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The best: HART chief is Aviator of Year

by Linda Douglass

FORT WAINWRIGHT — CWO Jon F. Babcock, Company C, 1st Aviation Regiment, was named Army Aviator of the Year by the Army Aviation Association of America (Quad A). Babcock is the OIC of the High Altitude Rescue Team (HART) and is the unit's instructor pilot.

"I am amazed," Babcock said learning of the selection on Friday. "I had no idea my nomination would go this far."

The award, the highest available to Army fliers, is presented annually by Quad A, an aviation organization similar to the Association of the U.S. Army.

According to Maj. Henry S. Morgan, Babcock's company commander, each aviation unit on Fort Wainwright forwarded nominations to the commander of the Aviation Brigade. From there, Babcock's nomination was forwarded to division level and then up the chain to Quad A.

Morgan said Babcock was nominated for his work on the HART, which he has commanded since July 1987. "He took a program already in place and continued to improve it," Morgan said.

Babcock's nomination form cited his role in separate rescue missions on Mt. McKinley in May and June 1988. "On both rescue missions, severe winds and white-out conditions from blowing snow made flying particularly hazardous, forcing Mr. Babcock to make

several attempts before he was successful. Pilots with less skill, confidence and dedication would have aborted the mission after the first futile attempts."

Morgan said the rescue missions in May and June 1988 were probably the two highest helicopter hoist rescues ever made.

"I think it's great," said Col. Dean M. Owen, Aviation Brigade commander. "He's a very, very professional aviator ... he really deserves the award."

Command News

African History Month activities set: African History Month is underway. The Equal Employment Opportunity Office at Fort Richardson will observe the month with a Gospel Music Extravaganza, Feb. 25, 7-9 p.m., at Theater 1. The program includes a skit by soldiers,



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