



Rick Smith's unit had a motto on the 30th of October, 1991:

These things we do, that others may live.

A Tech-Sgt in the Air National Guard, Smith was on leave the night the Perfect Storm put people in peril for their lives. He and his wife just had a new baby daughter, a few weeks before, and Rick was home with the family.

Then ... he got the call that someone was stranded at sea. He grabbed his gear, kissed his wife and daughters, and went out to do his job.

He never came home.

His body was never found.

We [learn the details](#) about Sgt. Smith's loss from the 106th Rescue Wing's web site:

In October of 1991, a helicopter and HC-130 flew to a distressed sailboat about 250 miles south of Gabreski ANGB [Air National Guard Base] to recover the lone sailor. The helicopter and HC-130 dropped survival gear to the vessel, which was riding out the storm sufficiently and began their return journey to base. Both aircraft flew into wicked weather conditions and the helicopter was unable to take fuel in flight.

The aircraft was forced to ditch in the Atlantic Ocean about 60 miles south of the base and the crewmembers were in the fight of their lives in what would later become known as the Perfect Storm. The mission was recounted both in the best selling book and the major motion picture and both provided a fitting tribute to the only crewmember who was not recovered by the valiant efforts of the crew of Coast Guard Vessel Tamaroa.

TSgt Arden "Rick" Smith, para-rescue man (PJ), gave the ultimate sacrifice that day so "That Others May Live."

Two of Sgt. Smith's daughters, now adults, decided to follow their father into Air National Guard service. Erica and Kristen are also with the 106th Rescue Wing. Their goal is to participate in search-and-rescue missions, just as their Father was doing when he died.

Carolyn, the child who was just born before her father perished at sea, is also thinking of joining the unit.

[Erica tells us](#) why she was motivated to become a search-and-rescuer:

I grew up being a part of the 106th, and I wanted to remain a part of it. The 106th is a great organization. They took care of us when my father died. Family is the heart of every mission.

What motivates Kristen?

He died doing what he loved. His memory seeps into everything we do.

Erica adds:

We're carrying on his mission. He lives on through us.

What is their motto?

These things we do, that others may live.

This image depicts Tech Sgt Rick Smith.

Credits:

Image online, courtesy U.S.Air Force.

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