

ANGEL'S WINGS

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Never Say Die

A 920th Rescue Wing nurse plays a critical role in one of the most remarkable cases to come out of the war in Iraq

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VOL.6 NO.4 JULY / AUG 2008

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cover graphic / TECH. SGT. PAUL FLIPSE



THE INSIDE SCOOP

news & features



NEVER SAY DIE pp.12-13

While caring for critically-wounded troops in Iraq, wing reservist Maj. Patricia Hayden became one of the critical players in the most physically- and visually-stunning cases in recent memory.



TOP OF THEIR GAME pp.8-11

In Afghanistan, wing helicopter crews have saved more than 132 people since deploying to Afghanistan in February, and wing maintainers have a 100 percent FMC rate (fully mission capable).



ENCAPSULATING HISTORY pp.16-17

The familiar historical icon located outside the pararescue squadron here, an Apollo command module boilerplate once used by rescue units for training is being refurbished.

pointsofinterest

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timemanagement

UTA SCHEDULE

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Sept. 6-7

Oct. TBA

Nov. TBA

Dec. TBA

DINING FACILITY

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

Br. 5:30 - 9:15 a.m. (UTAs)

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

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

FITNESS CENTER

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

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

BARBER SHOP

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

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

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

CLASS VI / SHOPETTE / GAS STATION

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

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



COL. STEVEN KIRKPATRICK

Commander, 920th Rescue Wing

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven Kirkpatrick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fanfare for the uncommon Airman

The 920th Rescue Wing is truly an elite wing. This past year, we deployed hundreds of 920th members to all three theaters. I can gladly say that all our Airmen who served overseas did so with honor and distinction. That will continue as we are asked to do more.

Our medical and combat search and rescue forces have saved hundreds of lives. Our security forces have defended base perimeters in the middle of heavy fighting and we've sent key people to fill prominent staff positions in theater.

Every senior leader I talk to, including former Air Force Reserve commander Lt. Gen. John Bradley, glows when they talk about this wing, when they talk about what 920th Airmen have achieved on these deployments.

As you know, the call for service overseas will continue, and soon we'll deploy more medical personnel, pararescuemen and HC-130 crews. Even as I write this, our HH-60 forces are in the middle of a 14-month deployment.

As your commander, I'm both proud and fortunate to work with people so dedicated to serve this great nation as you are. Thank you for your commitment.

For those of us who don't deploy, it's sometimes easy to forget we're still a country at war. But what I never want you to forget is that it's warriors like you who help make a difference.

Patrick Air Force Base is far from the front lines. But by helping those headed for the fight, you become an integral member of our team. I applaud your efforts in ensuring we're always ready.

I'd especially like to thank the families of our Airmen for your unique and invaluable service. As families of deployers, you willingly sacrifice time with your husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, sons and daughters.

You bear the burden of managing your households, taking care of your children and pets, and you do it alone.

Through your sacrifice and dedication, you help make these deployments successful. My promise to you

is that if you ever need help, please reach out to us—we'll help in any way we can.

I'd also like to say thank you to the employers of our Reservists, thank you for letting us 'borrow' your workers. We couldn't deploy or complete our mission without your support.

And what an incredibly important mission it is. Combat rescue is vital to the morale of the entire U.S. military. The idea that we will "never leave an Airman behind" gives our warriors the confidence to go an extra mile, to push a little harder, to reach a little farther—knowing no matter how bad their day gets, we'll always come for them.

Employers—be proud of your employees, they truly are heroes!

I am so proud of this wing. Your willingness to serve, your commitment to excellence and your remarkable accomplishments both stateside and overseas are truly unparalleled.

You make me proud to be an American and to wear this uniform. Keep up the good work, and Godspeed.

NEWS BRIEFS

Effective Jan. 29, a new law approved **EARLY RECEIPT OF RESERVE RETIRED PAY** for some members of the ready reserve who perform specific types of service.

The law is not retroactive to any periods of service before Jan. 29, 2008. Airmen can bring forward the date on which they are eligible to receive Reserve retired pay by three months for the following specific kinds of tours:

- Involuntary mobilization
- Voluntary MPA tours supporting a contingency
- Some Air National Guard, federally-supported tours supporting natural disasters of at least 90 aggregate days within a fiscal year

To help identify qualifying tours, order-publishing authorities should ensure proper statutory authorities are included on orders and encourage Airmen to maintain copies. As the Department of Defense releases guidance, the ARPC will update information to the field. However, if Airmen have performed 90 days of active-duty service since January 2008 and are approaching age 60, they should contact the ARPC to determine if their tour qualifies for early retired pay.



Officials in the directorate of financial management at Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command sent specialists to the Air Force Financial Services Center at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., in May. As a result of their visit, Ellsworth doubled the bandwidth for sending vouchers through the Enterprise Information Management system (EIM). The result of the increased bandwidth is that **AIR FORCE RESERVISTS' TRAVEL VOUCHERS SHOULD BE MOVING FASTER**. With the older Remote Access Drive system, visibility was lost to base-level finance, and the vouchers had to be copied and moved manually for processing. As a result, travel voucher processing took longer. The major advantage of EIM is the time it saves by tracking the documentation through the entire process.

Effective July 1, a **SIGNIFICANT CHANGE TO DEATH GRATUITY (DG) BENEFITS** election option took effect for all Airmen. Airmen may now select one or more persons of their choosing to receive the DG benefit. DG can be designated in 10 percent increments to anyone the Airman elects. Therefore, an Airman could choose to leave 20 percent to a cousin, 10 percent to a best friend and the remaining 70 percent to a spouse—any combination equaling 100 percent. DG designations are no longer restricted to a spouse, child or blood relative.

In order to implement this change, the Air Force Personnel Center will update all vREDs to reflect a "by law" DG election. Airmen should be able to immediately make changes to this DG election if they wish to designate one or more persons by name and percentage to receive DG payment.

The term "by law" means that 100 percent of the DG payment is paid in the following order of precedence:

1. *Surviving spouse*
2. *Surviving child(ren) in equal amounts*
3. *Descendents of any deceased children in equal amounts*
4. *Surviving parent(s) of the servicemember in equal amounts*
5. *Appointed executor/administrator of servicemember's estate*
6. *Airman's other next of kin entitled under the law(s) of domicile at the time of death*

Airmen who would like to designate a specific beneficiary or multiple beneficiaries by name must access the virtual Military Personnel Flight (vMPF) to provide the information. Airmen are responsible for keeping all beneficiary information up to date.

Married Airmen may elect to leave less than 100 percent of the DG to their spouses. However, the law now requires the spouse be notified in writing when an election of less than 100 percent is made to the spouse on or after July 1. The letter will be sent from the AFPC Contact Center whenever such an election occurs and will not disclose any percentages or identify additional beneficiaries.

For additional information, please contact customer service at (321) 494-6983.

ON THE RECORD

A young man gathers materials to build a bridge to the moon... and, at length, the middle-aged man concludes to build a woodshed with them.

- Henry David Thoreau

Top brass share ways to shine

Senior leaders share pearls of wisdom with junior officers at local seminar

BY CAPT. CATHLEEN SNOW
920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Junior Air Force Reserve officers from across the nation came together for mentoring and leadership in Cocoa Beach June 26-29.

Hosted by the 920th Rescue Wing here, seven senior leaders including the 920th Wing Commander, Col. Steve Kirkpatrick, shared their pearls of wisdom with 46 lieutenants through captains in a variety of settings.

"Patrick AFB and the Space Coast provide an excellent venue to mentor our young leaders within the Air Force Reserve Command. They were not only exposed to the 920th Rescue Wing mission, but were able to see how the 45th Space Wing and national agencies interact to perform the space mission for the Air Force," said Colonel Kirkpatrick.

The junior officers took in classroom lessons such as "Leading from the Trenches" "Leadership 101" to "Who Moved my Cheese," a lesson on

goal setting and flexibility.

They also climbed aboard busses bound for Cape Canaveral Air Force Station stopping at current and historic sites such as Launch Complex 34 where the Apollo 1 caught fire claiming the lives of some of history's first astronauts in 1967.

They toured the Air Force Space and Missile Museum and boarded HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters for an aerial tour of Kennedy Space Center's space shuttle vehicle assembly building and a pilot's view of CCAFS.

"This program gives them breadth of experience and allows them to gain leadership skills," said Maj. Michael Martini, Junior Officer Leadership Development Seminar Program Director.

"Junior officers don't get a lot of face time with senior Air Force leaders, especially generals," he said.

The ranking officer was a two-star general, Maj. Gen. Linda Hemminger, a Reserve mobilization assistant to the Air Force Surgeon General and nurse practitioner in her full-

time civilian job.

"I'm really excited to be able to speak with senior leadership," said Capt. Elizabeth Dicus, 433rd Airlift Wing, Lackland AFB, Texas.

"(Junior officers) spend their time executing their Wing's mission. This gives them a chance to see why we do what we do," said Major Martini.

"There are pilots, engineers, public-affairs officer and logisticians to name a few. The variety of junior officers who attended gave each of them a broader view of various job responsibilities at different wings," said the major who organizes four JOLDS a year.

"They're also exposed to the different military services. So they are speaking the same language when hitting the ground at Baghdad," said Major Martini.

Army Material Command's Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Brig. Gen. Bert K. Mizusawa gave them a look at joint military operations.

The program also expanded their view of different agencies such as the

Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute here.

The evenings left time for them to enjoy some time at Downtown Disney in Orlando and a little beach time too.

Three of the senior leaders were former 920th RW Commanders here: Brig. Gen. Richard "Ric" Severson, Assistant Vice Commander, Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Ga; Colonel John (Jay) C. Flournoy, Jr., commander of the 932nd Airlift Wing, Scott Air Force Base, Ill.; and most recently, Col. Timothy E. Tarchick, commander of the 934th Airlift Wing, Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minn.

"I liked the variety of speakers and each commander's views. Also, the people I met and their different jobs," said 1st Lt. Shawn Kilbourne, pilot, 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron, Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. "I would recommend it to others."

Capt. Jon Connerton, 920th Mission Support Squadron is credited with putting the course together here.

New wing command chief holds enlisted forum

The 920th Rescue Wing's new command chief master sergeant held a meeting with all of the unit's enlisted personnel during the June drill weekend.

Command Chief Master Sgt. Gerald Delebreau addressed an array of topics during the forum, including professional military education, safety, awards and decorations, and the life of reservists.

"I came from IMA (Individual Mobilization Augmentee) world," he said. "The last few months have opened my eyes to how hard it is to be a traditional reservist—per-

forming two jobs essentially. To accomplish this mission in spite of those challenges just amazes me."

The chief also took time to answer questions, with Airmen asking the chief's position on issues such as morale, training, military e-mail access and equipment requirements.

"I cannot do my job or make improvements without your input and support," said Chief Delebreau in closing. "If you have an issue, use your chain of command, and if you think I can help, give me a call."





photo/Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Allen

Reservists change roles, save lives; replacements prepare for desert duty

Two groups of Air Force Reservists from the 920th Rescue Wing here are making headlines on opposite sides of the globe; one for the impact they're making on American families in support of the Global War on Terror, the other for their preparations to relieve the first group.

Rescue wing Airmen from here—and from the wing's sister unit in Arizona—have saved 132 people since deploying to Afghanistan in February as part of a 14-month tour performing the U.S. Army medical evacuation mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, according to Maj. Kevin Merrill, director of operations for the 305th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron in Afghanistan.

A 'save' refers to a situation where, without immediate medical evacuation, a person would lose their life, a limb or eyesight (LLE). In addition, wing Airmen have also recorded 84 assists—evacuations where LLE were not in immediate danger.

One reason 920th Airmen have saved so many people is the skill of the 920th maintenance crews working on their HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters, which they brought from the wing's sister unit at

Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.

The Air Force average for the percentage of a unit's aircraft that are ready to fly at any given time—known as the FMC rate (Fully Mission Capable) is 77 percent. Since arriving in Afghanistan, rescue reservists have flown more than 482 missions (sorties) totaling more than 425 hours flown. The FMC rate for 920th Rescue Wing helicopters: 100 percent.

"Every time they called us for a mission, we launched—100 percent of the time," said Maj. Keith Belhumeur, commander of the deployed maintainers.

The second group made headlines back here in Brevard County, as the group of 920th Reservists due to replace their fellow wing members in Afghanistan for the second leg of the 14-month tour departed for Davis-Monthan AFB July 14 for two weeks of pre-deployment training.

The cadre of helicopter pilots, crewmembers, maintainers and intelligence specialists spent their time there getting used to conditions they will face while deployed.

The helicopter crews performed high-altitude training, while maintenance and intelligence troops practiced their respec-

tive fields in a support role.

Helicopter performance in mountain flying is significantly different from sea-level flying. Due to the altitude and uneven terrain, mountain flying requires more skill and attention to details like weather, winds, climb capability (or lack thereof) and calculating the power required to hover, according to 920th Operations Group Commander Col. Jeffrey Macrander.

"We need to get our folks training in an environment that emulates where they will be deployed," said Colonel Macrander.

The troops left Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on a C-5 Galaxy, one of the largest aircraft in the world and the Air Force's largest airlifter. The Galaxy, which can carry up to 270,000 pounds of cargo, also carried two of the unit's HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters to the desert base.

The wing's primary wartime job is combat search and rescue, which involves locating and rescuing servicemembers isolated in combat—such as pilots shot down behind enemy lines.

The medevac deployment, called an "in-lieu-of" mission, marks the first time the 920th has undertaken the role for the Army.

◀ Down the hatch

Reservists from the 920th Rescue Wing here load two of the unit's HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters onto a C-5 Galaxy in preparation for airlift to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. There, wing reservists will use the helicopters for pre-deployment training in support of the Global War on Terror.

Dusting off before a dustoff ▶

Staff Sgt. Ernest Kunde, an HH-60G Pave Hawk crew chief deployed to Afghanistan from the 920th Maintenance Squadron here, removes the dust cover from a Pave Hawk's mini gun before a mission.



photo/Master Sgt. Demetrius Lester



The sun sets on the flight line at Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan. When not obscured by dust storms, the surrounding mountains provide an impressive backdrop to the desert base. Also impressive is the level of danger associated with flying rescue missions in such lofty, acrid terrain. In spite of the challenges, 920th Airmen have recorded more than 132 saves since deploying to Afghanistan in late March.

ON TOP OF THEIR GAME

WITH THE TREACHEROUS MOUNTAINS OF AFGHANISTAN LOOMING IN THEIR NEAR FUTURE, RESCUERS UP THE ANTE AND THE INTENSITY FOR SOME HIGH-ALTITUDE TRAINING

BY CAPT. CATHLEEN SNOW

photo/Staff Sgt. Samuel Morse



The harsh geography of Afghanistan will be the setting for an upcoming mobilization of aircrews and support personnel from the 920th Rescue Wing here. The Florida Airmen took time prior to the mobilization for high-altitude flying experience at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. Afghanistan is considered to have some of the roughest terrain on Earth—enormous mountains, steep valleys and craggy foothills, making rescue missions all the more difficult. (*courtesy photo*)

At night, a big, gray, steel hawk perches high on an Arizona mesa. Slightly more than 53 feet of steel blades whirl overhead, whipping up hurricane-speed winds. A nearby cactus, 10 feet tall and prickly green, vibrates as if made of Jell-O.

The view to the front is a range of jagged clay mountains dotted with giant cacti. Behind is a vast open desert leading to the city of Tucson, where more than half million people preparing for a night's sleep are unaware rescue-wing Airmen are lurking in the hills in preparation for a mobilization to Afghanistan—to war.

While Florida's stormy coastal weather provides some challenges for HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter pilots, the day-to-day sea-level flying is far-removed from the 10,000-foot mountains they'll face when deployed next month.

At Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, nestled in a southern-Arizona desert valley, 920th Rescue Wing Airmen spent July 12-25 busily preparing for the toughest flying conditions in the world.

While war may be Hell, airspeed is life. Aircrews will be jetting their choppers over the craggy Central-Asian nation to save lives by medically-evacuating the injured out of potentially-hostile areas. Rescue wing Airmen here will soon pick up the injured where Davis-Monthan Airmen leave off, and if the workload experienced by troops from the wing's geographically-separated unit remains the same, they can expect to be busy.

At last count, the number of saves performed by the first rotation of 920th Airmen there was 132 and counting.

Returning crews spoke of many harrowing flights where they saved injured Soldiers, international forces and Afghans. There were also atypical missions, like the time they rushed snake venom to save a little Afghani girl's life. Or the one when they evacuated a military working dog who was sprayed with shrapnel from a roadside bomb.

But snake-bites and roadside bombs are only part of the hazards at ground level. A whole new set of dangers await aircrews once they're airborne, the most dangerous of which is air, or rather, the lack of *dense* air. The combination of high temperature and high altitude means less air particles for a helicopter's rotors to push on. Afghanistan has both.

The country, which is slightly smaller than Texas, routinely records temperatures of more than 120 degrees and is home to the Hindu Kush mountain range, which soars to more than 25,000 feet above sea level. How do pilots compensate? Power.

"It's all about power management," said Lt. Col. David Baysinger, commander of the helicopter squadron here at Patrick. "Lack of power management results in two-thirds of helo accidents. And due to the terrain, there are a lot of places you can't land. Even if you do land, you still need enough power to take off."

The idea, of course, is to be the rescuer, not the rescuee, not always easy in one of the darkest places on Earth—*literally*. For the most part, Afghanistan is without the glow of city lights, of



A rescue-wing helicopter pierces the desert sky over the southern-Arizona mountains as part of two-weeks of high-altitude training for pilots and aircrews from the 920th Rescue Wing, held July 12-25 at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. Crews flew HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters day and night to gain high-altitude experience prior to their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan, where wing Airmen will provide aeromedical evacuation for wounded troops. The training location was selected for its similarity to the rugged geography of Afghanistan. (photo/Capt. Cathleen Snow)

streetlamps and billboards and traffic lights. Throw dust storms and moonless nights in the mix and the result is truly dangerous flying conditions.

“Flying in violent dust storms on dark, moonless nights is when your training really kicks in,” said Colonel Baysinger. “You have to be prepared for a lot of different rescues.”

To deal with all the challenges pilots will face in a place like this, there’s just no substitute for experience. Flying a helicopter is an interactive process. It consists of a pilot and copilot to fly the machine, a flight engineer who is the power manager, who makes on-the-spot calculations depending on the ever-changing factors of altitude, temperature, wind and airspeed. The gunner is the fourth and final crewmember. A vital defensive position, the gunners are always scanning for danger, standing ready to pull the trigger if necessary.

No matter what’s happening outside the helicopter, crews agree that the environment must remain calm inside the craft. Part of the week’s training included lessons in crew resource management – how the crew interacts under stressful conditions and rapid mission planning and execution.

As they ready for their upcoming deployment, the pilots and aircrew aren’t the only ones who have the daunting task of keeping the huge hunks of steel in the air. The maintenance professionals who convoyed to the desert with them know that every aircraft that takes off is a life-saved.

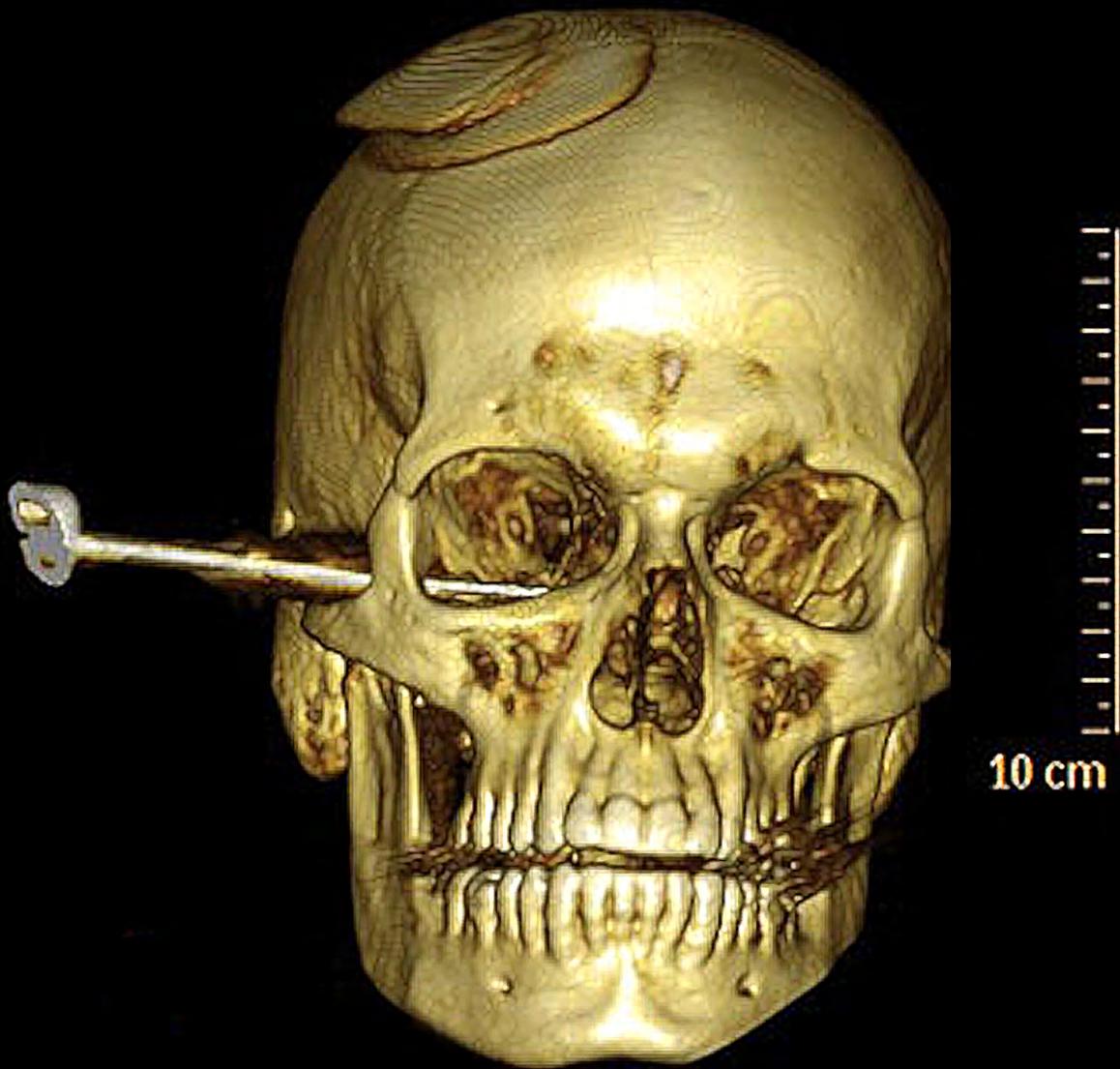
“The environment we’re operating in ... the dust, the talcum powder, just tears up the turbine blades, and that requires a more aggressive approach to maintenance,” said Chief Master Sgt. Philip Roe, Maintenance Squadron Superintendent. “By nature, helicopters are beasts—there are so many moving parts and so much wear and tear on the airframe.”

Maintainers always have to think one step ahead, which often requires working through the night to keep the helicopter on schedule.

As a two-ship of Pave-Hawks corral into the 943rd RG flightline at midnight near the end of their training, the maintainers can clearly see they were practicing brownout landings in the desert; a coat of dust covers the aircraft. Maintainers must thoroughly wash the aircraft and pull panels off to get a look at “heavy-hitting” items, including the power plant.

Keeping the Pave Hawk at optimum power is a high priority; it must meet certain power requirements for combat use. The rotor blades require lots of service, especially after they have flown missions in sandstorm conditions.

In all, nearly 100 Rescue Reservists, including pilots, pararescuemen, aircrews, intel officers and support personnel, from the wing will continue to deploy to Afghanistan over a 14-month period to perform medical evacuations as part of an Army in-lieu-of mission, when the Air Force picks up its brother-service’s primary mission—medical evacuation.



Never Say **Die**

A critical-care nurse from the 920th Rescue Wing helps bring a wounded soldier back from the edge of death

When wing Reservist Maj. Patricia Hayden's pager went off, she had no idea what was in store for her.

It was the day before Independence Day 2007. She was at Balad Air Base, Iraq, halfway through her first deployment, serving on the Critical Care Air Transport (CCAT) team there.

A CCAT is basically a flying, intensive-care unit, strictly for patient care, consisting of a nurse, a doctor and a respiratory therapist. They are a group of highly-specialized nurses, physicians, medical technicians and respiratory therapists charged with the responsibility of patient care during medical-flying missions.

When Major Hayden, a registered nurse in civilian life, got the call, she and her CCAT team grabbed their "go" bags—24-hours worth of clothing, toiletries, snacks, etc. that could sustain them should they have to remain off base.

The team had several patients that day. One was a young man with a penetrating gunshot wound to the neck, which was touchy because the wound involved the carotid artery.

The other was Army Sgt. Dan Powers. Sergeant Powers was a squad leader with the 118th Military Police Company (Airborne) from Fort Bragg, N.C.

Just 30 minutes prior to his arrival at Balad, Sergeant Powers was stabbed in the head with a 9-inch knife by an insurgent on the streets of Baghdad.

Of all the incredible details of the case, by far the most astonishing is that after he'd been stabbed, not only did Sergeant Powers NOT know he had a 9-inch knife sticking out of his head, he subdued the man who stabbed him.

The reason Sergeant Powers didn't feel his wound is that, although it regulates pain receptors for the rest of the body, the brain itself has no pain receptors and therefore cannot feel pain. Which is why it took someone else to tell the Army sergeant he was hurt.

And so, after Sergeant Powers had flung his attacker to the ground, a medic in his squad told him a trip to the hospital might be in his best interest.

At the Balad Air Base Hospital, he was assessed and immediately moved to the operating room. Once in surgery, the team pulled out the knife but there was excessive bleeding.

Through the technology available in theater, images were sent via telemedicine to the Neurosurgery Department at Bethesda Naval Hospital, Md. After neurosurgeons at Bethesda reviewed his condition, they determined that Sergeant Powers, once stabilized, needed to be transported to the Naval hospital for treatment and care as soon as possible.

And so, the aeromedical evacuation system was activated and the miracle flight began. Major Hayden's CCAT team brought Sergeant Powers and roughly 800 pounds of medical supplies on board the C-17 and were soon en route to Maryland.

A normal mission for critical care patients is to first stop at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, before being flown to a stateside facility—a relatively short trip.

"Most of our missions to Germany are only five hours," said Major Hayden. "This one was fourteen."

Neurosurgeons at Balad had removed the knife, rendering Sergeant Powers somewhat stable, but he'd lost two liters of blood—nearly half his total volume. It was a situation, not unlike others in combat, where personal feelings can become overwhelming.

"You start to get emotional, but you have to turn the switch off until after the mission," she said. "There were plenty of missions that tug so badly at your heart that, post-mission you just break down and cry.

"It's not about you—it's about those boys and getting them home to their families."

The flight to Bethesda went smoothly until the aerial refueling. That's when Ser-

geant Powers started 'crashing.'

As a KC-10 Extender hooked up with the C-17 over the Atlantic Ocean, Sergeant Powers developed hypertension and his intercranial blood pressure skyrocketed. To make matters worse, a furious thunderstorm began tossing the aircraft around, rattling the passengers inside. It was all Major Hayden could do to pull Sergeant Powers through.

"At 25,000 feet, so many things can go wrong," she said. "I adjusted his meds and prayed."

In spite of all the challenges, the Globemaster landed safely and Sergeant Powers received life-saving care, completing a truly-remarkable course of events. In less than 24 hours after being viscously attacked on a dusty street in Baghdad, Sergeant Powers was being operated on by a neurosurgeon at Bethesda Naval Hospital.

Incredibly, Sergeant Powers recovered from his ordeal with no significant side-effects, a fact easily attributable to the efforts of all people involved that day.

The mission was made possible—arguably, could *only* have been possible—through the hard work and expert coordination of a wide team of specialists, which was comprised of Reserve, Guard and active-duty servicemembers from four of the five U.S. military branches—Air Force, Army, Marines. A Total Force Team if there ever was one.

As for Major Hayden, the lasting emotion evoked by her time overseas is humility she feels for even getting the opportunity to help.

"It's an amazing privilege to take care of them and get them home safely," she said. "It's the best job in the world."



A CUT ABOVE

Army Sgt. Dan Powers with 920th Rescue Wing reservist Maj. Patricia Hayden (then still a captain), who kept him alive during the marathon, 14-hour flight back to the U.S. Amazingly, Sergeant Powers suffered no lasting effects from the knife attack he sustained while deployed to Baghdad in 2007. (courtesy photo)

Beautiful Minds

Aeromedical nurse receives first-place award for success of brain-trauma screening program

A member of the 920th Aeromedical Staging Squadron here was recently awarded the first prize blue ribbon by the Society of Trauma Nurses for the Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Screening Program he pioneered at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany.

Maj. Ken Dempsey, a neurosurgical intensive care nurse at JFK Medical Center, Atlantis, Fla., and part of the 920th Rescue Wing's Critical Care Air Transport team, began the development of the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) screening program in January 2006 with the help of Col. Warren Dorlac at Landstuhl.

"VA hospitals were receiving reports of military members having problems with their memory and reading comprehension," said Major Dempsey. "Some reports included information stating that military members would take a day or two just to read one page in a book.

"Some irrational and unhealthy behavior was reported. These reports led to the further development of the screening program."

According to the Defense Veterans Brain Injury Center, a traumatic brain injury is defined as "a blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the function of the brain."

A study by the Applied Physics Lab at John Hopkins University claims explosive devices account for at least 60 percent of deaths and more than 70 percent of injuries of U.S. servicemembers in Iraq, figures drastically higher than Americans have seen in all previous conflicts, and that nearly six out of 10 casualties entering Walter Reed Medical Center have been diagnosed with some degree of traumatic brain injury.

"Mild and moderate traumatic brain injuries can be easily missed," said Major Dempsey. "Other overwhelming injuries may mask an underlying brain injury. Sol-



courtesy photo

diers with a leg injury, etc. may never be screened for a brain injury. But the effects could be seen later on after they arrive back home."

In March 2007, the Department of Defense issued a directive that the screening program Major Dempsey developed be used on all patients evacuated from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom to Landstuhl, including civilian personnel and coalition military members. The success of the program has now made it a "Best Practice"

model for the Department of Defense.

In addition to receiving notoriety through the Society of Trauma Nurses award, the screening program was recently featured in a front-page story in the July 24 issue of USA Today newspaper, entitled: "Troops' brain injuries inspire a new mission; Key Army hospital in Germany boosts screening."

Now, due to the vision and care of Major Dempsey, U.S. servicemembers can get the diagnosis and treatment they need to battle this debilitating condition.

Reservist dies in tragic accident; Airman made everyone smile

BY CAPT. CATHLEEN SNOW
920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

A member of the 920th Rescue Wing's helicopter squadron died in a car accident in Orlando June 8.

Senior Airman Oscar R. Rivera, 22, was an aviation resource manager for the rescue wing and a student of auto and motorcycle maintenance in civilian life.

Oscar was scheduled to be on duty during the June Reserve training weekend here, but rescheduled when his toddler became sick from a spider bite.

His coworkers said he was a joy to have at work—always smiling, laughing and making jokes.

"Everyone wanted Oscar for their training partner," said Senior Master Sgt. Carla Chatman, an aviation resource management superintendent for the wing.

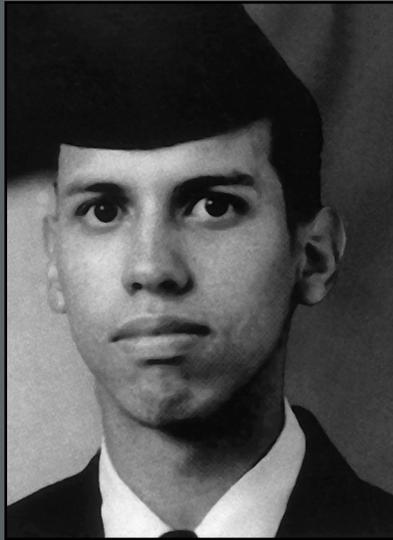
In addition to being well-liked for his demeanor on the job, Oscar was also a skilled, professional worker, according to his leadership.

"He prepared flight orders for his squadron's aircrew and made sure they were flying within Air Force regulations," said Staff Sgt. Argenis Sambois, Oscar's supervisor.

"He was known as a stickler for accuracy—when the aircrew saw him coming, they knew their paperwork had to be right," said Sergeant Chatman.

His productivity didn't stop at his assigned job; he utilized all of his skills to help out. He volunteered for various roles during the Wing Operational Readiness Inspection in November 2006 as a patient survivor for the pararescuemen and as an explosive ordnance team member.

Sergeant Chatman also said he was looking forward to deploying with the unit for the first time in the



upcoming months as part the Wing's current mobilization to Afghanistan.

The young Airman would have been drilling with the 920th this weekend but because of his child, he changed his schedule. "He was a great father," said Sergeant Chatman who said he called her Friday worried about his child.

She said he was two classes away from finishing auto and motorcycle technician school and looked forward to working as a mechanic.

"He liked cars and motorcycles," said Sergeant Sambois. "That was his thing. He even had them on his computer screensaver." At times he assisted coworkers with their car maintenance problems.

"The Wing has suffered a great loss with the passing of Airman Rivera. He was a bright Airman who contributed a lot in a short amount of time. We will pray for his family and grieve with them," said Col. Steve Kirkpatrick, 920th RW Commander.

Oscar is survived by his girlfriend and their toddler along with his girlfriend's three children. His parents are Oscar and Nely Rivera of Lewisburg, Tenn.

At close range

Rescue reservists clear pathway to space; protect seafaring civilians

BY TECH. SGT. NATHAN GREER
Special for 920th Public Affairs

Putting a shuttle into space is an undertaking that involves hundreds of people and numerous organizations, all working in coordination to make sure everything goes smoothly.

In an interview posted on NASA's Web site last April about the planned launch of the Space Shuttle Discovery, Mark Kelly, who commanded the shuttle, spoke about the effort so many people put into each launch.

"There are people all over the country that are very critical to the safety and success of this mission," he said.

Reservists from the 920th Rescue Wing here have long been part of the network of personnel who contribute to successfully putting a shuttle into space.

During each launch, aircrew, pararescuemen, maintainers, life-support personnel and support troops from the 920th are on hand to assist in the event of an emergency, as well as to clear the Eastern Range before all shuttle and rocket launches—flying over an 80-mile swath of ocean off the coast of Kennedy Space Center to ensure the launch path is clear.

"We keep boats from being underneath the launch azimuth when the rocket goes up," said Maj. Robert Haston, a HH-60G Pave Hawk pilot for the rescue wing.

The idea, Major Haston explained, is to make sure that—in the event a spacecraft explodes or malfunctions shortly after takeoff—boaters are clear of the area the debris is most-likely to land.

Not a simple undertaking considering the job of clearing the roughly 900-square-mile Eastern Range falls to just two helicopters.

Once the range has been cleared, the helicopters and their crew return to the Shuttle Landing Facility and remain on alert until the shuttle is safely in orbit.

Historic space capsule makes trip to body shop

BY TECH. SGT. PAUL FLIPSE
920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

A relic from NASA's Apollo program was an eye-catching sight as it was transported via flatbed truck from its home at the Air Force Reserve's 920th Rescue Wing here to Port Canaveral July 1.

The white, 11 x 13-foot, 9,000-pound space capsule, on loan to the 920th Rescue Wing from the Smithsonian Institute's National Air and Space Museum, has been kept here since 1992 and is in need of restoration.

It was moved the roughly 12 miles up State Route A1A through Cocoa Beach and Cape Canaveral to Excell Coatings Inc. at Port Canaveral, where it will spend the next month being refurbished. During the trip, motorists and pedestrians alike stopped whatever they were doing to take in the odd sight of the space module mingling with local traffic.

Smithsonian officials are pleased with the restoration project and are happy to renew the loan agreement for the capsule, according to Darrell Hankins, resource advisor for the 920th Rescue Wing.

The capsule, listed in the Smithsonian's Web database as: "Boilerplate, Command Module, Apollo, #1206," was

used in England by U.S. Air Force rescue personnel in the 67th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron at RAF Woodbridge to train in recovery operations for both the Apollo and Skylab programs.

The 920th Rescue Wing provides emergency medical, rescue and recovery support for all space shuttle

launches. The unit will assume an even-more prominent role in NASA's next manned-spaceflight venture, the Constellation program, scheduled for initial launch in 2014. Wing pararescuemen and aircrew personnel will be responsible for tracking and retrieving astronauts from space capsules that will parachute into the ocean

upon return from space, as was the case with manned spaceflight until the onset of the space shuttle program.

The 920th Rescue Wing is comprised of 1,500 Airmen, including three pararescue squadrons, two HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter squadrons and an HC-130P/N extended-range Hercules squadron.



photo/NASA Courtesy

▲ Encapsulating history

Air Force pararescueman Lt. Clancy Hatleberg closes the Apollo 11 spacecraft hatch as astronauts Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins and Buzz Aldrin, Jr., await helicopter pickup from their life raft. The command module moved from Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. July 1 for refurbishment was used by pararescuemen to train for both the Apollo and Skylab programs. The 920th Rescue Wing provides emergency medical, rescue and recovery support for all space shuttle and rocket launches. The unit will assume an even-more prominent role in NASA's next manned-spaceflight venture, the Constellation program, scheduled for initial launch in 2014. Wing pararescuemen and aircraft will be responsible for tracking and retrieving astronauts from space capsules that will parachute into the ocean upon return from space, as was the case with manned spaceflight until the onset of the space shuttle program.

Workers at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., help guide the 9,000-pound Apollo Boilerplate #1206 onto a flatbed truck for transportation to a local refurbishment facility. On loan here to the Air Force Reserve's 920th Rescue Wing from the Smithsonian Institute's Air and Space Museum, the capsule was once used by Air Force rescue units to train for astronaut recovery during the Apollo and Skylab space programs. ►



photo/Tech. Sgt. Paul Flipse

DIRTY JOBS

part III

By Master Sgt. Ray Padgett

Horsepower, technically, is a unit of power in the U.S. Customary Measurement System equal to 745.7 watts or 33,000 foot-pounds per minute.

Colloquially, the word has many different meanings to different people. The last thing that comes to mind for most, however, is cleanliness.

Horses can be messy. It takes 4,910 horsepower from each of the four Allison T56-A-15 turboprop engines to power the premier Rescue Wing's HC-130 P/N Hercules aircraft.

But someone has to maintain those horses, and that's certainly a dirty job.

That someone is the personnel in the 920th Rescue Wing's engine shop, where they rip apart and repair all of the HC-130 engines—as well as each of the two General Electric T700-GE-700 or T700-GE-701C engines that provide lift to the wing's HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters.

According to aircraft engine mechanic Tech. Sgt. John Knob, there's a love-hate relationship between the work and the mess. Sergeant Knob said you learn early to wash uniforms by themselves.

"Never mix them with other clothes."

Master Sgt. Albert Crespo, a supervisor in the engine shop, said the dirtiest job they face is probably a propeller coming off.

"If you're the lead guy in the front—you can count on at least two gallons of oil coming right at you," he said.

There are times Sergeant Crespo doesn't set foot in his own house until he takes his clothes off. Like on days he works with fuel ... he'll leave his uniform in the garage. However, coming home filthy isn't something Sergeant Crespo laments.

To him, it's something akin to a badge of courage.



Elbow grease

A day in the 920th Rescue Wing engine shop can render even the most-pristine uniforms downright filthy.

photos/Master Sgt. Raymond Padgett

"You want to look pretty, get another job," he says.

Synthetic engine oil isn't the only offensive-smelling ooze mechanics face. There's also hydraulic fluid, lube, oil and "break-free," a powerful penetrating fluid used to loosen nuts and bolts, which smells sickly-sweet—like a slightly-rotten banana.

Rounding out the list of smelly, messy fluids engine-shop warriors wade in are environmentally-preferred dielec-

tric solvent, room-temperature vulcanizing silicone and quick-dry, styrenated-alkyd enamel.

"I love it when you get grease up to your elbows," said Airman Joshua Rodriguez. "That's how I feel comfortable."

He enjoyed working on cars as a civilian and joined the Air Force Reserve to learn how to fix jet engines.

"They're not that much different, just a lot bigger parts," he said.

And a lot bigger mess.

920TH MAINTENANCE GROUP
SAVE OF THE MONTH

Master Sgt. Robert Torrez

recently distinguished himself in the performance of outstanding service to the 920th Rescue Wing Maintenance Group, Patrick AFB, Fla.



During the March UTA, the 920th Maintenance Group was without its security manager, who was on a mission away from Patrick. That's why it was Sergeant Torrez who was on duty, as acting security manager, when a "short-notice," classified security briefing was requested by the Intel shop.

To attend a classified briefing, an Airman must have his or her security clearance checked and reviewed. That day, more than 40 Airmen were on the list to attend the short-notice class. Missing the class for any of these Air-

men would mean a reschedule and more costly time away from the job.

It was then that Sergeant Torrez earned his Save of the Month, checking and validating every single Airman's security clearance in order to accommodate the classified briefing. Once this time-consuming task was completed, he volunteered to be the guard for the briefing, which meant he stood outside the briefing room to provide security during the briefing.

His quick actions and "can do" attitude allowed these members to attend the briefing while ensuring no additional man hours were spent on the training.

Based on his selfless actions and dedication to duty, Sergeant Torrez is hereby awarded the "Save of the Month" for May 2008.



Master Sgt. Robert Torrez



photo/Capt. Cathleen Snow



Hey man nice shot // A combat search and rescue mission performed by the 920th Rescue Wing during from Operation Enduring Freedom is scheduled to be immortalized in a one-hour television documentary for the National Geographic Channel. A film crew spent July 21 - 30 at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., and Patrick AFB, Fla., filming high-altitude, night-vision and 'brownout' training and an aerial refueling between a helicopter and HC-130P/N tanker. The documentary will feature the story of how 920th Rescue Wing helicopters and crew rescued ex-Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell after the rest of his SEAL team were killed. Mr. Luttrell documented the ordeal in his book, "Lone Survivor."



One Enchanted Evening // It was a night to remember as wing Reservists, civilians, retirees, families and friends let down their hair and kicked their heels up during the Third Annual 920th Rescue Wing Military Ball, held in Cocoa Beach July 12. The theme for the evening was the 60th Anniversary of the Air Force Reserve. However, the moment of the night came when Senior Airman Diane Lopes, a wing security forces journeyman, made her first appearance with the unit since being severely wounded in Iraq last September. Airman Lopes spoke of her time in rehabilitation and her gratitude for the support she received from her 920th family. Barely a dry eye could be found as Airman Lopes finished her speech with an order for security forces to lock the ballroom doors, then glanced at Lt. Col. Dennis Seymour, her mission support squadron commander, and announced, "I'm going to give Colonel Seymour that dance I promised him when I could walk again." (courtesy photos)

