Oath of Office to Capt. Greg Lowdermilk after being promoted. Captain Lowdermilk is the first AFRC Combat Rescue Officer to reach the rank in his career field. In a former life, Captain Lowdermilk was a pararescueman who had reached the rank of Chief Master Sergeant before becoming a commissioned officer. Congratulations Captain!



Maj. T.C. Cunha and wife Liane make their way into the 920th Rescue Wing military ball in March. Satellite Beach High School ROTC cadets provided a saber gauntlet at the entrance of the event.

Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Debra Levy

## BRIEFS

### ORI Information

The scheduled dates for the 920th RQW Operational Readiness Exercise and Inspection are:

**First ORE: April 3-9**

**Second ORE: Sept. 9-15**

**AFSOC/IG ORI: Oct. 30-Nov. 5**

### Military Pay Hours

The 920th RQW Military Pay office is located on the second floor of building 559 on O'Malley Road.

Please visit on Saturday of the UTA during normal duty hours, 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

### Riverside Dining Facility

To obtain the lunch and dinner menu at the Riverside Dining Facility, call "Dial-a-Menu" at (321) 494-2845.

### IG Hotlines

The 920th RQW Inspector General office is the wing's grievance channel when all other avenues of resolution have been exhausted.

Contact Lt. Col. Ken Warren or Master Sgt. Marcia Patrizzi at (321) 494-6474/2192.

Individuals wishing to report a case of suspected fraud, waste, abuse or mismanagement can also reach a hotline using the following contact information.

AFRC: (800) 223-1784 X-1513

SAF: (800) 538-8429

DoD: (800) 424-9098

*Career Concerns?*  
*Talk to Your Career Advisor*



*Wing Career Assistance Advisor*  
*920th Rescue Wing*  
**MSgt Clayton Henry**  
**(321) 494-9016**  
*clayton.henry@rescue920.patrick.af.mil*




### GWOT Medals

To ensure Air Force reservists who deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism receive the awards they are entitled to, Central Air Forces, the Air Force component of U.S. Central Command, set up a Web site:

[https://wwwmil.centaf.af.mil/Directorates/A1/CEN\\_TAF%20AWARDS/main.htm](https://wwwmil.centaf.af.mil/Directorates/A1/CEN_TAF%20AWARDS/main.htm). Select the "unit award" button to review approved awards.

## The Grand Finale



When pilots completed their 100th combat mission during the Vietnam War, the ensuing final, or "fini," flight included a bottle of champagne to celebrate a safe last landing and the end of their tours. As part of the outgoing wing commander's farewell, Col. Timothy E. Tarchick, members of the 39th Rescue Squadron (left) and 301st Rescue Squadron (right) gave the colonel a fond farewell with a dousing of water.

# Fond Farewell



Photos by Jim Laviska

Outgoing commander, Col. Timothy E. Tarchick, his immediate and extended family, and friends, huddle for a snap shot, March 5. As the 920th RQW's first commander, he leaves a legacy of many firsts.



Col. Steve Arthur, 926th Fighter Wing Commander, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, New Orleans, made a special presentation to the 920th Rescue Wing to thank its members for their support and rescue efforts after Hurricane Katrina affected the 926th FW and surrounding area.



Ms. Karen Bocast (left) shows her pride for her brother, Col. Steven Kirkpatrick, the new commander, as she takes his arm with her mother, Mrs. Wanda Davis (right) to pose for a snapshot at a reception following the change-of-command.