



The Official Newsletter Of The Aircraft Armament Chiefs Association (AACCA)

October 2017

AACAnewsletter@gmail.com

Issue #12

President's Message

Mike Lucchesi

Three Lessons On Leadership And Responsibility

Leaders can learn three important lessons on the nature of responsibility

Lesson 1: Good leaders assume responsibility for the mistakes and failures of their subordinates.

A leader has a duty to assign blame when things go wrong and take responsibility, especially if the employee's limited abilities were known in advance. Some of us have witnessed leaders invoke plausible deniability to distance themselves from bad events. Others prefer to blame their predecessor or their employees for the mistakes and failures that occur.

Lesson 2: Leaders take responsibility for their own choices.

There are two kinds of people in the world: those who make excuses and those who get results. It takes courage to shoulder responsibility for your own choices.

Lesson 3: Leaders help followers develop responsibility by increasing their sense of ownership in everything they do.

Armament Chiefs learned early in their careers from their previous SNCO's that a deep yearning from every NCO to have a sense of ownership of their people and tasks at hand. We learn responsibility when we satisfy the real needs of others. Paradoxically, leaders grow in responsibility when we help others to transform from dependency to freedom. In other words, leaders help

others to grow in responsibility by taking ownership rather than becoming victims of what happens to them.

"The man who complains about the way the ball bounces is likely to be the one who dropped it."

Lou Holtz



Editor's Comments

Where does the time go? It seems to fly by faster as we get older! I can't believe that Thanksgiving and Christmas will be here before we know it.

Thanks to everyone that took the time out of their hectic schedules to send in articles for this addition of the Loader Letter!

In this addition, our President, Mike Lucchesi has treated us to some thoughts on leadership and responsibility as well as information on the next AACCA reunion and October's election. Jeff Hulme highlights accomplishments of our outstanding weapons troops. In the continuing AACCA member interview series,

Without Weapons.....Just Another Airline



Nathan Dixon provides insight into his career and provides a bit of “wit and wisdom.” Darell Brewer provides an update on our association’s Strategic Plan and Glen Pugh has forwarded an article by SrA Kedesha Pennant from Dyess AFB on the 2017 Global Strike Challenge.

To close out our newsletter, I’ve provided some information on a way to aid MSgt Chad Milton whose home was damaged in Hurricane Harvey. I’ve also included a very interesting map showing where our Association’s members reside.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter! I sincerely appreciate everyone’s inputs. If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please send me your articles. As I always say, this is YOUR newsletter. I just assemble what I receive from the members.

Thanks!!

Keith



Weapons Chief Interview

Mike Lucchesi

The second installment of the Weapons Chief Interview. This is a chance to get a peek into an AACA Chief's reflections on their career and a bit of wit and wisdom. The chief will be asked questions and their responses will be posted as stated.

Enjoy!!!

Mike



Nathan Dixon

1. Current Occupation/Specialty:
NH-0301-IV / Director, 912th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

2. What set you apart during your Air Force Career as a Chief?

A true commitment to service-before-self and an indomitable emphasis on the pursuit of excellence.

3. Best Advice received:

My first supervisor, CMSgt Kenneth W. Jones (Ret), advised during his initial feedback that I should work hard to portray and instill in others a mindset of excellence. I learned that if I swept the floor, I should do it in such a manner I would be proud enough to sign my name to it. This was in 1980, long before our current list of core values existed and before we began to document feedbacks, the way we do today. That advice has never failed me. I share those words freely with each new member of my unit now, and have done so since I first became a Sergeant, circa ~1982.

4. Biggest challenge in the Air Force:

I don't see the Air Force's greatest challenge as air superiority, modernization, terrorism, or the threat of nuclear proliferation. I believe suicide and its prevention as our greatest challenge.

5. Who inspires you the most:

I am, and have had a large number of mentors, professional advisors and colleagues over the years.



Each has provided inspiration in their own way. However, I am most inspired by the 1%. That is, the 1% of Americans who choose to raise their hands and swear to defend this great nation of ours from all enemies, foreign or domestic. Each time I have the opportunity to speak to one or more of them; whether in the BX, during an ALS forum, or during initial in processing as a member of my squadron, I am inspired by their vigor and eagerness to serve this great nation of ours and at great personal sacrifice.

6. Personal Philosophy (one that you often shared...possibly):

While first used in accounting approximately 200 years ago (Trust the totals but, verify the math), my leadership philosophy has been grounded by the words “Trust but verify.” If you fail to verify what you have asked someone to do, you cannot provide honest feedback about his or her performance. Additionally, if you trust, but never verify, you expose the member and the unit to potential embarrassment related to something a quick verification could have corrected.

7. What is your #1 work standard above all:

Though perfection is illusive, and decisions are most often made without the benefit of perfect information or analysis, the never-ending pursuit of personal excellence is a quest worthy of embarking upon. St. Jerome Emiliani, a confessor, theologian, historian, and the second most voluminous writer (after Augustine) in ancient Latin Christianity authored a number of quotes. The one, which best signifies my personal work standard above all others is “Good, better, best, Never Let it Rest. Til, your good is better, and your better best.”

8. A community outreach or involvement you are or were proud of being part of:

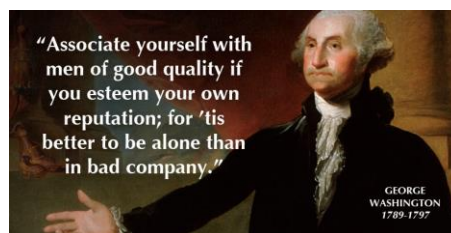
I have had the privilege, indeed the honoring of serving on and even founding a number of organizations over the years and AACA is certainly one of those. It is rivaled only by the time I served as Trustee, Vice President, President, Senior Advisor and Life-time Trustee of AFSA Chapter 553. As a team, the Chapter earned several divisional and International Chapter of the Year awards. Most rewarding was the long-term personal relationship developed with the first Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (CMSAF), CMSAF, Paul W. Airey. The sage advice and mentorship he provided me personally and to the chapter’s Executive Council (as a member, Senior Advisor and Life-time Trustee) over the years was precious. As a result, I had the honor of playing a part in having AFSA International’s Bylaws changed so that Chapter 553 became the Paul W. Airey Chapter, the first-ever named after a living CMSAF in AFSA’s history.

9. One thing about you someone may not know:

I like to tinker with automobiles in my spare time.

10. Hardest thing as a Chief you had to do:

Although I have faced a rather large number of challenges in my professional career, especially after having changed positions every 2-3 years for 30 years. Without a doubt, the most challenging thing I have ever had to do was recall a MSgt deployed on a 365-day tour. His daughter had committed suicide in their home shortly after his departure. It was the most difficult thing I have ever had to do.





2018 AACA Reunion Preparation

Michael Lucchesi

The 2018 AACA reunion is a little over a year away. The reunion will be located near Eglin AFB, FL. We are looking for a member to lead the effort and a few others to conduct supportive functions (hotel, activities, etc...). The supportive reps will provide the lead representative reunion information and updates. Please contact Evan Godwin (evan.godwin@hotmail.com) if you are willing to lead the effort or become a supportive manager.

Strategic Plan Update

Darell Brewer

My hope is that this edition of the newsletter finds all of the Aircraft Armament Chiefs Association family doing well.

The purpose of this short article is to keep everyone informed on one of our Mid Term Strategic goals. The mid-term goal of expanding the Aircraft Armament career field heritage will be taken on an incremental basis, beginning with the placement of a memorial bench at the Air Armament Museum in Florida. We are currently in the process of narrowing down the bench design, location at the museum, and subsequent pavers that maybe engraved with individual information to serve

as the foundation for the bench. Once the designs and logistics are finalized more information will be provided to the association as we move forward with this project.

Subsequent to this project, a project at the Enlisted Heritage Museum in Alabama will be researched and implemented as we continue to take these important steps to memorialize the rich heritage of the Aircraft Armament career field.

Darell



AACA Recognition Program

Jeff Hulme

First off, a huge thank you to Mike Cannon for the efforts he put into the AACA Recognition Program. Mike was the driving force behind establishing and managing the program for many years and has now passed the torch to me. The program is in great shape and I will be sending the policy letter out to members soon for a periodic review. This will be your opportunity to make suggestions or improvements as necessary.

We just placed an order for 300 more AACA Outstanding Performer coins to get us through the

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next few years. As you may or may not know, in addition to the MAJCOM and AF Outstanding Performers, the AACA also awards a coin to our 2W1 technical training Honor Graduates. The selection is tough. The student must maintain a 98% cumulative academic average with zero infractions of any type. It's not just awarded to the highest scoring student in each class; in fact, many classes do not have an honor graduate. In the rare cases where two or more students meet the criteria, the schoolhouse staff down-selects and only one coin is awarded to the top graduate. CMSgt Rich Fountain personally presents all coins when he's available, and if not, the highest ranking 2W1 awards the coin on behalf of the AACA.

Rounding out the MAJCOM award winner for 2016 are the following winners from AETC and AFRC. Congratulations to:

AETC Outstanding Performers

MSgt Daryl E. Crane, Outstanding Armament Manager, 33 MXG, Eglin AFB FL
 SSgt Kevin J. Hagans, Outstanding Armament Supervisor, 81 FS, Moody AFB GA
 SrA Tyler D. Bradley, Outstanding Armament Technician, 756 AMXS, Luke AFB AZ

AFRC Outstanding Load Crew of the Year

SSgt Oniel Hernandez, 482 AMXS/367 FS, Homestead ARB FL
 SSgt Miguel Irizarry, 482 AMXS/367 FS, Homestead ARB FL
 A1C Jeremy Watson, 482 AMXS/367 FS, Homestead ARB FL

AFMC Outstanding Weapons Professional of the Year Award Winners

Jeff Hulme



Left to Right: CMSgt Nate Dixon (Ret), SMSgt Thomas Rowe, SrA Travis Dougherty, Mr. Steven Trekas, CMSgt Andrew Carling.

HQ AFMC/A4M announced the winners of the 2016 AFMC Outstanding Weapons Professional of the Year Awards. This award is open to all 2W1s (and civilian equivalents) within command whether they are in a direct maintenance or support role such as an aircraft program office. Competition was very tight this year and all nominees deserve recognition and credit for their many accomplishments. The winners and a summary of their achievement are:

Amn Category: SrA Travis J. Dougherty, Fighter Lead Crew Member, 412 MXG/MXL, Edwards AFB, CA. SrA Dougherty executed F-35 bulk loader tests, identified flaws contributing to gun system jams and advised engineers on DoD's crucial \$383B acquisition program. He aided the F-35 technical



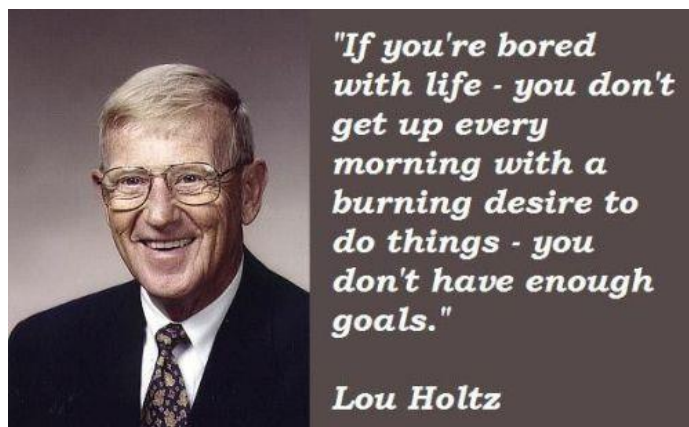
data development team by performing validation/verification loads which were vital to the US Navy's \$35M missile expansion program. SrA Dougherty organized and conducted multiple contractor and FMS training events, qualifying nine members on seven munitions supporting \$1.6M Poland, Singapore, and Taiwan F-16 test projects. Finally, he supported Military Grid Reference System tests and trained F-22 load crews on GBU-32/39 operations employed against ISIS targets in less than 30 days.

NCO Category: SSgt Vincent R. Franco, Weapons Expediter, 96 AMXS/MXARW, Eglin AFB, FL. SSgt Franco furthered \$2.8M SDB II program successes by generating 11 tri-mode weapons loads with a 100% successful release rate and met all five milestones on the test wing's #2 priority. He troubleshooted an AIM-9X failure to a faulty launcher and upon repair enabled the first ever F-15E air-to-air missile versus a watercraft target object. As the weapons lead in support of a Nellis AFB deployment, he led six personnel, 20 munitions loads and all armament maintenance actions enabling 58 sorties/75 hours of F-16 M7.1 software testing. Additionally, SSgt Franco guided aircraft configuration supporting B61-12 flight testing for a successful high-altitude nuclear release test.

SNCO Category: SMSgt Thomas E. Rowe, Weapons Standardization Superintendent, 412 MXG/MXL, Edwards AFB, CA. SMSgt Rowe directed B-2 nuclear rotary launcher assembly training, certified six personnel who loaded BDU-38s with a 100% release rate and averted an \$8M set-back for the B61-12 program. He developed an F-35 divert plan, trained 30 EOD personnel and led two real world events to ensure safe operations and reduce emergency response time. SMSgt Rowe conducted wing weapons manager assessments by

inspecting seven units, identifying 21 improvement areas and ensuring the 412 TW was ready for their upcoming UEI evaluation. Finally, he coordinated an A-29 light attack aircraft crosswind study by training contractor crews on GBU-12 loading operations critical to achieving current and future AOR capabilities.

Civilian Category: Mr. Steven P. Trekas, Weapons Safety Specialist, 412 TW/SEW, Edwards AFB, CA. Mr. Trekas authored a 58 item explosive operations waiver, evaluated munitions hazards and site plan requirements, and cut EOD response time by 99%. He identified a GAU-22 misalignment problem and coordinated with engineers on developing a modification to the OT&E testing resulting in the first ACC gun fire success for the \$400B F-35A program. Mr. Trekas investigated an AIM-9X-2 inadvertent rocket motor fire and coordinated a software change to ensure the F-22 CAF fleet remained safe and combat ready. Additionally, he developed F-35/F-22 combat aircraft parking area procedures, evaluated a \$200K facility, authored explosive site plans and expanded net explosive weight limits by 300% for 5th generation aircraft.



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**Submitted by: GLEN PUGH, CMSgt
Superintendent/CEM
7th Maintenance Group, Dyess AFB, TX**

Team Dyess participates in 2017 Global Strike Challenge

By Senior Airman Kedesha Pennant, 7th Bomb Wing
Public Affairs / Published June 14, 2017



U.S. Air Force Col. David Benson, 7th Bomb Wing commander, gives opening remarks during the 2017 Global Strike Challenge at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, June 13, 2017. The GSC is a competition within the Air Force that recognizes the "best of the best" in the world's premier bomber force, maintenance and security forces units. The GSC served also as a Comprehensive Airman Fitness event. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Austin Mayfield)

DYESS AIR FORCE BASE, Texas -- The 7th Maintenance Group, 7th Security Forces Squadron, 7th Operation Support Squadron, 9th Bomb Squadron and 28th Bomb Squadron all participated May 14 - June 13, 2017, in the sixth annual Global Strike Challenge.

GSC brings units together across the Air Force in a

competition to boost morale, promote unit cohesiveness and determine who are among the best in the bomber, missile, maintenance and security forces career fields. The competition connects heritage and mission, while at the same time recognizing and celebrating the "best of the best" in weapons systems and technical expertise. Dyess brought home three trophies from the last competition in 2015. The 7th Bomb Wing was awarded the Spirit Bell, distinguishing them as the best in epitomized professionalism, teamwork and esprit de corps during the competition. The 7th MXG won the Ellis Giant Sword Trophy, recognizing them as the best in bomber maintenance and the 7th OSS won the Eaker Trophy, designating them the best B-1B squadron in the Air Force.



U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 7th Munitions Squadron, huddle up before the 2017 Global Strike Challenge at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, June 13, 2017. Dyess was one of eight bases to compete in the challenge within Air Force Global Strike Command, which rigorously tests security forces along with missile, bomber and helicopter operational and maintenance communities. (U.S Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Emily Copeland)

A B-1B Lancer and C-130J Super Hercules static display were available for tours for Team Dyess. The 7th Civil Engineer Squadron explosive ordnance disposal technicians and the 7th SFS military

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working dog section came out to support Airmen and their families. The GSC also served as a Comprehensive Airmen Fitness event.

The 2017 GSC kicked off Air Force-wide early May and ends late June. The 7th Security Forces Squadron participated in the challenge May 14-20 at Camp Guernsey, Wyoming. They competed to win the Charlie Fire Team Trophy, which indicates the best security forces team within the command.

The 7th OSS, 9th BS and 28th BS continued the challenge May 22-25, with a race to drop munitions to a targeted location as quickly and accurately as possible. Obtaining the best flight times required precision in both pre-flight planning and in-route piloting.

“The day prior, we tried to figure out the best routing and angles to have plenty of time to take a look at targets with radar, but not take so long that the system degrades before we dropped the weapons,” said Maj. Jason Violette, 28th BS chief of standard evaluation.

This portion of the competition reflects the overall mission of Dyess Air Force Base.

“It shows our adversaries we’re able to project our air power globally anytime, anywhere and get our bombs on target on time,” said Maj. Brian Milner, 28th BS wing weapons officer. “That way we can get those effects when they’re most needed whether it’s to the guys on the ground or guys in the air.”

The 7th MXG culminated the race to victory June 13, on Dyess' flight line in three timed sub-competitions. The maintainers were scored based upon a weapons load, equipment and tool organization, data management, dress and appearance and a written test. In addition to these standards, the munitions crew was evaluated based on a munitions assembly

conveyor set-up, an inert-guided bomb unit assembly and a bomb-stacking exercise, which included a trailer-backing and forklift-maneuvering portion.

The competition assesses mission proficiency obtained through each team's time devoted to enhancing their overall performance and training for several weeks.

Senior Airman Brandon Young, 7th Munitions Squadron GSC forklift driver, was responsible for driving the forklift, which is integral to building the munitions assembly conveyor.

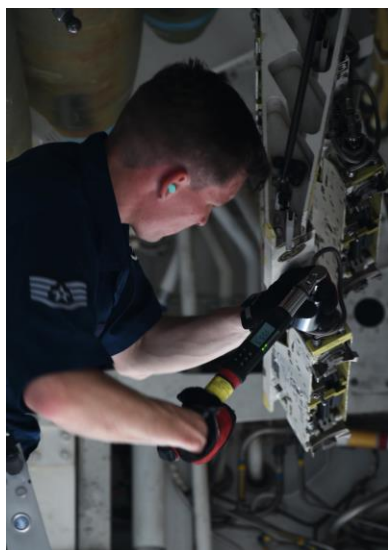


U.S. Air Force Airmen from the 7th Munitions Squadron, construct a munitions assembly conveyor during the 2017 Global Strike Challenge at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, June 13, 2017. A munitions assembly conveyor is a mobile assembly line used to build bombs efficiently. GSC competitors are selected based upon available wing assets and determined by the unit's internal competitive team selection process. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Emily Copeland)

The forklift is needed to remove all trailer assets in a timely manner for 7th MUNS Airmen to complete the bomb build, Young said. Everything needed to be removed at a fast pace yet in a controlled manner. The forklift has the capacity to lift 6,000 pounds in which we would load six bombs at a time.



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Clayton Moore, 489th Maintenance Squadron weapons load crew member, transports a global positioning system-guided inert bomb unit using a jammer during the 2017 Global Strike Challenge at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, June 13, 2017. The jammer is used to load and unload munitions into the B-1B Lancer. The GSC is a competition that showcases the world's best bombers, maintenance and security forces personnel units performing the Air Force Global Strike Command mission. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Emily Copeland)

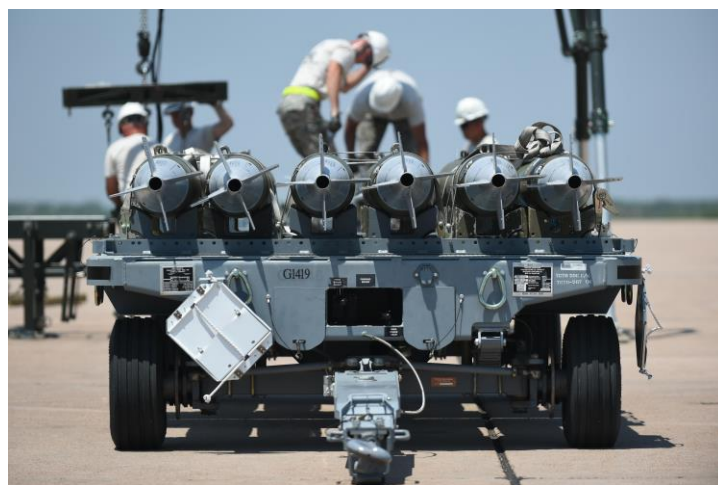


U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Donald Winters, 7th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron weapons load crew member, prepares to load an inert bomb into the bomb bay of the B-1B Lancer during the 2017 Global Strike Challenge at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, June 13, 2017. The 7th Maintenance Group and 489th Maintenance Squadron was scored based upon a weapons load, equipment and tool organization, data management, dress and appearance and a written test. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Emily Copeland)

For Young, the several practices all day in the Texas heat were worth it.

“I’m proud to be a part of a great team, and I had a fun time,” Young said. “All of the intensity built up to this moment.”

As a part of Total Force Integration, Airmen assigned to the 489th Bomb Group, the B-1’s first and only Reserve unit in the Air Force, participated in the challenge.



U.S. Air Force Airmen, assigned to the 7th Munitions Squadron, complete a bomb build as the final event in the 2017 Global Strike Challenge at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, June 13, 2017. During the competition, 7th MUNS crew members built Joint Direct Attack Munitions and manufactured them on a munitions assembly conveyor. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Emily Copeland)

We work really well together, said Tech. Sgt. Clayton Moore, 489th Maintenance Squadron GSC weapons load crew member. We’re a tight-knit community, so we’re always promoting morale. Our fellow Airmen did just that by cheering us on while we loaded the weapons in the bomb bay of the B-1.

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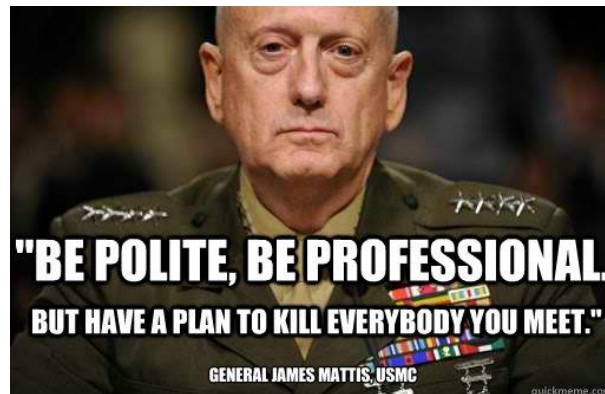


U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Clayton Moore, 489th Maintenance Squadron weapons load crew member, is hugged by his daughters, Kaylin, left, and Jaydin during the 2017 Global Strike Challenge at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, June 13, 2017. Moore's children were given a rare opportunity to see him in action. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Kedesha Pennant)

After the competitions among the operators, maintainers and defenders at the other Global Strike bases are complete, the 7th BW will vie for other awards ranging from the Fairchild Trophy--designating the best bomber unit in the combine fields of navigation and bombing—to the Bartsch Trophy—recognizing the best electronic countermeasures.

“Part of this competition involves building comradery in between the different units, squadrons and platforms,” Violette said. “It took the whole team from start to finish to be able to get us in the jet and off the ground to the range and back.”

After the competition events, a score posting and the announcement of the winners will be live-streamed from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, where AFGSC is headquartered, to each participating base Aug. 29-30.



Michael Lucchesi

The Vice President and Treasurer positions are up for election this coming October 2017. Both positions serve a four year term. AACA regular members with good standing membership accounts are able to vote. Voting will be done on line (survey monkey or voting button). All votes will be validated by the Board of Directors. All voting for officers will be completed on the date specified for the election.

If you would like to self-nominate or nominate another individual please forward names to AACA Secretary (Evan Godwin) by October 14, 2017. Regular members in good standing can be nominated for the position. Nominated individuals must be informed and agree to hold



the open position in writing. These agreements should be forward to the AACA Secretary. Current elected officials can be re-elected for one consecutive term. The current elected officials must make it known in writing that they would like to be considered for another term.

The winner(s) of election are those individuals who have received the largest number of votes for each open official position. Election winners assume the post for which they were elected on the 1st day of January of the year following the voting timeframe.

Duties of the positions up for election:

- The Association Vice President assists the Association President in carrying out the duties specified in the AACA constitution. The Vice President assumes the office of President in the event the President terminates his/her office before the expiration of his/her term, is incapacitated or is not available to carry out his/her function for any normally scheduled event.
- The Association Treasurer maintains records of all Association funds and financial transactions. At least once each year the Treasurer will report major expenditures and the beginning and ending balances of Association accounts to Association members either in a hard copy mailing or by posting on an internet site as designated by the board of directors. The

Treasurer will ensure Association accounts are maintained in a current status and reconciled within 14 working days of receipt of monthly bank statements. The Treasurer will make the Association books available for review as determined by the board of directors.

In October 2017, an election email will be provided to the membership to vote.

Seeking a Director at Large

Michael Lucchesi

The AACA is searching for a new Director at Large. These individuals are members of the Board of Directors and perform duties as directed by the President. The President has these individuals review, create, or analyze future program activities, lead events, and submit newsletter articles based on their updates. Please contact Michael Lucchesi (mictaoxx@yahoo.com) if you're interested.



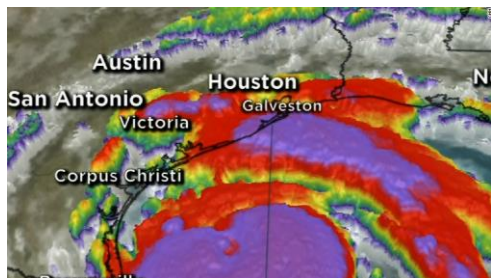
"The problem with quotes on the Internet is that no one can confirm their authenticity."

—Abraham Lincoln

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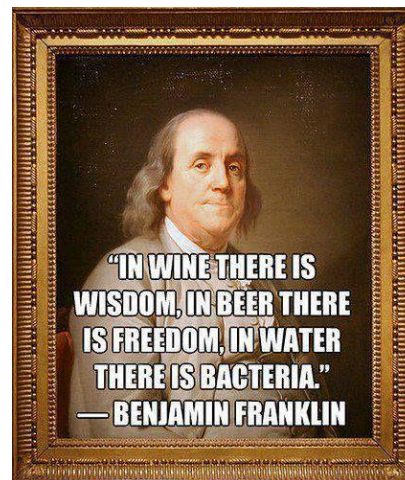


One of our own!

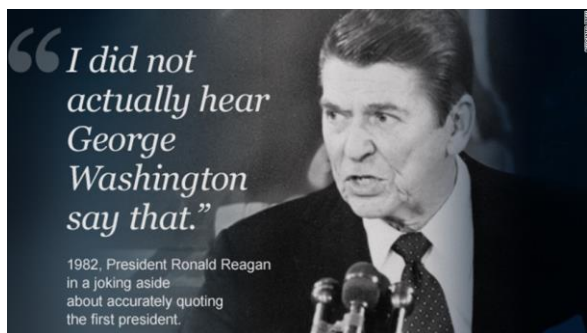
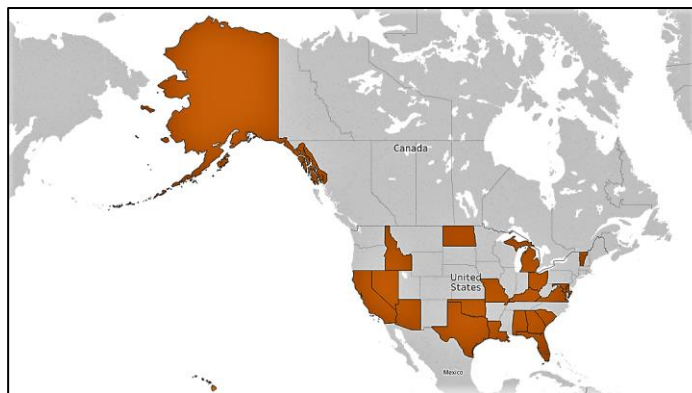


MSgt Chad Milton is a Weapons troop with the 147th Attack Wing. His home in Dickinson was flooded when the levee broke during controlled releases after Hurricane Harvey. He is currently unable to work due to his wife being deployed and having two children to look after. We are seeking funds for him to help defer the costs associated with his displacement (food, supplies, etc.) and make up for his time lost working while ensuring his family is safe.

The following gofundme page has been established to help raise money to assist MSgt Milton and his family. Please visit the website if you can help the Milton family. <https://www.gofundme.com/WEAPONS>



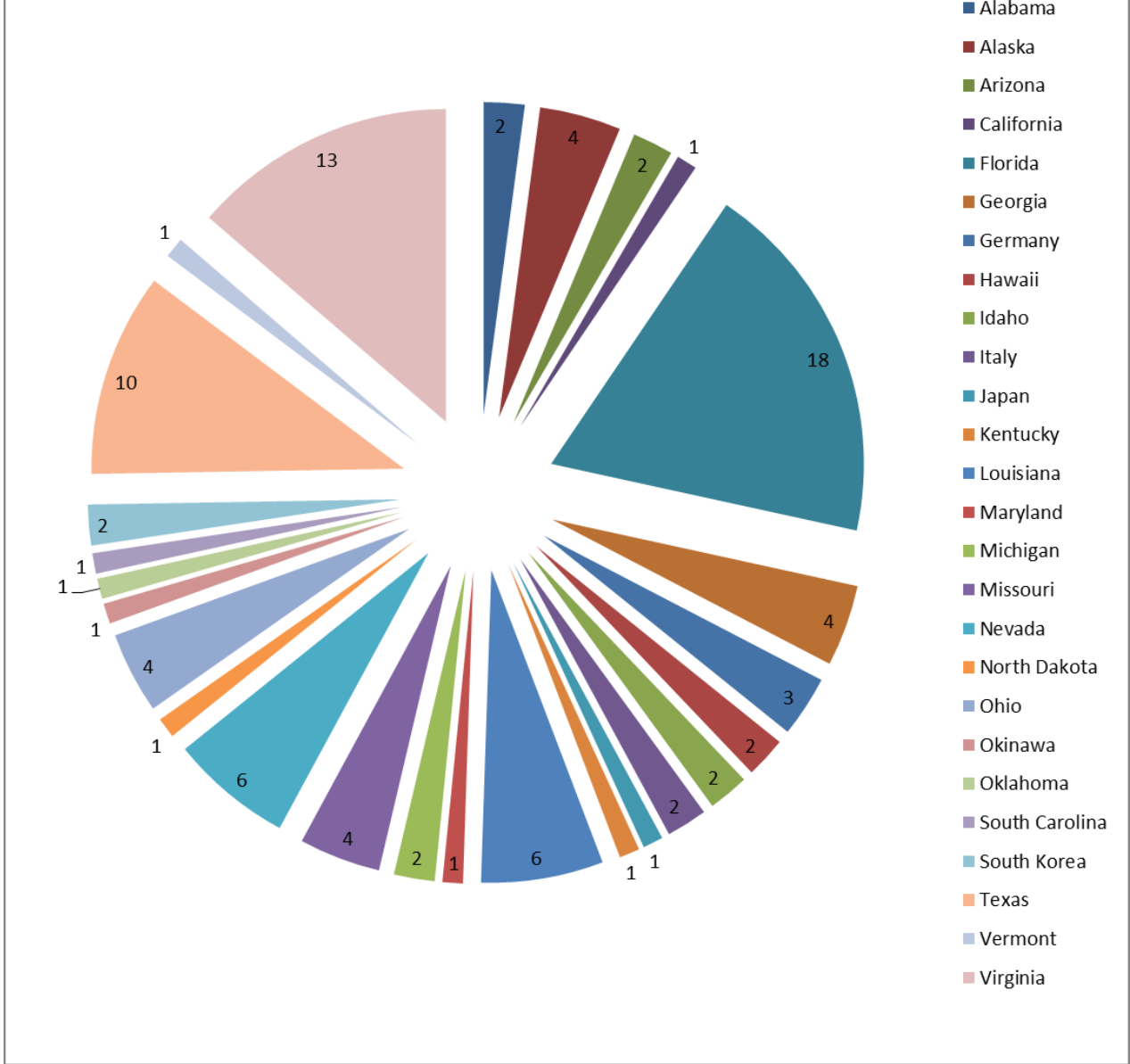
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AACA Membership By State



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