PARARESCUE was the title to the following article — written by Technical Sergeant Curt Phythian, USAF Pararescue — In memory of Technical Sergeant William J. Flower, who lost his life on 30 April 1972 while training so "That Others May Live." Reprinted by permission of Skydiver Magazine:

The jungle didn't look like an ideal drop-zone to Colonel Klecinger as he surveyed the area. Somewhere down there were the survivors of a crashed aircraft. The plane had carried some high-ranking officials and some news commentators. (Eric Sevareid was one of the newsmen.) Burma in 1944 was not the best place to crash an aircraft.

Colonel Klecinger wondered if his two medic volunteers would jump when the time came. They had never jumped before and the Colonel had only tried it once himself. He was determined though to get these people back alive. And so the medical trio jumped and spent a month with the survivors while awaiting a ground team to get to them. This then was the first of many Pararescue missions of the U.S. Air Force. From this was realized the need for a trained force of Rescuemen, capable of jumping and surviving in any conditions while providing for the needs of the survivors.

It's been a long time since the 1940's and the Pararescueman of today is one of the best trained in the world.

So what does it take to be a Pararescueman? Well if he can run three miles in 26 minutes, swim 2000 yards in 50 minutes and make it through some rigorous calisthenics

he'll be considered. He must be a volunteer for Parachute and Diving duty. And if he is selected for training, he can look forward to a year of some of the roughest training any military can offer. For a year his instructors will make life as rough and demanding as they can. He'll be harassed, exercised and drilled in Rescue work until it is his whole life. If he ever falters or fails to meet the standards — he's out. He must thoroughly believe in the Pararescueman's Motto — "That Others May Live."

The Pararescue trainee starts his training with a preconditioning course at Hill Air Force Base, Utah — the home of Pararescue training. Here he learns what getting into shape really means. He'll run, exercise, swim, run and exercise some more. If he can keep up he'll start formal Rescue training.

First of all is medical training at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. Here he is taught advanced life saving techniques, including minor surgery. This training is the basis of his ability to save lives, so it is as intensive as possible.

By the way, a Pararescue trainee never walks while in training. He runs everywhere.

The next school is the Army Airborne school at Ft. Benning, Georgia. Here he learns what being a paratrooper means and if he makes it, he'll graduate with five jumps and his silver wings. But parachuting is only one of the methods of transport he must learn.

Survival school at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington is one of the fun schools. By the time he graduates, the Pararescue trainee will be able to survive in any area of the world, even when being chased by an enemy force. He'll know the meaning of hunger and will actually have to find his own way out of a mountainous wilderness. It will take him at least a week to get back to civilization.

Diving school at Key West, Florida is one of the hardest military schools in the world. Before the trainee finishes here he'll think he's a fish. He will spend more time in the

water, day and night, than he will out. He'll be an experienced SCUBA diver when he graduates from this course. On his final dive he will perform a search 130 ft. below the surface of the Atlantic. Again his instructors will make every effort to have him drop out. One of the games the instructor will play is called underwater harassment. They will pull off gear, turn off your air and generally try to shake you up. If you surface — you're through. The idea is to keep calm and put your gear back together. This sometimes goes on for an hour or more.

Now it's back to Utah for the finishing touches. The would-be Pararescue man is ready for transition training. By now better than 50% of his starting class has been washed out.

While in Transition school he'll learn to make SCUBA jumps. He will be jumping into the open ocean with approximately 130 lbs. (9 stone 4 lbs.) of SCUBA equipment. Then he will learn to jump into forests, intentionally landing in a tree. He carries a rope so that he can repel out of the tree.

During all his jumps (day, night, land, water or trees) he'll be given medical and survival problems. As if this wasn't enough, he'll be taken back to Georgia for a school in mountain climbing.

If he masters all this, he'll reach graduation day. It's a proud day when you are given the maroon beret of the Pararescuemen. NOW YOU'VE FINALLY MADE IT!

What comes next? Well assignment to a Pararescueteam somewhere in the free world. There are only 300 Pararescuemen and they are stationed in places like Japan, Okinawa, Vietnam, Philippine Islands, Hawaii, Thailand, Guam, California, Alaska, New Hampshire, Florida, Panama, Azores, Iceland and the United Kingdom.

Is his training finished now? No! Pararescuemen train constantly to be ever ready. They are trained as jumpmasters at their first assignment. They also learn to work

on project APOLLO. They know quite a lot about rescuing the Astronauts. Pararescue teams are on special alert any time an APOLLO shot takes place. Pararescuemen have jumped on project Mercury, project Gemini and project APOLLO.

During his career, the Pararescueman will have a chance to attend other schools, such as — Jungle Survival, Tropic Survival, Firefighter School, Combat Helicopter Rescue, Ski and Mountain School in the Alps and Arctic Survival.

An average day for a Pararescueman consists of maintaining his rescue equipment and preparing for training missions. He makes numerous land and water jumps every year (Winter and Summer) to stay proficient in his chosen line of work — TO SAVE LIVES!

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Sport parachuting is a cute, 100-pound girl donning her gear. From a height of 12,500 feet she cooly prepares to exit the aircraft. Her parachuting companions span the cultural spectrum: a doctor, a lawyer, a student and a truck driver. Yet whether corporation attorney, professional soldier, airline stewardess or mechanic, they jump because of their inherent desire to live — not die.

The amount of control and maneuverability in freefall can easily be described as phenomenal. You can fall as slow as 120 mph flared out in a spread position or you can reach 180 mph in a steep dive. This gives a 60-mph maneuverability speed between jumpers and the merriment and buffoonery is a regular circus.

A man can only run at 20 mph on the ground. In the air he can literally fly to another jumper a thousand feet away at the unbelievable speed of 60 mph. In reality a man in the air can close three times faster than he can on the ground. And you can actually fly like a bird — horizontally — vertically — diagonally — fast or slow; in fact, you actually do fly like a bird.