

AIR RESCUE

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3rd Group earns presidential kudos

NAKHON PHANOM RTAFB, THAILAND—The Third Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group here recently was presented its fourth Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary heroism while engaged in operations against enemy forces. The citation covered a period from May 1, 1970 until March 31, 1972.

During this period, aircrews of the 3rd Group rescued 449 persons, many of them pilots downed in enemy-held territory during the Vietnam Conflict. During the war, the determination of rescue crews in picking up downed aircrews, often hovering directly over enemy positions, became legend.

As one Jolly Green pilot said after a save, "If a man went down, he counted on us to attempt a save." The number of saves was indeed significant; the lives saved included enough aircrews to man two tactical fighter wings.

Although operations are usually given the spotlight in most citation nominations, maintenance in the 3rd Group did not take a back seat in this one.

Maintenance on HH-3s and later, HH-53s reflected some of the highest ready rates in rescue forces worldwide. This was accomplished, a nominating officer wrote, even though there were critical manning shortages, threats of hostile enemy fire and monsoon rains.

Despite all the special maintenance requirements, the official continued, major moves experienced by the three squadrons (due to the end of the Vietnam conflict), several typhoon evacuations and several evacuations because of suspected sapper attacks, maintenance people

of the 3rd Group maintained one of the best records in ARRS.

Because of the nature of the combat rescue operations job, it is natural that individual heroism should appear in the 3rd Group. During the reporting period, four Air Force Crosses and 53 Silver Stars were presented to rescuemen. These were just a portion of the 3,300 indi-

vidual decorations that were earned by the Jolly Greens.

"It gives us a good feeling to make a save," one Jolly pilot remembered recently. "All Jollies—and I think that's why they're Jollies—can go home with a sense of pride in doing something constructive.

"He can say, 'I was helping people. I was saving lives.'

"And that's a great feeling."

How to rip-off \$50

Last month the AIR RESCUE's front page opened a contest for the new name and flag, or nameplate, of the ARRS newspaper. It offered a \$50.00 savings bond (or two \$25.00 bonds) to the Rescue individual(s) submitting the winning name and/or illustration by the July 10, 1974 deadline.

So far, SSgt. Franklin Perkins, Det. 1, 39th ARRWg. at Homestead AFB, FL is the only entrant.

However, good old-fashioned competition is still alive and well in matters involving the AIR RESCUE. Moreover, there are 3,800 competitive people in Rescue. Shouldn't there be just about that many entries?

Drawings should be horizontal to fit an 11-inch wide by three-inch height form. Entries should represent the overall mission of the ARRS. All ARRS personnel should readily identify with the name and flag; i.e., no select group, function or area should be over-emphasized.

Fifty dollars await the winners' palms. Send your entries to: AIR RESCUE Editor, MAC/OII/Stop 100D, Scott AFB, IL 62225 by July 10. Please include your full name and address. No entries will be returned unless requested.

---Editor

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