

## USAF, Rescue aids in flood disasters

WASHINGTON (AFNS) — Four disasters have hit widely separated parts of the United States over the past month. During June, Air Force personnel and equipment rescued some 78 people, and airlifted more than 770 tons of emergency relief supplies.

Food, clothing, bedding, pumps, generators, medical supplies and in one case a large whale boat was airlifted by Air Force active, Reserve and Air National Guard units to Rapid City, S.D., and disaster areas in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York.

When flood waters destroyed more than 30 per cent of Rapid City, personnel and equipment from Ellsworth AFB, and Air National Guard units assisted the stricken community. More than 3,200 personnel and 300 vehicles were placed at the disposal of the city. Twelve heli-

icopters from Ellsworth flew 49 sorties and were credited with 14 rescues.

Three Ellsworth sergeants died while attempting to rescue people from the flood waters. Air Force aircraft flew in some 120 tons of clothing and food donated from other areas around the United States.

Just as the Rapid City operation was getting under control, Air Force units in the Rio Vista area of California

An HC-130 Hercules acted as an airborne command and control center and two HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giants wor-

ked the affected area. The unit was credited with rescuing two people.

ere summoned to assist in rescue operations when a levee in the area broke, flooding some 15 to 20 square miles. Rescue aircraft from the 42nd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, Hamilton AFB, Calif., participated.

At almost the same time the Scottsdale-Phoenix, Ariz., area had four inches of rain and tornado-like winds. Normally dry, dusty desert washes became torrents carrying cars, trucks, debris and people. Rescue units from Luke and Williams AFBs assisted local authorities. Four Rescue helicopters rescued more than 60 people in flash flood areas.

One of the people picked up by helicopter was Air Force Reserve TSgt. Jerry Decker of Phoenix, a production controller with the 302nd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron. Sergeant Decker lives in the flooded area and was on vacation at the time.

"I had gone down to the Indian Bend Wash to find my youngest son. I saw two lifeguards from the Eldorado swimming pool and two teenage girls stranded in the wash," explained Sergeant Decker. "One of the lifeguards swam to the bank to get help, and one of the girls tried to follow him, but she couldn't make it.

"The current started to carry her downstream. The lifeguard and I formed a chain to try and reach her as she went by, but she was too far away. The lifeguard and I went in after her. We caught her and passed her back and forth as we were swept along. I grabbed the only willow tree in sight and pulled the lifeguard and the girl over to it. We hung on to the tree for 10 or 15

minutes till we were picked up by a helicopter."

In addition to the rescue efforts of the helicopters, men and vehicles from Luke AFB were involved in rescue operations on the ground. Less than two hours after the request was received, more than 100 men and 17 heavy-duty trucks left the base by convoy for the flood area.

Meanwhile Hurricane Agnes was making her fury felt on the East Coast. Tyndall AFB, Fla., housed and fed more than 600 personnel. Later in the week Air Force units airlifted supplies and personnel into the northeastern disaster area. Some 240 sorties were flown by Air Force aircraft, airlifting more than 650 tons of relief supplies to stricken areas in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York.

## 'Un'easy rider is an unusual rescue

OSAN AB, Korea — While flying a routine training mission recently, members of Det. 1, 33rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron's Flight 247, received an emergency medevac request which proved to be one of their most unusual rescues.

Because of the unusual circumstances surrounding the mission, the detachment commander first had to okay the procedure. Next, the 41st ARRWg commander at Hickam AFB, Hawaii was aroused at 2 a.m. for his approval.

Minutes later Flight 247 got the go-ahead and soon landed at Camp Ames, 45 miles southeast of Osan to rescue their unusual patient — a huge Army sentry dog which had been bitten by a snake.

Forty-five minutes later the uneasy crew delivered what looked like "...140 pounds of frothing teeth" to Seoul, where others waited to take the dog.

## Pedro rescues Army general

TAN SON NHUT AB, RVN — An HH-43 Pedro crew of Det. 14, 3rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group rescued Lt. Gen. William J. McCaffrey, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army in Vietnam, after his helicopter was forced to make an emergency landing.

The crew of the UH-1 Huey in which the general was riding declared a "May Day" and landed in a rice paddy about four miles east of Tan Son Nhut.

None of the six persons on board the Army Huey were injured.

The Pedro arrived on the scene min-

utes after the "May Day" call, and picked up the general and his aide, Capt. Allen Russo. The other four men on the helicopter elected to remain with the Huey until it could be lifted from the site.

The general and his aide were taken to the Tan Son Nhut flight line.

Crewmembers on the Pedro were Captains Jackie L. Roberts, aircraft commander, and Howard A. Randall, copilot; Sgt. Robert J.S. Brind, mechanic; and SSgt. William T. Mathews, medical technician.



**SAFETY BOUND** — A flood victim is hoisted from a river into an HH-34 helicopter from the 302nd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron (AF Reserve), at Williams AFB, Ariz. The flash flood caused great damage in the Phoenix area.