



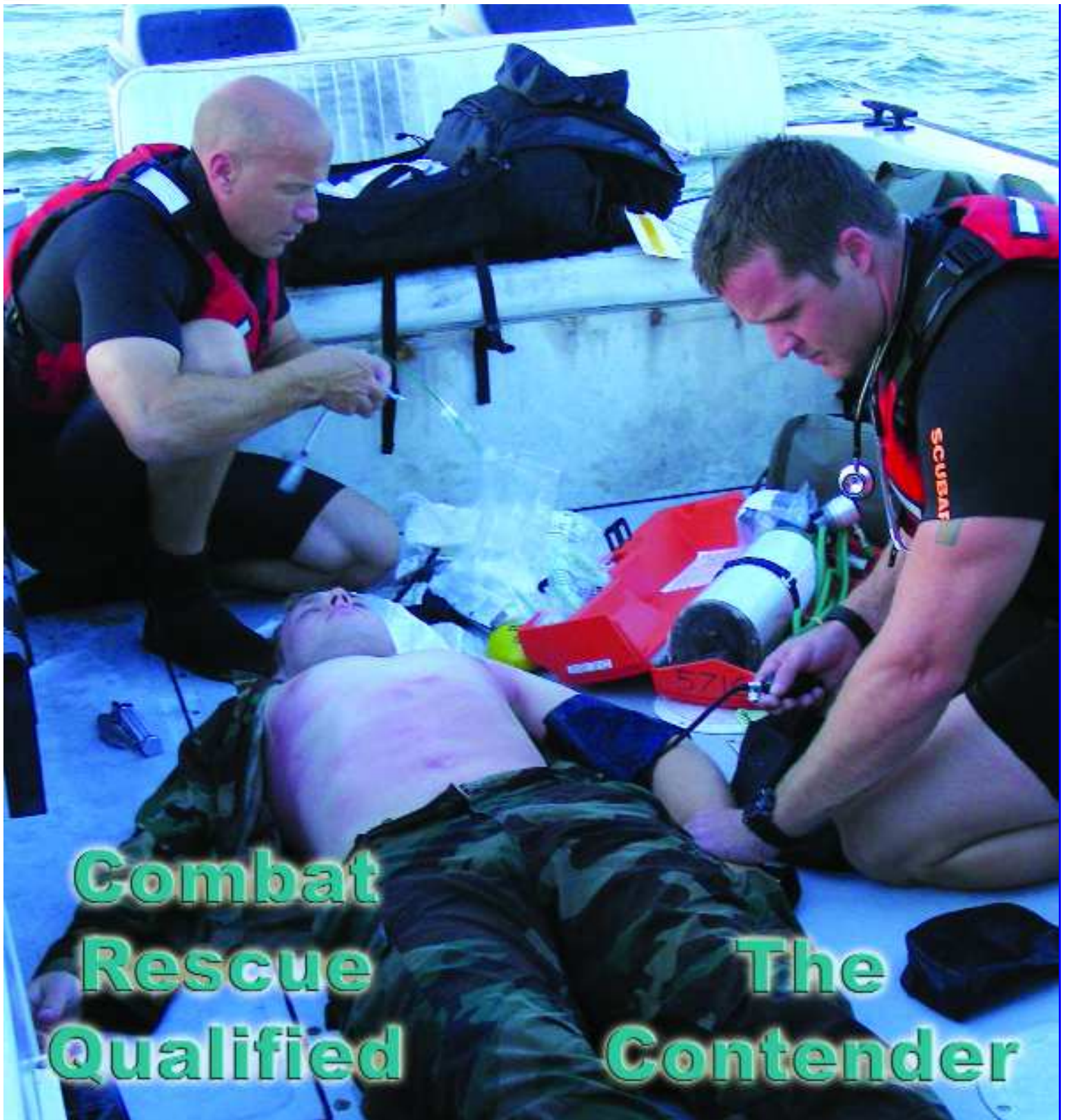
ANGEL'S WINGS



Volume 4, No. 7

920th Rescue Wing, Patrick AFB, Fla.

July 2006



Combat
Rescue
Qualified

The
Contender

Angel's Wings

Volume 4, No. 7

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On the Cover:
Pararescueman Staff Sgt. Rusty Drake (right) checks a "victim's" vital signs during his initial team evaluation to become combat mission ready.

Media training revealed

by Colonel Jeffrey Macrander
920th RQW OG Commander

Now that I've been trained by Air Force Reserve Command Public Affairs, I guess I'm finally "qualified" to write an article.

This one-day training course was definitely beneficial, although I wish I'd had it before my first on-camera interview!

Fortunately, most of my prior on-camera experiences and other interviews were "feel good" stories about rescue people saving lives both here, at home and around the world.

The most difficult interview I ever did was after one of the unit's helicopters rolled down Mt. Hood. How I wish I had been trained before that interview!

The most important tidbit I brought away from this training is that every Airman represents their unit, this wing, AFRC and the Air Force - all the time.

You may have heard the phrase "every Airman, a spokesman." In this age of global and instantaneous news, it's easy to get the word out, intentional or otherwise. The world is watching our actions all the time.

Whether in uniform or not, many of our neighbors, friends, coworkers and contacts in the local community know that we are in the "Air Force."

What they don't know is that we are in the "Air Force Reserve." We have done such a great job of being a total force, and are so seamless in our ability to integrate with the rest of the AF, that we have become "invisible" to even our active duty counterparts.

I think this is one of the main reasons General Bradley wants us to wear AFRC patches: visibility.

Being "invisible" is good sometimes, but not when it comes to getting recognition and ultimately



(Left to right) Col. Thomas Deall, Air Force Reserve Command director of public affairs, Col. Jeffrey Macrander, 920th operations group commander, and 1st Lt. Cathleen Snow, public affairs officer, conquer media training day.

getting funding.
It's up to each of us to get the word out about the Air Force Reserve. Here are some facts about what the Reserve is doing:

- There are 74,000 AF reservists, of which 9,200 of those are ARTs
- AF Reserve provides 20% of AF's capability for only 4% of AF budget
- 23% of AF combat rescue capability is in the Reserve
- 60% of the Aeromedical \Evacuation capability is in the Reserve
- 20% of the intelligence support is in the Reserve
- 89% of Reserve aircrew and 74% of support personnel are prior service with an average of 10 years experience
- There are currently 2,200 Reservists mobilized and an additional 2,700 voluntarily deployed.

Closer to home, the 920th Rescue Wing has people deployed all over the world right now. You should be proud of all the 920th has accomplished; 26 combat saves in OIF, many more during the OEF,

(See CC on page 11)

920th MXG awards first "Save of the Month"

by 2nd Lt. Jaime Pinto
920th RQW Public Affairs

What is a "Save of the Month"? The Save of the Month is a new recognition program for the 920th Maintenance Group that recognizes outstanding Airmen on a monthly basis.

Congratulations to Tech. Sgt. Ken Harbart, the first Save of the Month recipient.

Also known as, "Mr. Fix It," Sergeant Harbart has been in the unit for three years and works in the electro-environmental shop of the maintenance group.

Sergeant Harbart "saved the day" when he made a last second repair to a troublesome HC-130 aircraft. The 920th MXG worked on the problematic HC-130 for 3 weeks, troubleshooting several needed repairs to overcome depot

deficiencies.

In a last minute save, Sergeant Harbart located the last set of jumper wires needed to put the airplane back in commission.

Sergeant Harbart was presented with the Save of the Month award during the June commander's call.

The recognition program was initiated by Col. Frank Dolcater, Commander of the 920th Maintenance Group. The award will be given out monthly based on nominations from each maintenance shop, he said.

There is no format to the award, it can be an individual or team award and is chosen by Colonel Dolcater.

"The Save of the Month program is a way to recognize the good things people do on a daily basis, it's a more formal pat-on-the-back," said Colonel Dolcater.



U.S. Air Force photo/1st Lt. Cathleen Snow

Tech. Sgt. Ken Harbart received the first Save of the Month award.

And the winners are...



**Master Sgt.
Annette Blackburn**

**Senior NCO
of the Quarter**



**Tech. Sgt.
Robert Grande**

NCO of the Quarter



**Senior Airman
Dennis Lum**

Airman of the Quarter

Dedication even during hard times

**Story and photo by
Tech. Sgt. Shane Smith
920th RQW Public Affairs**

As reservists, sometimes the call to duty interferes with a member's personal life. Sometimes it is just easier to reschedule.

For traditional reservist Staff Sgt. Jason Evans however, the call to duty is a priority, even during tough times.

A few months ago, the thirty-one-year-old member of the 920th Rescue Wing Aeromedical Staging Squadron was diagnosed with stage four Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma cancer.

This is a cancer of the lymph nodes that has spread to his lungs, heart, bones and blood.

Although the diagnosis seems daunting, his doctors say the prognosis is optimistic as long as he continues to receive the necessary treatments, including regular sessions of chemotherapy.

Since beginning his treatments in March, he has not been able to work at his civilian job as a dialysis nurse in Lake County, Fla.

He has had to move back home with his parents and struggles to pay his bills, including his rising medical expenses.

He does not have medical insurance and has exhausted his and his family's savings trying to fight this battle, he said.

Sergeant Evans said he has another eight months of therapy left and doesn't quite know how he is going to manage.

With all of this going on, Sergeant Evans borrows money to buy gas for his car to attend his Unit Training Assembly weekends.

"That is the dedication this man has to our unit," said Tech. Sgt. Byron Willams, one of Sergeant Evans' close friends and colleagues. "His humble commit-



Staff Sgt. Jason Evans administers a vaccination to a 920th Rescue Wing member during the June UTA. A member of the 920th RQW Aeromedical Staging Squadron, Sergeant Evans faithfully performs his duty during drill weekends despite being diagnosed with stage four Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma cancer. The 920th Combat Rescue Top Three recently held a fundraiser in his name.

ment inspires us all," he added.

Inspiring members of the 920th's Combat Rescue Top Three to act, a series of fundraisers were held in his name at Uno's Chicago Grill in Viera, Fla., in June.

"We had a great showing and the restaurant offered to contribute 20 percent of the total bill from anyone who presented a fundraiser coupon," said event organizer Senior Master Sgt. Steve Lacy.

"We raised \$651 and individuals gave another \$851," Sergeant Lacy said. "Jason and his family are overwhelmed by the outpouring of generosity," he added.

Sergeant Lacy added that Sergeant Evans is doing better and has two more treatments after which the doctors will reeval-

uate.

A medical technician with the 920th for over 10 years, Sergeant Evans said he is determined to beat his illness and serve another 10 years.

On Saturday of the UTA, the soft-spoken sergeant will proudly put on his military uniform.

He will continue to administer the immunization shots and learn the skills necessary to heal battle wounds.

After sign-out on Sunday, Sergeant Evans will return home to relentlessly fight his own battle - with cancer - until the wounds have healed and a victory is declared over his illness.

AFRC patch becomes mandatory Oct. 1

Air Force Reserve Command is in the process of making the wear of the AFRC patch mandatory on battle dress uniforms and flight suits for unit reservists and headquarters staffers.

These people, who include those assigned to the AFRC headquarters and the Air Reserve Personnel Center, can start wearing the patch now. Oct. 1 is the mandatory wear date.

The new patch policy does not apply to mobilization assistants, individual mobilization augmentees and full-time members of the Active Guard and Reserve assigned outside the command.

“Our Air Force reservists are proud to be Airmen in our Air Force today. As we try our best to be an ‘Unrivaled Wingman,’ we are proud of our heritage as Citizen Airmen. Our people want to be recognized as reservists,” said Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, AFRC commander.

“As an Air Force major command, we wear our command patch so people know who we are,” the general said. “We have been a major command for

over nine years. Our folks deserve to be recognized for the great work they do for our Air Force and our nation. We are ‘One Air Force, Same Fight ... an Unrivaled Wingman.’”

The AFRC patch will go on the right breast pocket.

Unit commanders may approve the wear of one sewn-on, subdued patch on the left breast pocket, either a numbered air force, wing or squadron organizational patch. That patch will be centered between the left and right edges and the bottom of the flap and the bottom of the pocket.

People assigned to the area of responsibility will follow the guidance prescribed by that combatant command.

AFRC officials approved the purchase of the patches last year, and most units have already received funding to buy them. *(AFRC News Service)*



Citizen Airman

Employer awards recognize contributions

Air Force Reserve Command is seeking nominees for its Citizen Airman and Employer of the Year Awards. Deadline is July 31.

The awards recognize an enlisted reservist and an officer who deployed in support of current operations from Jan. 1, 2005, to Dec. 31, 2005, and their respective employers for supporting their activation and deployment.

Unit reservists give their nominations to their wing commanders for endorsement and submission to the number air force commanders.

Individual mobilization augmentees assigned to the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver submit their nominations through their chain of command to the ARPC commander.

Other IMAs submit their nominations to their unit commander who sends them to the Readiness Management Group at Robins Air

Force Base, Ga.

Air reserve technicians and members of the Active Guard and Reserve cannot enter because the awards are for reservists who are not employed full time by the federal government.

Reservists type their nominations on an Air Force Form 1206; employer nominations are typed on a single 8 1/2- by 11-inch bond paper. Both use point paper or talking paper format – bulleted short statements or key points.

The packages should explain the reservists’ contributions to the Air and Space Expeditionary Force or contingency, and the employer’s support of military members and the Air Force Reserve.

In addition to nominee’s name, job title, organization, mailing address, commercial phone number, fax number and e-mail address, each nomination should include the same information on the nominator.

Other requirements are a one-page biography on each nominee and a 70- to 80-word citation that captures the essences of the achievement.

Commanders have until Aug. 21 to submit the nominations to HQ USAF/REI, 1150 Air Force Pentagon, Room 5D712, Attention : Chief Master Sgt. Valerie Barnes, Washington, D.C., 20330-1150.

A panel in the Office of Air Force Reserve will review the nominations and submit them to the commander of AFRC for approval.

The Air Force Association will recognize the selected reservists and employers at its annual convention in Washington in September. The reservists will receive a plaque. The employer will get an eagle trophy.

The awards program pays the travel expenses of the employers and spouses. Units fund the selected reservists’ trips.

(AFRC News Service)

All in a day's work

PJ earns combat mission ready status preparing for shuttle launch

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

The rescue wing mantra "These Things We Do That Others May Live" employs vast skills that take pararescuemen, better known as PJs, through a whirlwind journey of intense physical and mental demands; a typical day's training for the 308th Rescue Squadron.

This day, June 20th, in typical PJ fashion, pararescueman Staff Sgt. Russell Drake successfully earned his combat mission ready status, while he and his teammates trained for open water astronaut recovery.

Mission briefings laid out the day's events for Sergeant Drake and other members of the 308th RQS: Master Sgt. James Johnston, Master Sgt. John Shiman, Master Sgt. Alexander

Abbey, and Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Curl, long time members of the squadron.

The five were on hand to accomplish this high profile training, referred to as a RAMZ (Rigging Alternate Method Zodiac) deployment. Instead of being inflated during the parachute drop, a Zodiac, or inflatable motorized boat, is deflated and bundled up into a four-foot cube.

The engine, fuel and medical equipment are also in the package. Two cargo parachutes are attached.

The acronym doesn't mean much to the average person, but in essence, "A RAMZ deployment is a technique developed for astronaut recovery, and other open water rescues, to include combat," said Chief Curl.

With the next space shuttle launch days away, and a plan on hand, these men embarked on a



Left to Right: Teammembers Master Sgt. Alexander Abbey, Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Curl, Staff Sgt. Russell Drake, Master Sgt. John Shiman, Tech. Sgt. Eric Wenserritt and Master Sgt. James Johnston prepare to train for the Discovery space shuttle launch which occurred July 4.



A 920th Rescue Wing HC-130 aircraft drops a RAMZ package over the Judy Drop Zone located in the Banana River.

search and rescue training mission with Chief Curl evaluating Sergeant Drake every step of the way.

The initial phase included preparing and loading the RAMZ aboard an HC-130 aircraft for deployment at Judy Drop Zone located in the Banana River, a



Pararescueman Master Sgt. John Shiman gathers his parachute after landing safely in the Banana River.

stone's throw away from Patrick Air Force Base.

The airplane will climb to 3,500 feet as the men prepare for a freefall parachute jump. When it's time, they will follow the RAMZ off the back ramp of the aircraft during the same deployment pass.

In addition to evaluating



Tech. Sgt. Eric Wenseritt pilots the safety boat and clears the drop zone of civilian vessels.



Staff Sgt. Rusty Drake assesses the "victim's" condition while Chief Master Sgt. Jeff Curl evaluates his performance. Pararescueman must pass critical lifesaving skill evaluations to become combat rescue mission qualified.

Sergeant Drake, the other pararescuemen are accomplishing recurring training for freefall parachuting and RAMZ deployments.

Many other support personnel are involved during these exercises. Tech. Sgt. Eric Wenseritt, the squadron vehicle maintenance noncommissioned-officer-in-charge, is also a qualified boat master.

He's piloting the safety boat and clearing the drop zone of civilian vessels. On the aircraft's third pass, he communicates the "clear to drop" to the aircrew above.

In an instant, the men clear out of the aircraft and pull their rip cords. The parachutes open at 3000 feet, allowing them to waft slowly down to the water below.

One after the other, the PJs plunge safely into the water and shed their parachutes for the next phase of the recovery; inflating and starting the Zodiac.

As it bobs up and down, the PJs wrestle with the Zodiac while it inflates.

Once aboard, Sergeant Drake pulls the engine chord numerous times to de-water the engine,

attaches the fuel line, and gets the boat under way.

At this point, "everything is going as planned," said Chief Curl.

As the sun goes down, the men navigate to their objective, a PJ trainee, Senior Airman Andy Holzem, who is playing the role of survivor.

Sergeants Abbey, Drake and Johnston climb onto the support vessel and begin the final phase of their training; administering medical care to the survivor.

In addition to Sergeant Drake's evaluation, a Florida Today news photographer and I, the public affairs officer, are documenting the training for upcoming news articles.

Sergeant Drake undergoes more mental scrutiny as his evaluator observes his rapid assessment of his patient's condition.

He analyzes the Chief's administrative inputs and assesses the patient while following his medical checklist. At times he stops to document the patient's vitals and take in the array of information

(See PJs on page 11)

D-Day recount becomes personal for CAP cadets

**Story and photo by
Master Sgt. Raymond F.
Padgett
920th RQW Public Affairs**

The classroom was hot and packed when Florida Civil Air Patrol Unit FL-209 Group 4 began their weekly Wednesday night meeting. The cadet's eyes were focused on the thirteen rows of ribbons on the guest speaker's Air Force uniform.

Sixty-two years and one day earlier, retired Chief Master Sgt. Richard A. Ortega was a nineteen-year-old private in the 29th Infantry Division on the first American assault wave at the beaches of Normandy, France, remembered forever as "D-Day."

The CAP unit receives volunteer support from the Air Force Reserve's 920th Rescue Wing. Senior Airman Joshua Sherman, a life support journeyman with the 39th Rescue Squadron, supports the unit housed in the youth center at Patrick Air Force Base.

Chief Ortega, a veteran of three wars and a retired educator, now serves as the Vice President for Aerospace Education of the Air Force Association of Florida. He performs many speaking engagements for the CAP and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps units.

"These are our future leaders of aerospace forces," he said. "If we do not teach them what we have learned, then our future will be in bad shape."

Chief Ortega began his briefing by explaining there were actually two separate operations to invade the coast of France beginning the evening of June 5. "Everyone knows about Operation Overlord,



Retired Chief Master Sgt. Richard A. Ortega speaks to Civil Air Patrol cadets about the D-Day invasion. Chief Ortega was on the first American assault wave at the beaches of Normandy, France.

but how many of you know about Operation Neptune?" he asked the group.

After a brief lesson on the troop size of divisions, regiments, battalions and companies, Chief Ortega unfolded several charts and maps before describing the day's events as they unfolded in front of his eyes. The cadets hung onto his every word.

He starts with the 0500 hour takeoff of approximately 1500 allied bombers to bomb bridges and fortifications, an hour-and-a-half before the main invasion.

At 0600 hours, Navy ships approximately 10 miles out began a bombardment to take out German heavy gun batteries and a multitude of machine gun pillboxes.

A wave of close air support

came at 0625 hours dropping 250 and 500 pound bombs on the 150 yards of sand exposed by the low tide on Omaha Beach.

The craters would be used as foxholes by the assaulting force. Chief Ortega described watching as the last bomber dropped smoke bombs in an attempt to mask the arrival of the assault force.

The first wave of the 29th Division made their initial assault at 0630 hours. Not many of the landing craft from Companies A, B or C made it to the beach, Chief Ortega recalled.

He was assigned to a rifle platoon in Company E. As their landing craft approached the shore, a rocket blew off the arm of a Navy Chief Petty Officer who was driving the craft.

(See CAP on page 11)

The Contender: A rescue story

by Senior Airman
Heather L. Kelly
920th RQW Public Affairs

With one look she can stop a man dead in his tracks. Her hair, a silky shock of chocolate; her eyes, a misty grey; her golden skin, covered in age spots and patches of whiskers and fur.

At first glance, Lucille Bald may not win any beauty pageants, but she has won the hearts of 920th Rescue Wing members and the local community.

The Chinese Crested canine recently competed in the World's Ugliest Dog contest, held annually at the Sonoma-Marin Fair in Petaluma, Calif., June 23.

Affectionately referred to as "Lucy", Lucille Bald's story is rooted in rescue. After being saved from a puppy mill by Andrea Potts, wife of Senior Master Sgt. Robert Potts, 920th Maintenance Group superintendent, Lucy still bares the marks of her tumultuous past; the number 258 is tattooed in blue-black ink under her hindquarters.

"She lived in deplorable conditions," said Mrs. Potts. "The mill was shut down by the police."

Now a member of the 920th Rescue Wing's extended family, Lucy joins the ranks of countless other animals saved by unit members.

"During Hurricane Katrina, the mood of the country was really negative. I was aware of all the people and animals the 920th was rescuing and began a blog on www.petfinder.com. I wanted to let people know there were people out there helping," recounted Mrs. Potts.

The forum generated 5,000 hits in a little less than two weeks, said Sergeant Potts. "I stick behind her and this cause.



Courtesy photo

Mrs. Andrea Potts proudly holds Miss Lucille Bald during the 2006 World's Ugliest Dog contest.

Rescue is a good thing," he added.

A production team with the Animal Planet network recently traveled to Patrick Air Force Base to cover the story.

Capt. Mike Brasher, a pilot with the 301st Rescue Squadron, and unit mascot Katrina were on hand to highlight the unit's efforts to save both man and beast during rescue missions.

Katrina the rescue beagle was a part of those efforts.

Plucked off of the I-10 overpass in New Orleans after helping 920th rescue crews shepherd victims into unit helicopters, the dog was entrusted to an emergency medical technician at a collection point outside the city.

After flying around-the-clock missions and rescuing 1,043 people in New Orleans, 920th crews returned home. Captain Brasher and his wife then set out to track the brave beagle down using the petfinder website. After a few weeks, they succeeded.

"It was a difficult adjustment

for her at first but she's recovered well, and is very much a part of our family," said Captain Brasher, holding the content Katrina in his arms.

In a different kind of search, the 18th annual hunt for the world's ugliest dog began in March.

A website was created to tally votes online, culminating into a final showdown in front of the judges in June.

Before departing for the contest, a send-off party was held for Lucy at Port Canaveral, Fla., where friends, family and well-wishers gathered to cheer Lucy on.

"When I first saw her, I thought she was adorable, I didn't think she was ugly at all," said Mrs. Potts. "All the feedback I've gotten from other people though motivated me to enter her into the contest, and it just snowballed," she explained, surrounded by a crowd of supporters.

Contest participants traveled from as far away as England to compete against the likes of "Munchkin", "Pee Wee", and "Rascal".

Out of 18 contenders, Lucy raked in 1,027 votes online and placed third in the pedigree class at the competition.

"She was so happy, she loves people and loved all of the attention," said Mrs. Potts.

In the end, the pack was lead by "Archie", another Chinese Crested who took first place in the overall contest. Archie's online tally fell short of Lucy's however, capturing only 210 votes.

"It was a once in a lifetime experience," Mrs. Potts said. "Currently Lucille has no plans to compete next year and plans on retirement," she noted.

The event is scheduled to air on Animal Planet in October.

Around The Pattern



Courtesy photo

Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, Africa - Members of the 920th RQW who are deployed with the 308th ERQS pose for a photo at a drop zone while preparing for the pararescue team to land during a jump. Pictured left to right are Tech. Sgt. Patrick Wilson, Master Sgt. Ben Codallo, Tech. Sgt. Jose Nieves-Torres, Tech. Sgt. Matt Weiner, Tech. Sgt. Brian Wahlstedt, and Tech. Sgt. Nolan Cooney.



U.S. Air Force photos/1st Lt. Cathleen Snow



Tech. Sgt. Jan Wills retired during the June UTA. After first serving and retiring from the Army as a captain and helicopter pilot, she joined the Air Force Reserve's 920th Rescue Wing as a chaplain's assistant. She proudly displays her military graduation book which features a photo of her practicing lobbing hand grenades at the enemy during her Army days. Congratulations Capt./Tech. Sgt. Jan Wills!

BRIEFS

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 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

ORI Information

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

Second ORE: Sept. 9-15
AFSOC/IG ORI: Oct. 30-Nov. 5

Information Management Classes

Information Management classes will be held in June in the 920th Mission Support Group commander's conference room of Building 561.

Electronic Records Management - July 8
9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

This is a mandatory two-year requirement for 3A0X1 personnel, and is recommended for civilians who are on duty to attend these classes if possible. It is also highly encouraged that any person who works with Air Force records in their sections attend these refresher-training classes regardless of what their Air Force Specialty Code is.

(CC from page 2)

and 1,043 saves during Hurricane Katrina.

Our aircraft have, or are scheduled to get, some modifications that are ahead of the active duty, such as the 200-gallon combat fuel tank, improved crew seats on the HH-60s, and the Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures on the HC-130s. It was a Reserve initiative that put the self protection system on the HH-60, a program that eventually went to the entire fleet.

Don't forget to share this information with your employers. Also, there are resources for them as well, like the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve website: www.esgr.com. Encourage them to visit the wing, so they get a better understanding of what you do and why it's important. We hope to do another Bosses Day soon.

If you ever have the opportunity to publicly speak about your Reserve job, get with public affairs and they can provide you lots of helpful info. Feel free to share your experiences with your family, friends, neighbors, employers, and co-workers.

(CAP from page 8)

Chief Ortega watched as two infantrymen tried to take the controls when another explosion hit the landing craft and flipped it over into the water.

He swam as far and fast as he could to get away from the sinking vessel, he said.

Twenty-four hours later, only four men from his 33-man rifle platoon were still alive. Over 10,000 Allied forces were killed and 50,000 wounded during the invasion.

Chief Ortega described being wounded many times over the course of the next month. On July 19, he received a severe shrapnel wound to his right hand and was forced to shoot with his left until July 30, when a leg wound finally removed him from combat.

Cadet Master Sgt. Jessica Femia, a ninth grade student who has been in the Civil Air Patrol for two years, said she was very interested listening to someone who was there.

"I will always remember him telling us about the men of E Company and how only four of his 33 platoon members were accounted for the next day," she said.

Chief Ortega also served in the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War. After retiring from the military, he was a teacher and school administrator in the Florida public school system for nearly 22 years.

Chief Ortega left the cadets with some parting advice. "Every morning say your prayers and eat your breakfast. In that order," he advised.

(PJs from page 7)

the Chief provides.

As the boat rocks, Sergeant Drake prepares an intravenous injection set. He inserts a 16-gauge catheter into the patient's arm and attaches the line. Good fluid flow indicates a successful insertion. He secures the injection site. During the entire procedure he's evaluated on proper sterile techniques. No pressure.

Finally, the Chief is satisfied Drake performed optimally. Although, their day is not over until their parachutes are rinsed free of saltwater and their equipment is in tow.

As the exercise winds down, night is upon the rescuers.

"Staff Sgt. Drake performed very well. All areas evaluated were accomplished thoroughly and professionally," said Chief Curl. Which he said is a reflection of the quality of training Sergeant Drake received from pararescue school and his instructors at the 308th Rescue Squadron.

On this "typical PJ day," Sergeant Drake joins the ranks of his fellow pararescuemen as combat mission ready. He's ready to put his skills into action saving lives during peace or war.

All in a day's work so that other may live.

Drop Zone: Operation Hatchling

As many 920th Rescue Wing members know, the rescue ethos transcends the boundaries of species.

When a pair of baby terns were found in distress, the 920th RQW and 45th Civil Engineering Squadron joined forces to bring the birds home.



Found in the parking lot of the 920th RQW headquarters building, the baby terns had fallen from their nest on the building's roof. Several species of terns are listed on the threatened species list in the state of Florida.



Guardian angels gather to watch over the hatchlings in a make-shift litter.



The rescue reinforcements are called in and arrive just in time.



U.S. Air Force photos/Master Sgt. Raymond F. Padgett

After rising high above the pavement, the hatchlings are gently returned to their nest and launch pad. Operation Hatchling demonstrated once again why we do these things - "That Others May Live."