



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

May 2020

AACAnewsletter@gmail.com

Issue #16

President's Message

Mike Reed

WOW what a year we are in so far, COVID has completely change our normal, and now I am the president of the AACCA. I personally think the vote was fixed, but I am looking forward to leading this great organization through the next few years. I want to thank my friend, Mike Lucchesi for his leadership over the last several years, **Well Done!** I have big shoes to fill for the second time, I hope I meet everyone's expectation.

This will be my first newsletter as your president. For those that don't know me, let me give you some background information on me and where I hope to take the group. I entered the Air Force in June 1983, I entered with a guaranteed job. To this day, I remember reading the job at a Delayed Enlistment Program meeting, the recruiter slid a blue folder to me, he said "I think I have a job for you." I opened the folder, read "loads and unloads nuclear and non-nuclear munitions" that is all I read, I closed the folder, slid it back across the table and said "I'll take it." In my mind I thought the Air Force is going to pay me to play with nukes!!! Hard to believe that was just short of 40 years ago now, in July 1982. I have been a 462/2W1 ever since, only thing even remotely outside the career field was a short year as chief inspector in 00-01 at Aviano. I have worked F-4, F-15C/D, F-111, F-16 (block 40, 42 and 50), A-10, and the B-1. I have held almost every position in the weapons career field possible and finished my 30 year career at ACC HQ as the Functional Manager.

I am now working for the Department of the Air Force as the AETC Functional Manager, this puts me in a

unique position of being a retired CMSgt and working with the current active duty CMSgt. My fellow MFMs and the current CFM give me a direct link to the new 2W1 CMSgt that are grown each year, tapping into those new chiefs, we can grow our organization in the coming years.

My goals for the organization are to grow our ranks with both current CMSgt, new CMSgt and even those retired CMSgt of the ANG, AFRC, and AD to join us. I also want to put some no-nonsense actions that support the strategic goals of the organization. We have some great strategic elements set down by the previous leadership of the group, and I want to put action to those goals for all of us.

I look forward to the coming years as your president and working with a group of Chiefs on the executive board that match any group of Chiefs I have ever known.

Without Weapons, It's Just Another Airline!!!

Mike

Vice Presidents Message

Lee Robbins

As your newly elected VP, I wanted to take the opportunity and say thank you—thank for you for those who are serving and those who previously served our great nation.

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Airmen across the total force, we need your skills, expertise, followership, and leadership now more than ever as our country battles, deters and continues to crush foes both visible and invisible across the globe. As part of my service and all-in approach to our armament motto, “GET SOME”, you have inspired me to get as much as I possibly can.

It is truly a privilege to serve you in both capacities as the ACC 2W1 MFM and your ACAA VP. Additionally, through the executive council and our active association members, we will continue to aggressively reinvigorate our organization to help and support our Armament community and their families. As such, I want to emphasize a couple of things:

First, if you are a Weapons Chief, I hope you’ll throw in and join us. We need your contributions and your input during general membership meetings and beyond.

Second, I ask that you read, digest, contribute and promote this newsletter. This publication is vitally important to fostering the outstanding efforts of the Airmen we serve, history of our great AFSC, news from the front, strategic initiatives and direction of the career field.

In sum, I greatly appreciate this opportunity - it is truly an honor and privilege to serve alongside you.

Sincerely,

Lee

Editor’s Comments

Keith Hilton

I know it has been over a year since the last newsletter. Boy how life gets busy. I’ll try to do better in the future.

I hope you are all doing well during this darn COVID-19 epidemic. Life has certainly changed for most of the country.

In this addition you will again be treated to many informative and entertaining articles from our membership. You have already met the new association President and Vice President. You will also meet the new Career Field Manager. There is an article on the new approach to loading checklists, a touching article about honoring a fellow weapons troop that was murdered, and some additional weapons loader history. Finally, you will be introduced to some of our awesome superior performers. Thank you for your contributions!

If you have any stories, cartoons, photos, etc. that you would like to see included in YOUR newsletter, please send them to me for incorporation into future newsletters. You can send them to me at kahilton1@outlook.com, keith.a.hilton@gmail.com, or aacanewsletter@gmail.com.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter! I sincerely appreciate everyone’s inputs. As I always say, this is YOUR newsletter. I just assemble what I receive from the members.

Keith

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From The Career Field Manager



AACA greetings from the Pentagon. A lot of change has happened since the last edition of the Loader Letter. We gave a final send off to CMSgt John Jordan, having served thirty years of honorable service to our Nation, Air Force and Weapons community. We performed the ceremonial flag exchange at the Pentagon December 2019. I want to thank John for all he has done for our career field and his continued defense as other career fields try to infringe on our core principles to load/unload nuclear/conventional aircraft.

As with everyone else in the world, we are faced with new challenges and creating new ways to make the mission happen during COVID-19 pandemic. Along with my fellow MFMs, we are teleworking but continue to move forward with our initiatives. (1) Combat Ammunition System (CAS) support ended in Feb 2020 and Theater Integrated Combat Munitions System (TICMS) went live.

Units are still working through the challenges that come with a new program, but they are making it happen. TICMS future releases will bring capabilities to match our technology and ensure ease of real time munitions tracking...no more use of streamers during exercises. (2) We have begun the first draft to establish stand-alone armament policy under AFD 21-2. The intent is to align armament policy under the munitions umbrella. The goal is to become the OPR of our own instruction versus being an OCR to AFI 21-101. (3) Smart Weapons Digital Checklist is this year's Spark Tank co-winner. The team at Spangdahlem used innovation to streamline an F-16 loading operation checklists into one consolidated product based on several pre-task inputs. Winning the competition awarded \$1.4M to complete integrating all munitions into the project. This capability is bigger than the weapons loading checklist and is adaptable to any task, which requires multiple TOs to accomplish the work.

Finally, the Senior Munitions Manager Conference is scheduled 13 – 17 Jul 2020 at Convention Center Hampton, VA. We hope to see AACA members come out and share some experiences with our newer generation of senior weapons leaders. Below is current MFM breakout with turnover this past year:

ACC	CMSgt Lee Robbins
AFSOC	MSgt Rafael Gabriel
AETC	Mr. Michael Reed
ANG	MSgt Brandon Bradley
AFGSC	CMSgt Gabriel Flagg
PACAF	CMSgt Dale King
AFMC	CMSgt Andy Carling

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USAFE CMSgt E. Joel Paxton
 AFRC SMSgt Christopher Moore

I am humbled to be in this position as the CFM, and I am always available to provide perspective/direction the career field is going.

Sincerely,

J Sells

- ❖ Follow on Instagram the official account of the USAF Aircraft Armament Career Field Manager at https://www.instagram.com/2w1_aacfm/?hl=ro or @[2W1_AACFM](https://www.instagram.com/2w1_aacfm/?hl=ro)



John Jordan Retirement



“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same.”

Ronald Reagan

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U.S. Air Force SSgt Brian Crews, 75th Aircraft Maintenance Unit load crew chief, reviews a checklist during a quarterly weapons load competition November 7, 2014, at Moody Air Force Base, GA. Crews performed a last-minute check to ensure proper connections between the missile and the A-10C Thunderbolt II. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Dillian Bamman/Released)

A Checklist for Change

By CMSgt Gabriel Flagg

4 April 2020

Ahhhhhhhhh...the weapons loading checklist, both a blessing and a curse. For many Team Chiefs it's a safety blanket and for others it's an albatross. Often times, its reference is a savior for that new Team Chief that can't recall how to wire a GBU-12 on a TER. More often, its complexities result in the dreaded and infamous phrase "Safe it up, Take it down...Do it again." Before the kinder-gentler revolution, it was many Team Chief's weapon of choice when the 2-Man forgot the torque wrench or the 3-Man fell asleep on the jammer while loading Mk-82s (that really happens). The checklists were

typically heavy enough that the crew members knew they didn't want to get one thrown at them but if thrown, there wasn't much of a chance that it would leave a mark...the perfect deterrent to negligence and tomfoolery.

Today, nearly all of the paper checklists have been replaced by digital tablets. Needless to say, because of the cost of replacing a tablet when thrown, the checklist has lost some of the utility of year's past. However, going from an antiquated process like flipping through a pouch full of plastic-wrapped pages and marking steps with grease pencil to a digital one-stop-shop of checklist convenience must be a game changer for the Team Chiefs...right? The reality is that the Team Chief's process hasn't really changed much at all. For most, instead of having a pouch full of paper they have a screen with multiple PDF files open that relate to each munition that is to be loaded. You see, we didn't really go digital approximately 10 years ago when we went to tablets. The paper-reducing initiative was never about mission-related efficiency but rather cost-savings and programmatic efficiency. Ask nearly any Team Chief with experience in both methods of loading and they will likely tell you that they prefer the old way of doing business.

I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that it's human tendency to prefer the old to the new but the fact is that the Team Chiefs still have to navigate through the same technical data to find the steps that apply to their task at hand. What's changed is that now they have to account for things like battery life, cracked screens, and software crashes. Additionally, the digital checklist lacks any bookmarking

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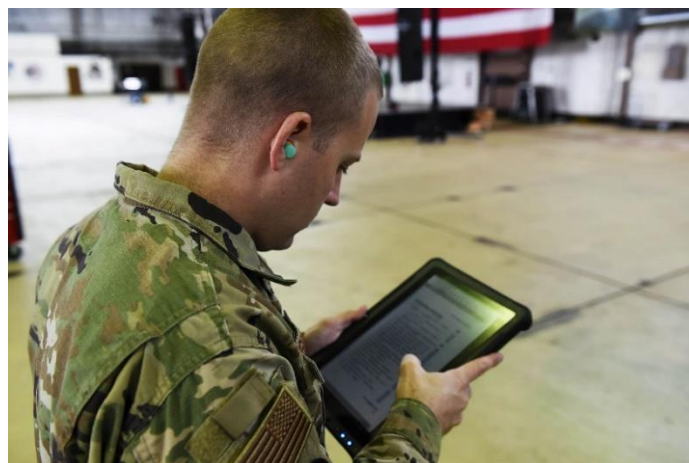


capability. If you didn't know better and you were watching a weapons load today, you'd think that the Team Chief was trying to clean peanut butter from the screen with the amount of swiping that they perform. At least with a paper checklist an experienced Team Chief could get pretty close to the section they needed just by feel. We've all come to recognize there is typically a price to harnessing technology but we should also recognize that the benefits to operational efficiency must out way these costs. For the current weapons loading checklist...they simply don't.

For years myself, and many others in our community, have dreamed about being able to arm our Weapons Team Chiefs with a software capable of streamlining weapons loading technical data. However, for most of us the task seemed (and probably was) insurmountable. How do we get the money? How do we get the T.O. writers to play ball? How do we get the SPOs on board? Hell...how do we get the career field to buy in? Far too many times we've seen a great idea die on the vine because one stakeholder was reluctant to change. However, it is clear that the landscape is changing. Senior leaders are now preaching the need for innovation, adaptability, and a willingness to take risk.

In April of 2019, I was the Wing Weapons Manager at Spangdahlem Air Base and MSgt Gabriel Valenzuela was my Weapons Standardization Superintendent. He approached me one day with an idea to stop utilizing AF Form 350 tags on serviceable equipment. He went on about how they were a waste of time and money, and I largely agreed with him. However, I had been thinking about a

streamlined loading checklist for some time and my response to him was "Val, if you really want to make an impact to our community...get us a smart checklist". Looking back, I probably could have crafted a better response. We spent the next few hours discussing how the checklist should function, what the impact would be, and how we could bring it to fruition.



TSgt Benjamin Angley, 52nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron weapons load crew chief, reviews a weapons load checklist at Spangdahlem Air Base, September 30, 2019. There are over 800 steps for loading munitions onto aircraft and load crew team chiefs have to scroll through the entire list just to pick out the few hundred that apply to their specific weapons loads. (U.S. Air Force photo by SSgt Joshua R. M. Dewberry)

We knew that we needed to convince people that there was benefits in what we were seeking and we quickly found out that outside of the weapons community, leaders didn't understand just how complex our process was. They couldn't grasp that weapons loading checklists are undoubtedly the most complex form of technical data across the aircraft maintenance enterprise. Think about it, even for one

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of our least demanding platforms like an F-16 there are billions of potential ways for a Team Chief to fill out his/her checklist. They could load any combination of the nine stations with, munitions, munitions variants, methods, fuzes, or initiators. Despite the billions of possible ways to complete a weapons load, there are only 25 checklists that “direct” the Team Chief how to accomplish the load. What people outside of our community fail to understand is that our checklist are not directions for completing a load they are a complex matrix of decisions riddled with if/than statements. Because of this disconnect, we knew that we needed to perform a proof of concept to generate quantifiable benefits that could be understood by all.

The proof of concept was simply an Excel spreadsheet that contained only the steps that were applicable to loading a standard Suppression of Enemy Air Defense configuration on the F-16 (3x AIM-120, 1x AIM-9, 2x AGM-88). In a controlled load barn environment we tasked a load crew with loading the munitions the traditional way with full PDF checklist and then with the streamlined Excel checklist. We soon realized that a streamlined checklist would produce results even greater than we expected. In terms of overall load time, the streamlined checklist cut nearly 28 minutes from the overall load time. In fact, the Team Chief’s checklist usage time dropped from 27 minutes to just under 4 minutes. This is the result of externalizing the “Does this step apply?” decision-making that a Team Chief must make repeatedly throughout a weapons load. Armed with this data, we hoped that we could utilize it to get all of the stakeholders on board with the

initiative. After-all that’s how we have always made significant change in the Air Force...right?

My first call was to the Technical Order Management Agency (TOMA). Knowing that our communities have been at odds in the past due to inefficient change processes and quite frankly differing agendas, I wasn’t overly optimistic that we would end the call with a shared objective. Sure enough, the call ended with the gentlemen saying “Well it sounds like you’re going to do it anyways and ask for forgiveness later.” That was my last call to the TOMA office. In fact, thanks to the Air Force’s innovation push, it was my last attempt to build support with stakeholders outside of the Weapons community.

One of the programs that had been birthed from the Air Force’s drive toward innovation is Spark Tank. Spark Tank is the Air Force’s play on the popular show Shark Tank where business entrepreneurs bring their ideas in front of investors in hopes of getting the funding they need to grow the business... I’m sure you are all aware. Same idea for Spark Tank, Airman submit their ideas up from their wings to the MAJCOMs. Eventually, the MAJCOMs choose two ideas to push forward to the HAF where the initiatives are skinned down to the top six. Those individuals then gather on stage at AFA Orlando to pitch their ideas to Air Force senior leaders and celebrity judges in a competition to procure funding for the initiatives. Without getting too far ahead of myself, an idea from Spangdahlem had won the competition in 2019 and we made the decision to submit the Smart Weapons Loading Checklist idea in 2020.

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Meanwhile, the annual Senior Munitions Manager Conference was quickly approaching and we knew that this was our opportunity to gain the buy in that we absolutely must have in order to proceed. I introduced the idea to the Weapons Chiefs at the end of a day over beers and, minus a few comments like “Why do we need checklists at all?”, the Crusty Old Load Toads (COLTs) were overwhelmingly in favor of the idea. From there, it was time for our aim to shift away from building support and towards a feasible solution.

I had recently, attended Chief Leadership Course at Gunter Annex and during that time I toured an organization called MGMWERX (another product of our service’s new found innovative mindset). MGMWERX is an offshoot of DEFENSEWERX that serves Air University by providing innovative approaches to problem solving. Despite their contract to provide service to Air University, they saw merit in what our team was trying to accomplish and we were able to gain approval to move forward with our initiative together. The folks at MGMWERX immediately paired us with an organization called Business Enterprise Systems Product Innovation (BESPIN) who also had an office in downtown Montgomery. This is yet another organization that the Air force has stood up to support Airmen’s innovation efforts (starting to see a trend here?). BESPIN’s leadership team was quick to offer their support as their team had a decent understanding of the Weapons community due to their previous efforts to improve Weapons maintenance management at Nellis AFB.

Immediately we went to work together. We scheduled a software design sprint for December in Montgomery and our teams worked to get as much done as we could leading up to that event. Our team at Spangdahlem began to break down the checklist steps and build a logic tree that would allow a software engineer to understand when each step is and isn’t applicable to the task at hand. After spending countless hours analyzing checklist steps I can tell you that it is a very meticulous and labor intensive task but it is undoubtedly necessary that we codify what is currently tribal knowledge in our community. While this was going on our team across the pond was starting to design the software.

Our software designer at BESPIN, Mr. Ian Brothers, was paired with a software designer at Pivotal Labs, Mr. Coby Almond to assist with or project. Pivotal Labs is well... pivotal to how everything unfolded after that. Since our Weapons subject matter experts were thousands of miles away, the two-person design team paired with the Weapons Troops at the 187th out of Dannelly Field to gain user-centered feedback and a first-hand understanding of the pain that is associated with our checklists. They watched loads, asked questions, and took feedback on their design to ensure that the wants and needs of the loader were understood and being met.

Just prior to the software design sprint, the team learned that we were semi-finalists for the Spark Tank competition and looking at our competition, we felt like we had a great shot at making the finals. This added a level of excitement to the week-long design sprint at MGMWERX.

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After all, making the finals of the Spark Tank competition meant that (A) you were likely to get some level of funding and (B) your initiative would likely have the endorsement of the Spark Tank judges (SECAF, CSAF, and CMSAF).

During the sprint, the team continued to refine the software design while working with local entrepreneurs to refine MSgt Valenzuela's pitch in anticipation of the competition finals. Furthermore, the team felt that it was time to name the software. In industry, it is typical for software to take the name of a mythological character or place. This led our team to name our product "Mercury". The element is known to be fast, agile, and deadly. While the mythological Roman god was known to guide souls to the underworld...kind of fitting.

The most important point of the week proved to be when Coby announced that Pivotal Labs had a pre-existing meeting with General Harrigian, the USAFE-AFAFRICA Commander, later in the month and that their leadership would like to pitch our software solution to him. Our team saw this as potentially another a path toward our overall goal of getting this capability into the hands of our Team Chiefs. Even if we didn't make the Spark Tank finals, General Harrigian had the resources and clout to push the initiative forward.

Shortly after returning to Spangdahlem, and General Harrigian's meeting with Pivotal Labs, it was announced that team Mercury was 1 of 6 teams to make the Spark Tank finals. This announcement was followed by an email from General Harrigian expressing his excitement and asking what he could

do to assist the team. At this time we knew we had a good idea but we needed to better posture ourselves for the Spark Tank competition. In my mind we did that by reducing concerns over feasibility and risk. If General Harrigian was willing to put forward the funds and Pivotal Labs was capable of coding the software with an authority to operate (ATO) on the DoD server in just six weeks, our chances of winning the competition would dramatically increase. Keep in mind this coding sprint would only give us the ability to sort and filter steps to load five munitions on the F-16 but it showed that it was possible and that we had gotten over any security concerns. The General funded the \$342K effort and we instantly lowered any perceived risk from the Spark Tank panel.

Prior to the Spark Tank event at AFA Orlando, MSgt Valenzuela and I attended a pitch workshop at AFWERX Vegas. You might be thinking, "A pitch workshop? Really?" that's what I was thinking anyways. However, this competition is just as much about inspiring Airmen to innovate as it is about choosing the right winner, so the team from AFWERX that runs the competition has interest in putting together a quality production. The workshop was three days of fast paced pitch refinement where we saw ourselves fall behind the other teams as they continued to refine their pitches while we chose to repeatedly start over. Despite our restarts, the workshop went forward and MSgt Valenzuela continued to find himself performing a brand new pitch, in front of everyone, with no slides... to say he was embarrassed and disheartened is an understatement but we knew that we needed to get

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the message right. When everyone else was flaunting dollar saving, we were talking combat readiness. The problem was getting our audience to value the ability to generate an F-16 28 minutes quicker.

Upon arriving back in Germany, we continued to develop the pitch until we knew the audience would understand the pain that our Team Chiefs go through and the value that our solution would bring to combat readiness. MSgt Valenzuela practiced for a few weeks in front of anyone who was willing to listen and I continued to work with Pivotal to refine the software as much as possible leading up to the competition. Before we knew it we were flying to Orlando for the competition.

Despite having to pitch our idea to Air Force Senior Leaders, onstage in front of three thousand people MSgt Valenzuela's performance was beyond stellar and our team walked away as co-champions of the competition. More importantly, he moved us one large step closer to getting the capability into the hands of our Team Chiefs by securing an additional \$1.4 M toward developing Mercury and garnering the support our senior most leaders. Although it gave me great pride to see one our 2W1s perform to that level while under such pressure, it also left me thinking "that's what we do". Whether deployed to a desert or 48 miles from a demilitarized zone our folks are trained to perform on a stage where there are no do overs or phone a friends. That's what we do.

When I look back at this story I find myself saying over and over "we were so lucky that happened". But in reality, it wasn't luck at all. Almost every one of those "lucky" situations

involves a program or organization that was established to foster innovation. The Weapons community has known for years that our Team Chiefs need a streamlined checklist. However we lacked the environment to foster the change. There wasn't a Spark Tank, or an MGMWERX, or BESPIN to drive the initiative forward. We had the impossible task of convincing everyone in our chain of command and any stakeholders that the idea was in **their** best interest. Fortunately, our environment has changed, and we can thank our Air Force senior leaders for providing us the opportunity to surmount the bureaucracy that we've grown accustomed to and advance our 2W1 community.

If you would like to watch the video of MSgt Valenzuela's pitch you can click the link below and skip ahead to the 37:45 mark.

<https://youtu.be/Tzxa-Q6V9iM>



MSgt Valenzuela pitches "Mercury" to the Spark Tank panel.



Barksdale dedicates facility to slain airman, addresses safety after string of off-base murders

By [JENNIFER H. SVAN](#) | STARS AND STRIPES
Published: August 19, 2019

svan.jennifer@stripes.com



Alyssa Kidd comforts Beckham Kidd while the family comes together for the renaming of the Weapons Load Training facility at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., to the Kidd Weapons Load Training facility in honor of the late TSgt Joshua L. Kidd August 16, 2019. Kidd was killed last fall in an attempted break-in of his vehicle outside his home in Bossier, LA. (2nd Bomb Wing Public Affairs)

A building at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., now bears the name of a former Spangdahlem airman who was murdered last year outside his Louisiana home, one of five Barksdale airmen and civilians to be killed in the last 14 months.

Tech Sgt. Joshua Kidd's family, including his wife and young son, unveiled the new name — "TSgt Joshua L. Kidd Weapons Load Training Facility" — at a dedication ceremony last week, the Air Force said in a statement.



Then-SSgt Joshua Kidd secures a GBU-38 Bomb to an F-16 in 2012. A Building at Barksdale Air Force Base, LA now bears his name (Christopher Toon/U.S. Air Force)

Kidd was killed by a gunshot to the chest on the morning of Sept. 25, 2018, after he interrupted two youths who prosecutors say were trying to steal items from his car outside his Bossier City home.

Two Louisiana teenagers have been charged as adults in connection with his death.

"I would wish more than anything that Josh could see this," the Air Force statement quoted his wife, Alyssa Kidd, as saying at the ceremony Friday. "There are no words to describe what it's like to see all of you come out and support Joshua. It's a true testament to how he impacted each and every one of us."

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Final approval for dedicating the building in Kidd's name came from Gen. Timothy Ray, head of Air Force Global Strike Command, the service said.

Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, where, from 2009 to 2012, he was a weapons load crew chief.



The Kidd family, friends and airmen of the 2nd Bomb Wing gather for the renaming of the Weapons Load Training facility at Barksdale Air Force Base, LA to the Kidd Weapons Load Training facility in honor of the late TSgt Joshua L. Kidd August 16, 2019. (Philip Bryant/U.S. Air Force)

Alyssa Kidd and Beckham Kidd receive a replica of the plaque that will go onto the newly named Kidd Weapons Load Training facility from Col Michael Colvard, 2nd Maintenance Group commander at Barksdale Air Force Base, LA, August 16, 2019. Kidd was killed last fall in an attempted break-in of his vehicle outside his home in Bossier, LA (Philip Bryant/U.S. Air Force)

Kidd was one of five members of the Barksdale community to be murdered since June 2018, according to the Air Force.

The spate of murders prompted 2nd Bomb Wing commander Col. Michael A. Miller to issue a statement last month expressing concern about the safety of airmen and civilians assigned to the wing, home to three squadrons of B-52H Stratofortress bombers.

Kidd was recognized during the ceremony for his "unwavering leadership and influential legacy," the Air Force said.

"I've been stationed at eight installations in my 25-year Air Force career and I have never experienced as many murders involving" airmen and their families, Miller wrote in the statement, published by local news outlet BossierNow.

A GoFundMe campaign created last year, which raised nearly \$44,000 for Alyssa Kidd and the couple's young son, Beckham, said Kidd went out of his way to assist deployed airmen and their families and often mentored younger airmen.

Besides Kidd, Tech. Sgt. Kelly Jose, a reservist and civilian employee for the 307th Logistics Readiness Squadron, and his wife, Heather Jose, were killed in November after giving a man a ride while shopping at Mall St. Vincent, in neighboring Shreveport.

Kidd enlisted in the Air Force in March 2008. Before his assignment to Barksdale, he was assigned to Osan Air Base, South Korea, and

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Their bodies were found in a parked car, burned beyond recognition. A suspect was arrested after a six-hour standoff with law enforcement, according to the Shreveport Times.

In June, postal worker Antonio Williams, the spouse of a civilian employee at Barksdale, was gunned down while delivering mail in Shreveport.

Also in June, Tech. Sgt. Perry Bailey, the noncommissioned officer in charge of education and training for the 2nd Medical Group, was slain in an apparent murder-suicide in a Shreveport residence, according to [the Shreveport Times](#).

“I am deeply concerned for the safety of the military members and their families assigned to Barksdale Air Force Base,” Miller said in the statement. “Not only am I concerned about their personal well-being, but also our ability to recruit and retain the necessary talent to complete our mission to defend our nation.”

Local news radio station [KEEL reported](#) Miller sent an email to Shreveport provisional police chief Ben Raymond, saying that the “overwhelming consensus” of most airmen assigned to Barksdale was that Shreveport and Bossier City “are not safe places to live.”

“The song is ended, but the melody lingers on. “

Irving Berlin



Aircraft Armament Chiefs Association Recognition Program

Jeff Hulme

2019 Lt Gen Leo Marquez -Munitions Category- Award Winners

Supervisor Manager: SMSgt Jennifer Rudeseal, 355 AMXS, Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ (ACC)



Technician Supervisor: TSgt Justin Hall, 509 MXG, Whiteman AFB, MO (AFGSC)

Technician: A1C Nicholas Kotecki, 3 MUNS, JB Elmendorf-Richardson, AK (PACAF)

2W1's SWEPT all 3 categories...Get Some!

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Air Combat Command

Load Crew of the Year – Crew 50, SSgt Brodish, A1C Dowell, A1C Moreno-Garcia, 388 AMXS, Hill AFB, UT.

ACC Annual Armament Technician/Supervisor/Manager of the Year:

Technician - SrA Cole M. Smith, 355th AMXS, Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ

Supervisor - TSgt Daniel L. Kok, 355th AMXS, Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ

Manager - MSgt Gabriel Herrera, 432 MXG, Creech AFB, NV



Air Education and Training Command

AETC 363 TRS AACA Armament Top Graduate Award



A1C David M. Walker, 363 Training Squadron - Sheppard AFB TX



SrA Georgia Parker, 363 Training Squadron - Sheppard AFB TX



Sgt Jimmy Amaro, 363 Training Squadron - Sheppard AFB TX

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SSgt Drew Renken, 363 Training Squadron - Sheppard AFB TX

AETC Annual Armament
Technician/Supervisor/Manager of the Year:

Technician: SrA Arzate, Holloman AFB, NM

Supervisor: SSgt Davis, Holloman AFB, NM

Manager: MSgt Nealeigh, Luke AFB, AZ



United States Air Forces in Europe

Load Crew of the Year: Crew G-06, SSgt Kyle Fitzpatrick, A1C Deonta Canady, A1C Jacob Nowakowski - 31 AMXS, Aviano AB

USAFE Annual Armament Technician/Supervisor/Manager of the Year:



Technician: SrA Alexis K. Barr, 748 AMXS - RAF Lakenheath



Supervisor: SSgt Tiffany A. Leese, 86 MMS - Ramstein AB

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Manager: SMSgt Joshua D. Smith, 52 AMXS, Spangdahlem AB



AFMC Outstanding Weapons Professional of the Year Award Winners

HQ AFMC/A4M announced the winners of the 2019 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 supporting 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 Dustin G. Jones, F-22 Weapons Load Crew Member, 412 AMXS, Edwards AFB, CA. SrA Jones synchronized engineering support and led an armament configuration effort on the F-22 aircraft. He ensured a successful fit check for a new munition

and advanced lethality of the \$7.6M weapons upgrade program. He repaired an F-22 pylon fuel leak by identifying and replacing defective fuel probes. This allowed continued testing of the KC-46 aircraft refueling capabilities and led to in-flight refueling certification for the F-22 fleet. SrA Jones facilitated a hung store training event by instructing 12 end-of-runway operations personnel on emergency response procedures ensuring safe operations and aircraft recovery. Additionally, he troubleshooted a COLT armament test set anomaly and diagnosed & repaired a defective cable returning the sole \$333K asset to service.

NCO Category: SSgt Michael P. Velasco, Weapons Lead Crew Chief, 96 MXG, Eglin AFB, FL. SSgt Velasco teamed with US Navy ordinance technicians and trained six personnel on AGM-88 missile safing and download procedures which contributed to his earning the 96 MXG Maintenance Professional of the Quarter award. He was handpicked for a live-fire missile test at Holloman AFB, NM where he loaded three AIM-9X missiles and achieved a 100% fire rate while validating a \$1.5M Block II upgrade program. As weapons lead for Exercise NORTHERN EDGE, SSgt Velasco was recognized as a Superior Performer while leading five personnel in supporting 135 sorties for a \$5.5B test program. Finally, he was the first 96 Test Wing weapons load crew chief certified on the new Grey Wolf missile. He authored the F-16 weapons load crew training plan and worked closely with the design engineers as they completed developmental testing of this advanced capability missile.

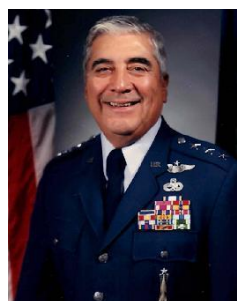
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SNCO Category: SMSgt Kalandus K. Morgan, Weapons Standardization Superintendent, 96 MXG, Eglin AFB, FL. SMSgt Morgan coordinated with Northrop Grumman and Seek Eagle engineers to execute fit checks on the advanced \$110M Grey Wolf cruise missile program. He responded to an Urgent Operational Need request for a new bomb variant by directing weapons load training for the BLU-111 penetrator. This \$826K effort provided needed capability to the warfighters while increasing safety of the legacy munition. SMSgt Morgan expertly filled a 2W0 CMSgt position during a gap in leadership, managed a \$300M munitions project, secured DoD approval for ten munitions sites and increased explosive storage capacity by 4M lbs. Also, he advised a Foreign Military Sales customer on a \$2B weapons program and developed a secure storage agreement for stand-off missiles eliminating a five-year stalemate.

Civilian Category: Mr. Jason P. Fowler, Armament Systems Technician, 96 AMXS, Eglin AFB, FL. Mr. Fowler executed F-16 20mm gun boresights and trained 16 personnel on this infrequent but critical procedure. His corporate knowledge was vital in restoring gun boresight maintenance capability that had not been used on Eglin in over nine years. He overhauled the flight's Data Integrity Team program by analyzing over 2,000 maintenance data entries with less than 1% error well below the 96 MXG 3% standard. Mr. Fowler flawlessly trained ten personnel on the Multi Bus Fault Isolation tester, resolved four pilot reported discrepancies and returned three line replaceable units to service saving \$12K and avoiding three MICAP backorders. Finally, as a premier

maintainer he aced five personal evaluations and quality verification inspections with zero discrepancies contributing towards the unit's Outstanding MSEP rating.



2018 Lieutenant General Leo Marquez Award Winner



SrA Haley R. Wolochowicz was selected as the winner of the 2018 Lt Gen Leo Marquez Award in the munitions and missiles category. She is assigned as a

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weapons lead crew member in the 52 MXO/MXWL at Spangdahlem AB, Germany. Recognized as one of USAFE's top loaders, SrA Wolochowicz generated six F-16 aircraft for a command-wide exercise producing 12 of 12 weapons ready aircraft in less than 12 hours. She evaluated 2.5K proficiency loads, 1.5 qualification loads and certified 14 load crews for NATO Exercise Trident Juncture. Her efforts contributed towards her selection as Airman of the Quarter for 3rd quarter 2018. SrA Wolochowicz was key to the 52nd FW AGM-158 Joint Air to Surface Standoff Missile integration. She trained and certified 18 load crews in 30 days bolstering the wing's standoff capabilities. SrA Wolochowicz co-led a European region-wide training event and trained 45 NATO targeteers on 24 munitions enhancing combat interoperability. She authored three AFTO 22 technical order changes, coordinated approval and drove Air Force-wide improved GBU-39 and AGM-158 inspection processes. Her technical expertise and job knowledge were instrumental in her selection as Armament Systems Technician of the Quarter for 3rd quarter of 2018. SrA Wolochowicz is well deserving of this Air Force level award and is a valuable asset to 52nd Fighter Wing.



SrA Daniel P. Libassi was selected as the winner of the HQ AETC Outstanding Armament Professional of the Year Award for 2018 in the technician category. He is assigned as a weapons load crew member in the 49th AMXS at Holloman AFB, NM. SrA Libassi helped establish the first Block 5 MQ-9 deployment by participating in a ten member team tasked with preparing four aircraft packages in ten days used to liberate 200K civilians in Raqqa, Syria. While deployed for 151 days he helped generate 1.2K munitions operations and 307 air tasking orders spanning over 5K hours of reconnaissance missions. This resulted in 12 enemies killed in action and being recognized with the 435 AEW Team Award for November 2018. SrA Libassi also earned a 435 AEW Safety Award by developing an airfield sweep plan to tackle a FOD epidemic. Upon execution, his plan netted removal of 55 lbs of debris and cut aircraft damage by 66%. As a stellar technician he crushed 478 maintenance actions and nailed a 100% pass rate for quality assurance and weapons standardization evaluations. His efforts contributed towards 327 GBU releases, 2K sorties and 682 pilot and sensor operator grads. SrA Libassi is well deserving of this MAJCOM level award and a valuable asset to 49 AMXS.



**AETC Outstanding
Armament
Professional of the
Year Award Winner**

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**AFRC
Outstanding
Weapons Load
Crew of the
Year Award
Winners**



SrA Kyle D. Candelaria, SSgt Thomas W. Kisiday and A1C Patrick K. Beter were selected as winners of the HQ AFRC Outstanding Load Crew of the Year Award for 2018. The load crew is assigned to the 482 AMXS at Homestead ARB, FL supporting the F-16 aircraft. SrA Candelaria and crew supported Exercise RED FLAG 18-2 by loading 81 munitions enabling squadron pilots to fly 99 sorties with a 100% release rate while reinforcing their combat-mission readiness skills. The crew readied aircraft for a POTUS tasking by installing 24 missile launchers, loading 18 missiles

and 3K rounds of 20mm ammunition. This high visibility tasking allowed 482 FW pilots to fly 37.9 hours of Combat Air Patrol missions with zero deviations. Their weapons loading and maintenance skills coupled with superb attention to detail lead to an “Exceptional” rating during COMBAT HAMMER and their recognition as Superior Performers. SrA Candelaria, SSgt Kisiday and A1C Beter identified widespread LAU-131 rocket launcher serial number errors, vetted 459 assets and corrected 60 faults enabling accurate tracking of 444 rockets valued at \$1.2M in the Combat Ammunition System. Additionally, they surpassed 16 load crews by executing 127 MRPL training loads and flightline evals with a 97% pass rating earning Load Crew of the Quarter honors for Apr-Jun 2018. Finally, as expert troubleshooters SrA Candelaria and crew were called upon to isolate, repair and train four other technicians on complex coaxial video cable repairs on the F-16 weapons system restoring 25 aircraft to fully mission capable condition. SrA Candelaria, SSgt Kisiday and A1C Beter are well deserving of this MAJCOM-level award and a valuable asset to the 482 FW.



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462 History Chapter 6 Further developments in the intra War Years

Steve Lebron

The development of all metal mono planes with enclosed cockpits and retractable landing gear brought the Army Air Corps into the modern era. But the hardware is not what makes a fighting unit. The capabilities of personnel have to be up to task.

Another interesting video may be watched at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hxr3U_jleE at 2:30 it shows some gun handling techniques used by Armorers. At 32:00 you'll see some bombing exercises.

As we saw in Chp 1 and 3, the armorer's job quickly became its own distinct specialization. It was sometime during this period that they received their Military Occupation Specialty (MOS) designation of 911. The MOS is, of course, the same thing as the Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) we are familiar with today. I don't know about you, but it seems prophetic to me that 911 was chosen as our MOS, for we do bring the danger and pain. Below is the career field description as listed in TM 12-427 MOS Classifications dated 1944.

AIRPLANE ARMORER (911)

Performs first and second echelon maintenance on all armament within the unit and loads bombs and ammunition in aircraft.

Periodically examines aerial machine guns and other aircraft armament and equipment such as aerial cannon, bomb racks, bomb release mechanisms, gun mounts, gun turrets, and pyrotechnics for cleanliness and proper functioning.

Installs armament and equipment and checks their completeness prior to missions. Removes and replaces aircraft armament to be serviced or repaired.

Removes and replaces bomb sights. Inspects, disassembles, cleans, repairs, assembles, and makes parts replacements to such weapons as .50-caliber machine guns, 30 caliber machine guns, 37—mm cannon, rifles, carbines, and pistols.

Uses combination tool, wrenches, screw drivers, micrometers, depth gauges, and other hand or bench tools in making these repairs. Loads bombs on bomb racks of aircraft prior to missions.

Must be familiar with armament inspection and maintenance procedures, and with safety regulations in handling transporting and loading bombs and other ammunition. Must be familiar





with safety regulations pertaining to chemical warfare.¹

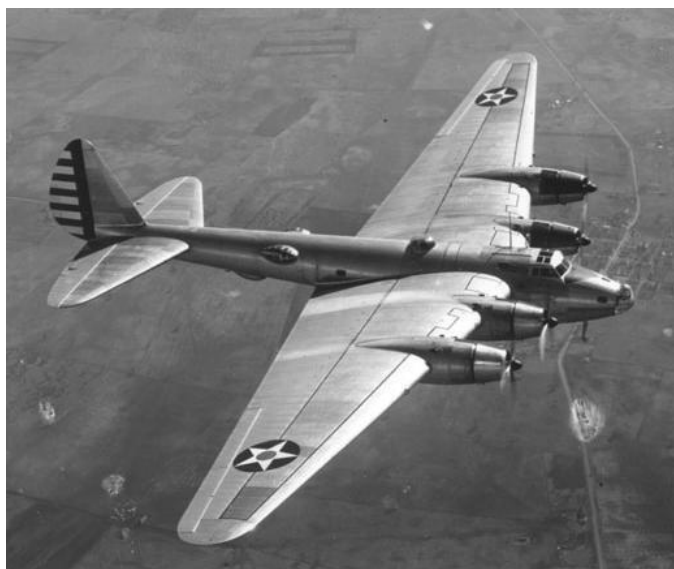
Directly related to the 911 was the Airplane Armorer-Gunner (MOS 612). They performed many of the same responsibilities but also manned the machine guns in flight. These were considered technical jobs not suitable to the general aircraft mechanic (the official title of the general aircraft mechanic being Booger Hooker). In fact, trade-test centers for screening all recruits by test and interview were established at major Air Corps stations due to the necessity imposed by the technical nature of our business. Once selected for armament the trainee could expect fifteen weeks of instruction at Lowery Field on both fighter and bomber armament.²

Watch the video on how to choose an Army Air Corps job. Pay close attention to the skills that make an "expert armorer." At 26 minutes into the video the Armorer's job is covered. Not only can we see how our training was conducted there may be some training lessons for our current force. I for one think there is value in live fire training. I think it's also worth noting that the Armorer's story was used as the last story, the anchor story. I think we'd all agree that the whole point of an air force is to deliver the ordinance to its terminal location (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwQPwqqeht8>). By the way, the ordinance men were MOS 901, Munitions Workers, our Ammo brethren. Then as today, we had to work together.

In July of 1935 Capt. Charles B. De Shields, armament officer of the 59th Service Squadron at Langley Field, moved bombs and ammunition to Richmond for a mobility test with the 96th Bombardment Squadron. "His stock for the exercise consisted of nine 2,000-pound bombs, eighteen 1,100-pounders, and twenty-seven 600-pounders, plus seven 140-pound boxes of machinegun ammunition. He and his section (4 noncommissioned officers and 20 privates) hauled the sand-filled bombs to Richard E. Byrd Flying Field (Richmond International Airport today) by truck, set up a bomb dump, and moved the bombs to the flight line as needed by the 96th Squadron. The squadron loaded 9 planes for 14 missions from Byrd Field. Since it was testing mobility-not practicing bombing-the bombs were removed from the planes before takeoff. De Shields and his men took them back to the dump to use another day. Thus the 59th's armament section handled each bomb a number of times (Sound familiar? How many times did you put bombs up only to take them down later!) and at the end hauled them back to Langley Field. The 96th used slings and hoists to lift bombs onto aircraft. But De Shields possessed no special tools, equipment, or mechanical devices of any kind. He relied on manpower to lift bombs into and out of duce and a half trucks to move them from place to place. To raise a bomb from the ground to the truck bed, his men leaned two channel irons (9

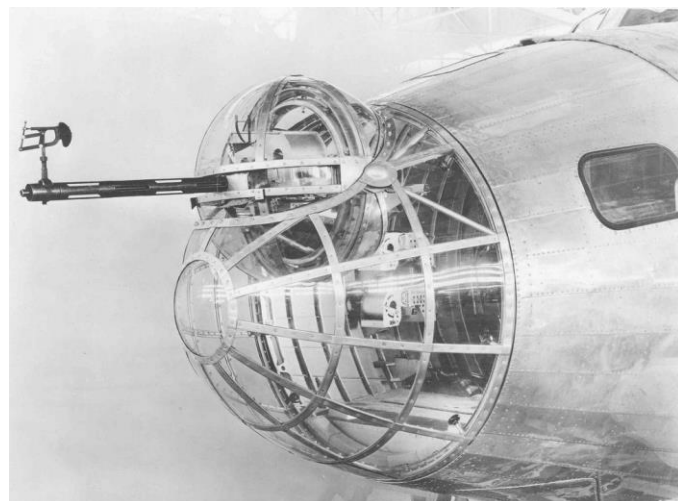


feet long and 6 inches wide) against the end of the truck and slid the bomb up. Some men pulled on a manila rope from the truck bed, others pushed from the ground. The trucks had no bracing or other means to keep the bombs from the rolling and shifting that often damaged fins. To unload the truck, the men used the rope to let the bombs slide down the channel iron." They moved the



bomb into position on the flight line or in the dump by fastening a rope to it and dragging it along the ground. After the exercise, De Shields asked for trailers to carry bombs, and a truck with a boom and hoist leading to better equipment³. This can be seen as the beginning of our munitions trailers.

As noted in our previous chapter bombing was seen as the key to future combat operations. The introduction of the martin B-10 seemed to validate that future. However, fighters quickly caught up to the B-10s performance and a new



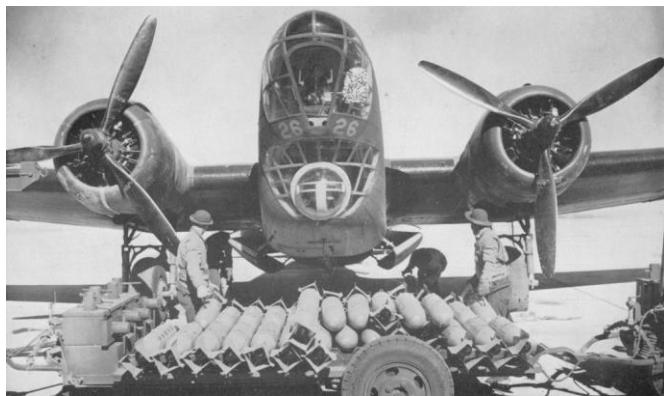
generation of more capable bombers was needed. The answer seemed to be in a generational leap forward. In 1937 Boeing flew the XB-15 (seen above). It was the biggest airplane designed and flown in the United States up to that time. It could carry a 2,000 lb bomb load 5,000 miles at almost 200 mph and in one test carried 31,205 lbs of bombs to 8,200 ft. Note the 50 cal nose mounted MG.

The technology for this size aircraft was not yet ready, it was underpowered. Additionally, it was expensive. Since the USA was in the middle of the great depression the aircraft was perhaps doomed from the start. Boeing soon moved onto a scaled down version, the YB-17. While this prototype held much promise and was highly desired by the Army Air Corps congress would not provide the appropriations for large numbers of them. Instead congress mandated the purchase of a different bomber, the B-18 seen below.

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The B-18 was a Douglas Aircraft Company design based on the successful DC-2 platform. Congress saw this as a cheap alternative to the costly B-17. 350 of these in different variants were ordered making it the most plentiful bomber at the outbreak of WWII. It carried three 30 cal MGs and up to 4,200 lbs of bombs at 216 mph. However, almost immediately upon receipt it was clear it was obsolete. But no matter, Armorers were stuck loading weapons into its bulbous bomb bay. They were also loading attack aircraft which we'll cover next time.



¹ <https://archive.org/details/TM12-427> pg 114

² <https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/AAF/VI/AAF-VI-19.html>

³ <https://media.defense.gov/2016/Mar/17/2001481634/-1/-1/0/PAGES%20FROM%20AVIATION%20IN%20THE%20US%20ARMY%201919-1939.PDF>

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Pictures From The Field



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Evan Godwin

Additionally, I received the new order of AACA Coins and, as promised, they turned out awesome (the pics don't do them justice). They are available for sale at \$10 per coin plus shipping.



As a reminder, to purchase store merchandise, send me an email to the aacageneralstore@gmail.com address and let me know what you'd like. I'll mail the items to the address you provide and you, in turn, send a check to me at the address I provide for the merchandise cost, plus shipping. All store items can be viewed on our website: www.armamentchiefs.org .

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Evan



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Caption Contest



Please send your caption for this awesome photo I received to: AACAnewsletter@gmail.com. Winner(s) will be announced in the next newsletter. Please also let me know if you were the photographer so I can give you credit for your work.

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