



SINCE 1949, SSgt Robert S. Loud has worked all over the world as a pararescueman. He is now NCOIC of a rescue unit at Bien Hoa AB and recently went on his first combat rescue mission into the jungles of Vietnam.

Veteran Rescue Man Penetrates the Jungle

BIEN HOA AB — A pararescueman since 1949, 35-year-old SSgt Robert S. Loud recently penetrated the jungles of Vietnam on his first combat rescue mission with Det. 6, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Sq. here.

It was early morning when the alarm sounded for the rescue birds to scramble — a pilot and his aircraft were down in the jungles about 16 miles northeast of Bien Hoa.

The early morning fog was still thick over the heavy jungle foliage when the pararescuemen reached the area. Because of the fog they had some difficulty in locating the pilot. After about 30 minutes of searching, Sergeant Loud spotted the chute and lowered the forest penetrator. They got no response from the pilot. Loud knew something was wrong so he volunteered to ride the penetrator into the jungle.

Once on the ground he searched through the heavy jungle but was unable to find the pilot. Back in the helicopter they resumed their search from the air. A few seconds later Loud spotted the pilot.

Again he volunteered to be lowered to the ground. Reaching the pilot, he found him dead. Calling in the chopper, which carried the litter basket, they lifted the pilot out of the jungle.

Assigned to Wheelus AB, Li

to his credit, Loud has performed rescue work around the world. In Greece, in January 1966, an aircraft crashed into the side of a mountain. Loud was among the rescuers credited with saving the lives of four survivors.

His rescue efforts have taken him to such places as Kenya, Mauritius Island in the Indian Ocean, Germany, England, Italy, Rhodesia, Congo, Senegal, Alaska and Hawaii.

He has participated as a pararescueman in many of the Mercury and Gemini space flights, and was on the original rescue team which tested the flotation collar for the capsules in Bermuda.

In concluding, Loud said, "At first I had doubts about coming to Vietnam, mainly because of leaving all of my friends in Tripoli, but since arriving here I have found it to be one of the most rewarding experiences of my life."

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Assigned to Wheelus AB, Libya when he received his notice of assignment to Vietnam, Loud spent a fast eight days in the States before coming here. He is now NCOIC of the detachment's pararescuemen.

"My 17 years of training in the rescue field," Loud said, "are paying off here in Vietnam. In the past, actual rescue missions were few and far between, and the majority of our work consisted of training. Here, practically every mission we fly is the real thing and those years of training are paying off in the form of very fast and effective rescues.

"In my career as a rescueman," he continued, "I've found the work to be very rewarding but more so here than anywhere else. When you figure that every minute a pilot stays on the ground lessens his chances of survival, you're faced with a tremendous challenge. The reward one feels in meeting these challenges, and overcoming them, is the most gratifying feeling I've ever experienced."

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A parachutist with 114 jumps

DECEMBER 13

J. H. is - Hackney, Flower (C-46)
HH-43 - Ross

Ross had med evac. for an
F-4C pilot who shot himself with
357 in leg. Compound fracture of leg
and bleeding badly to "C" med.

Ross picked up F-102 pilot
who bailed out 5 miles NW of
Da Nang.

DECEMBER 14

Jolly Green - Joffe, Weddel
HH-43 ABN. Duffey

Subornel (S.D.4 to Udon) made
first night pickup in SEA from Huey.
A-26 out of Thailand crashed. Jolly
Green picked up two and Huey one.