

Capsule 'Baby Sitters' Get Medals, Mainland Trip



Sergeants Vigare, Vargas and McClure (from left) wear their Air Medals and point to Hawaii on a globe.—Star-Bulletin Photo.

In June of 1961, a rescue SC-54 was working the Discover XXV mission. On board were sergeants Joe Vigare, Ray McClure, and Bill Vargas. This time, when the capsule splashed down, the Pararescuemen were deployed and the capsule was successfully recovered. This was the first open sea mission deployment using the new SCUBA capability. The three men were awarded the Air Medal for their efforts.

AIR RESCUE MEN HONORED

PHILIPPINES--Ten officers and eight enlisted members of the 31st Air Rescue Squadron on Clark AB were decorated by Col. Donald E. Smith, commander of the Pacific Air Rescue Center, during a ceremony held recently at Thirteenth Air Force headquarters.

Receiving the Air Medal were Captains Harold K. Pike, Richard F. Reichardt (with the eighth Oak Leaf Cluster), and Kenneth W. Dotson, all pilots; John M. Gilbreath and Alexander F. Stewart (with first Oak Leaf Cluster), both navigators; 1st Lieutenants David W. Raines (pilot) and Jack O. Slocombe (navigator).

Other Air Medal recipients were Technical Sergeants William V. Vargas (with first Oak Leaf Cluster) and Austin Little, both para-rescuemen; Staff Sergeants Kearney V. Lundy and David E. West and A2C Robert L. Key, all flight mechanics; and Staff Sgt. Norwood Steele, radio operator.

Involving different periods of performance from June 1964 to May 1965, the Air Force award individually cited the 31st honorees for "meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight as HU-16 crew members in Southeast Asia."