

HH-3E Jolly Green Giant Rollout and Awards Ceremony

by Master Sgt. Michael Riccardi
106 RQW

9/18/2008 - **Francis S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y.** -- The 106th Rescue Wing unveiled and dedicated its newly refurbished Sikorsky HH-3E Jolly Green Giant Rescue Helicopter during the Wing Quarterly Awards and HH-3 Rollout Ceremony Saturday of the September UTA.

The assembly included retired members of the 106th, guests, honorees and current members of the 106th who appeared before a representation of their 33-year rescue legacy, the Sikorsky HH-3E Rescue Helicopter.

Colonel Michael F. Canders, the 106th Rescue Wing Commander, addressed the gathering and introduced the guest speakers which included Ken Zore, The New York Islanders' Director of Operations for Promotions and Events. Mr. Zore presented the Wing with an Islanders' team-commemorative jersey and also presented Master Sgt. Jules Roy, Tech. Sgt. Erik S. Blom and Staff Sgt. Douglas P. Kechijian, pararescuemen with the 103rd Rescue Squadron, with commemorative plaques from the Islanders for the rescue demonstration performed at the opening game ceremony at the Nassau Coliseum Nov. 10, 2007, Islanders' Military appreciation day.



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - Members of the 106th receive various awards during the HH-3E rollout ceremony. The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the rollout ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF photo by SrA Christopher S. Muncy)



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - Members of the 106th receive various awards during the HH-3E rollout ceremony. The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the rollout ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF photo

Next Mr. Jim Brundige, a former pilot with the 106th Fighter Interceptor Group, told his story of how he landed the F-102, 0788 with a burning engine. The fire rendered the aircraft unserviceable; however, it was salvageable enough to put on display here where it had represented the 106th for over thirty years.

Finally Colonel Bernie Giere (Ret), a former Air Operations Supervisor and Commander of the 102nd Air Rescue Squadron affirmed the 106th Rescue Wing legacy by telling the story of his own rescue by an HH-3 Jolly Green Giant after he went down in an F-4 Phantom aircraft During the Vietnam.

Colonel Canders praised the crew for painstakingly restoring the HH-3E rescue helicopter to within minute detail of originality and for fighting hard not to compromise the integrity of the restoration project. He said, "Now, when I drive on base, I will now see something that tells me something special about the 106th Rescue Wing."



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - Director of Operations for Promotions and Events for the Islanders hockey team presents Col. Michael F. Canders, 106th Rescue Wing Commander, with a custom jersey. The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the roll out ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF photo



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the roll out ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF photo



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the roll out ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF photo



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - Jim Brundige speaks about his experience with the F-102 Delta Dart. Brundige was the last person to fly the F-102 which currently is on display at the 106th Rescue Wing. The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the roll out ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF photo



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - Daniel Leach, 8, son of Master Sgt. James Leach, plays with the restored HH-3E's control panel. The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the roll out ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF photo



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - Col. Michael F. Canders, 106th Rescue Wing Commander, shakes the hands of each person responsible for the restoration of the HH-3E. The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the roll out ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF photo



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the roll out ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF photo



F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. - The volunteers involved in the restoration process pose in front of the HH-3E. The 106th Rescue Wing hosts the roll out ceremony for the recently restored HH-3E Jolly Green Giant on September 6, 2008. Official USAF Photo