

9 &10 December 1972

Sgt. George P. Gonzales, PJ
Silver Star Medal

An HH-53C JGG from the 40th ARRS, NKP crewed by Capt. Wyman M. Rish (P), Bouteerse (CP), Smith (FE), Gonzales (PJ) and Young (PJ) attempted an unsuccessful rescue of a Udon 14 TRS RF-4C aircrew (Call sign "Kansas 01A/B") Maj. Billie Joe Williams (P) and 1st Lt. Hector Michael Acosta (GIB) when their aircraft was hit by an SA-2 SAM near Nghĩa Hung commune, Nghĩa Đàn district, Nghệ An province, about 35 miles north of Vinh, DRV. Two chutes were seen, but the rescue helicopter was shot off their hover over one of the RF-4C crew members. Maj. Williams was KIA and Lt. Acosta became a POW before he could be rescued. This SAR attempt was determined to be a PAVN trap.

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Citation:

"Vietnam Air Losses" by Chris Hobson, JRCC Save Form, & "PJ's in Vietnam" by Robert L. LaPointe

GONZALES, GEORGE P.

Citation:

The President of the United States takes Pleasure in presenting the Silver Star Medal to George P. Gonzales, Sergeant, U.S. Air Force, for gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force near Thanh Hoa, North Vietnam on 10 December 1972. On that date, Sergeant Gonzales voluntarily flew into a highly hostile and heavily defended area to attempt the rescue of a downed American airman. When all of the miniguns on his hovering helicopter were rendered inoperative due to intense ground fire, he valiantly continued protective fire with his handheld weapon in order that the helicopter's position above the survivor could be maintained. By his gallantry and devotion to duty Sergeant Gonzales has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.