

SYNOPSIS OF THE EVENTS PRECIPITATING THE FOLLOWING AWARDS

LT W. WAECHTER	SILVER STAR MEDAL
LTJG R. A. WILWAN	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
ADJ2 H. R. OLSEN	AIR MEDAL
AXJ M. D. BRANTLY	AIR MEDAL

The Helicopter and crew during a mission to attempt to locate and rescue a downed pilot were vectored deeply into the enemy territory of North Vietnam. The crew, subjected to heavy and intense antiaircraft and automatic weapons fire while approaching enemy territory, skillfully employed evasive measures and succeeded in flying inland over seventy miles of heavily defended territory to reach the rescue site in a mountainous area. After the downed airman established communication with the rescue helicopter over his survival radio and described his precarious position, the crew determined to effect a rescue, hovered over the gorge and began the treacherous vertical descent to the position where the survivor was thought to be. Expertly maneuvering the helicopter into a ragged hover by sacrificing directional control and varying the pitch in the rotor to maintain speed and lift, the crew succeeded in rescuing the downed pilot after locating the airman under dense foliage and lowering the rescue sling. Reaching the safety of the open sea after running the gamut of a tremendous barrage of antiaircraft fire, the crew displayed outstanding courage and airmanship throughout, thereby upholding the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.