

Sergeant Receives Silver Star Medal

BIEN HOA AB, Vietnam (MNS) — MSgt. David D. Rhody was recently presented the Air Force Silver Star for his recovery of three seriously wounded personnel.

Sergeant Rhody, a pararescue technician assigned to Detachment 6, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, was presented the medal by Brig Gen. Allison C. Brooks, Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service commander.

THE SILVER Star is the United States' third highest military award for heroism.

In February, Sergeant Rhody assisted in recovery of three members of a U.S. Army long range reconnaissance patrol (LRRP), 22 miles northwest of Bien Hoa City.

WHEN HE arrived on the scene, enemy automatic weapons fire was directed toward his aircraft. The helicopter took 24 hits and was forced to return to the base for repairs.

Another helicopter was exchanged for the damaged one and the sergeant was flown back to the scene.

In the interim, an Army AH-1 Cobra helicopter gunship crew moved in to clear the area and a quick reaction team of eight soldiers formed a 40-yard perimeter around the LRRP soldiers for additional protection.

Sergeant Rhody was lowered into the area. While raising the first two litter patients, sporadic ground fire again erupted and he instructed the HH-43 pilot to evacuate the scene to avoid further damage to the aircraft. He remained behind for a hour to provide protection for the third wounded man.

The rescue team returned with another armored helicopter to pick up the injured soldier and Sergeant Rhody. On their way out, their aircraft was pierced with five enemy bullets.