



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

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AACAnewsletter@gmail.com

ISSUE #8A

Editor's Comments

Correction - Issue #8A of OUR Official Newsletter! Thanks to everyone that sent in articles, links, etc. (*even though it took a little prodding from Mike!*).

In this newsletter we say good by to our outgoing AACA President, Bob Sherrill; welcome our new AACA President, Mike Lucchesi; hear from our career field manager, Jason Davis; get a history lesson from Steve Lebron; learn about new support equipment from Jeff Hamburg; see new offerings from the AACA store from Evan Godwin; and wrap up with Mike Lucchesi explain his vision as the AACA moves forward.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter! As always, I appreciate inputs anytime. I would like to hear your comments on what you would like to see in the newsletter. Have we hit the nail on the head, or do you have recommendations. As I always say, this is YOUR newsletter. I just assemble what I receive from the members.

Thanks!!

Keith Hilton

You're in Great Hands!

It was an absolute privilege serving as your President the past two years. Our AACA is an outstanding organization focused on supporting 2W1/462s of the present and the past. If you haven't done so already, check out our website <http://armamentchiefs.org> and take a look at the "Awards/Recognition" and "In Memoriam tabs." Both of these sections are tributes to those Armament Professionals that have made, or will keep, us the best Air Force in the world. Not to leave out YOU, the professionals who have lead it all; I salute all that you have done and continue to do in the interest of our national security.

Just this past year, the AACA has donated \$940 to the Kebil Scholarship Fund, recognized several Armament Professionals of the Year, Load Crews of the Year, and Armament Systems School's Top Graduates. Unfortunately, we also appropriately said thank you and farewell to a couple of our fallen comrades and family members.

I'd like to thank my staff of the past couple years in all that you have done for the betterment of the AACA. Joe Gassler, Secretary (replacing Jeff Hulme) and I were voted in together for the two-year term, thank you Joe for your outstanding commitment to our efforts. Mid-term elections brought in Darrell Brewer (VP) and Joel Paxton (Treasurer), replacing Pete Romeo (VP) and Mike Cannon (Treasurer) and their huge contributions.

Despite that mid-term transition, we didn't skip one checklist item, just as the best load teams do. I also don't want to leave out the following individuals... In some way or another like, Director-at Large, AACA Store, Newsletter, Recognition, Recruitment, and Constitution Committees, they were all instrumental in the progress of the AACA. Thank you, Evan Godwin, Pete Romeo, Ernie Valencia, Dick Vancil, Mike Cannon, Jeff Hulme, Joe Gassler, Evan Godwin, Darrell Brewer, Joel Paxton, Steve Laser, Jeff Hamburg, John Spronk, Keith Hilton, Eric McGowen, and Dave Kerr. Not to forget, our CFM, CMSgt Jason Davis, Jason has been nothing less than supportive to our goals. I hope I didn't leave anybody out.

As I expressed, it's been a true privilege and I look forward to lifting our organization to greater heights under Mike Lucchesi's leadership. I will continue my support as your Webmaster and anything else that's needed. Thanks for all YOU do!
Proud to be a weapons loader!

Bob Sherrill

Without Weapons.....Just Another Airline



President's Message

I am honored to serve as the new president of the aircraft armament chiefs association (AACCA) and excited by the challenge to support our mission and continue to lead our vision.

The AACCA was conceptually conceived five years ago this year as an official association. I am looking forward to this New Year in which we will continue to build our presence, advocate expansion, and launch a few additional ideas within the board of directors to consider as part of our efforts in supporting the aircraft armament community. One of these ideas is to set a path through the development of a strategic plan, along with an annual plan to achieve these strategic goals. This strategic plan will be developed with AACCA's mission and vision in mind. As with the past two years of improvements, ACCA members should begin seeing improvements in our website, our values being reinforced, career mentoring, and possibly a career advisor network for those in transition.

As noted during the last general meeting, there was a proposal to have our next reunion at Langley AFB, VA during the senior munitions manager's conference in July 2016. Based on a survey 67% agree based on the total survey responses to go Langley, so Hampton Roads it is for the 2016 AACCA Reunion. The AACCA "2016 Hampton Roads Reunion" initial planning details will be out during the next general membership meeting in March 2016.

I highly recommend you carry your AACCA coin at all AACCA events, this is a fair reminder and last warning. For those who do not own a coin, please get in touch with (Ret) Chief Evan Godwin, AACCA Store Manager, to purchase a coin.

Finally, I believe we have the vision of what we are capable of doing within our virtual structure and my goal as the president is to keep us loyal to that vision and the constitution to which we agreed to all

uphold. Thank you for your part and I can't wait to see what we will achieve together in the next two years. Hope to see everyone at the ACCA 2016 Hampton Roads Reunion.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Lucchesi



From Your 2W1 Career Field Manager

Hello and Happy New Year from our nation's capital! 2015 has come and gone. It was quite a year for the Aircraft Armament System Specialists. Loaders stationed and deployed around the world were busier than ever with only an 87% manning level. Some of the highlights were deployments with record B-1 expenditure rates, electronic tablets for loading, and the continued bed-down of the F-35.

During the calendar year 2015, loaders and armament Airmen from the 7th/28th Bomb Wings combined to produce staggering results in support of Operations INHERENT RESOLVE and FREEDOMS SENTINAL. AFCENT tasked aircraft tallied over 19,000 air-to-ground expenditures during 2015. The B-1 armament community was responsible for 37% or 7,150 of those expenditures with far less iron to work with and accumulated a 99.9 weapons release rate. The most recent Bone team from the 28th Bomb wing racked up more than 5,000 of those expenditures in just 6 months. They single-handedly exceeded the previous 6 years of B-1 expenditures in one AEF rotation without a single

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ground/munition mishap! It's safe to say that the B-1 armament community is on top of their game.

Also in 2015 we introduced electronic loading checklists to our legacy airframes. The days of using the checklist as a motivational tool, throwing it at your 2/3/4 man, are coming to a close. All of the legacy airframes have been tasked to produce a checklist that can be used in an electronic format using an e-tablet; no more grease pencils, checklist sleeves, or erasers required! I know it is hard to swallow but the new generation is here and they love the tablets. The tablets will also be used for maintenance tasks, CAS AIT for tracking munition expenditures, e-mail, distance learning, etc... By the way, if you hit your 2/3/4 man with one they would probably end up in the hospital and a tablet would cost you about \$2,500!

Throughout the year we continued to grow the F-35 units which are now located at Edwards, Eglin, Nellis, Luke, and most recently Hill, the first bed-down for a combat coded unit. Our loaders are currently being trained and certified to load the AIM-9X, AIM-120, GBU-12, and GBU-31 munitions with more to come in the future. One of the things that is different for the F-35 is we will have no Armament shop as there are currently no back-shop tasks required. Trust me when I say we are keeping a close watch on this concept to ensure it's in the best interest of the AF and the career field.

As we enter 2016, the challenges will continue. As a result of the AF manpower reduction a few years ago it is now time to go into recovery mode. 2W1 accessions will double over the next several years and training those new Airmen will be even more of a focus for the career field. Also in 2016 we will bring back the annual Senior Munitions Manager Conference. This will take place at Langley AFB, 18-22 July; so if you're in the area there should be some good stories being told at a local watering hole.

I will close this by saying thanks to all of the Armament Chiefs out there past and present. Our career field continues to lead the maintenance community in all aspects. This is a direct reflection of what you all have done over the years in developing, training, and taking

care of Aircraft Armament personnel. This was evident in a recent world-wide meeting I attended with the crew chief/avionics career fields. Many of those in attendance used our career field as an example of how to properly develop Airman to be leaders in the maintenance community. It was awesome to hear that from other career fields. It made me proud to be a loader and I hope it makes you all just as proud.

Jason Davis



462 History (OK, I'm biased)

Steve Lebron

Years ago Mike Lucchesi talked with me and a few other chiefs about writing a book about our Aircraft Armament Systems history. I don't know about the other guys but I've slacked on this. Recently I was asked to put together an article for our newsletter on our history. I figure this is a chance to redeem myself. I envision this as a series of articles which perhaps someday may help form the structure for a segment of our book. With that in mind I welcome all feedback and criticisms.

Additionally, I'd ask that you send me copies of any primary resource material you may have as well as your personal stories or stories you've heard. A few things I'd like to note. In areas where I've not been able to find hard evidence I've filled in the blanks with reasonable guesses. I've tried to identify those passages. In other areas I've used information I've accumulated over the years. Since this isn't an academic paper I've not cited all sources. I have cited things I've copied and pasted or things I did not feel were common knowledge.



One last thing, any opinions that come out in these articles are mine and mine alone. If you disagree with any conclusions please share your thoughts with me. Subsequent issues will come out as I can get to them. I'm a high school history teacher now. Not all of us can retire to a life of luxury, besides, someone has to keep the economy going. I figure this will take a few more years to get done. I hope you enjoy the words...

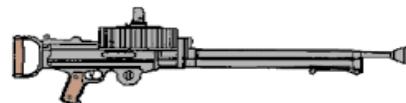
Let's face it, we're sexy. Why else would we always get the glory shots in magazines and videos? Ok, it's true. Pilots share some of the stage but we all know who the last people to lay hands on the weapons really are... And as a wise man once said: "Without weapons, it's just an airline!" The truth is, however, we weren't always the last to touch the weapons. If we want to look at the history of the Armorers (spelled correctly, you'll see) we need to go back to WWI.

Aircraft, at the beginning of the Great War, were viewed by the top brass as a fad or novelty item. They believed they'd serve no serious purpose in the nascent conflict which they thought would end within months. So much for the infallibility of the top brass! As the war went on it didn't take long to realize that the airplanes inherent operational field gave it obvious advantages in reconnaissance, a role previously the domain of cavalry. Generals quickly came to appreciate that preventing enemy aerial observation of their forces was crucial to effective ground operations. There were several obvious solutions. One could try to hide from the observers. This proved impractical in the static environment of WWI. One could counter the observers defensively. Anti-aircraft fire was thus developed. The following link has a video of the French test firing an anti-aircraft machinegun, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4SpHST26K8>). And, of course, another alternative was to use airplanes to shoot down observation airplanes. And that's where we come in...

The weaponization of aircraft was more an evolution than a decision. We've all heard about pilots

taking up pistols, rifles and even shotguns to chase away or kill the enemy in the air. However, mounting machine guns seems to me to be the definitive step in making combat aircraft.

The birth of our career field is also here. In a 1920 book Daniel P. Morse, Jr, commander of the 50th Aero Squadron during WWI, referred to the "Armourers" as "machinegun experts." He even refers to an "Armament Department."¹ This is distinct from the other enlisted men he noted as part of the squadron; mechanics, wireless men and chauffeurs. At this point I'll make an assumption since I was unable to find supporting primary sources. Armourers would have worked on machineguns and the supporting hardware. What is factual, for allied forces, is that the first installed machine guns were Lewis Guns taken from the trenches.



The proof of concept had actually taken place two years before the war began at the Army Aviation School in College Park, Maryland. The Lewis Gun has the distinction of being the first machine-gun fired from an airplane; on June 7, 1912 Captain Charles Chandler of the US Army fired a prototype Lewis Gun from a Wright Model B Flyer.² One of the downfalls of this gun was its small drum capacity (97 rounds) which rendered in flight reloading complex, see photo below! (By the way, if you are like me and want to see it in operation here's a link to the Lewis Gun being fired <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ene6LievhIE>).

Eventually these guns were superseded by the Vickers-Maxim which had better reliability and was belt fed versus drum fed giving it a greater ammunition capacity. For the Armorer it wasn't a matter of merely mounting and loading the guns. There was maintenance a modern weapons troop would recognize. Obviously



guns had to be cleaned and repaired. Less obvious was the work on the supporting hardware.

The first problems encountered in mounting machine guns was how not to shoot off your own propeller while shooting

forward. Several solutions were found. Mounting machine guns so that a gunner could fire from the side was an initial solution. However, the added weight of a second crew member and the inherent difficulty in hitting a moving target from the side while sitting in a moving vehicle made this an inadequate solution.

Another solution was to mount the gun in top of the bi-wing so that bullets would travel over the arc of the propeller as seen in the photo. This solution made for poor aim, note the gun sight in the photo.



Yet another solution was to place the engine behind the pilot so the airplane was pushed rather than pulled forward by the propeller. This gave clear forward fields of fire solving the aiming problem. However, pilots complained that in crashes (which were common) the engines had a tendency to shift forward and crush the pilot. Geeze, these guys are never satisfied, ok, we'll call that "code 3."

Yet another solution, one that would require the armorer to perform additional maintenance was the adoption of a steel deflector plate. This risky fix required fitting angled metal guards on the propeller in line with the path of the bullets: The guard is a "V" shaped piece

of steel with mounting brackets welded on the two ends at the top of the "V", these are attached to the propeller. When viewed from the front or side you can see a "U" shaped bullet "gutter" intended to direct the deflected path of the bullet striking it away from the propeller.



This did not always work well due to vibrations causing the gun to shake, sending a ricocheting bullet back into the pilot, a potential "code 2." Another problem was the impact of the bullet striking the plate could create fractures in the propeller causing it to fail, back to "code 3."³

The ultimate WWI solution came with the development of synchronization gearing. It is unclear who invented this technique. There is evidence pointing towards the French and the Germans. Regardless, both sides began using it around the same time.

There were two distinct types of gun control, both in use at the time of the signing of the armistice, the hydraulic and the mechanical. The operation of both these types is somewhat similar. In each case a cam mounted on the engine shaft actuates a plunger when the device is in operation, which in turn operates the rest of the mechanism. In the mechanical gun control the impulse of the cam is transmitted through a series of rods



to the gun, causing the gun to fire at the proper moment through the arc of the propeller without hitting it. In the hydraulic gear the impulse of the cam is transmitted

to the gun through a system of copper tubes containing oil under high pressure.⁴



Armorers would have been responsible for both systems. The modern weapons troop would recognize these as timing issues. With this innovation guns could be mounted on the centerline of the fuselage making the airplane a point and shoot proposition. This marks the birth of the fighter we know today. Speaking of guns, ammunition for them was also developed. The WWI fighter was equipped with guns firing tracer, armor piercing and incendiary rounds. Bombers would have carried similar machineguns and ammo but primarily for defensive purposes. We'll talk more about the development of bombers and how it impacted Armorers next time.

Steve Lebron

¹<http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044088018387;view=1up;seq=12>

²http://www.wwiaviation.com/allies_guns.html

³<http://www.wwiaviation.com/development.html>

⁴<http://www.theaerodrome.com/forum/showthread.php?t=31798&garp=6>



"War is much too serious a matter to be entrusted to the military."

— *Georges Clemenceau*

New Armament Equipment: 25 MM Bulk Loader

By: Jeff Hamburg

As it is well known that the Air Force version F-35 JSF has a 25MM gun system installed. It is mounted at the left wing root and holds a total of 181 rounds!! A company out of Italy was awarded the contract to come up with a Bulk Ammo Loader. After close to 2 years, they threw in the towel and through Lockheed then Northrop Grumman a contract was awarded to Hydraulics International.

Having done some consulting for them since retiring, I was looking forward to having some input as to what the new loader would offer. Couple things that always bugged me with the 20mm loaders was; if anything happened in the drum/container or chute we lost 4 ammo loads on the F-16 and F-15E and 2 for the C models. Also, sure as heck when you needed to download, everything was full.

Anyhow, the 25MM Bulk Loader has 4 separate containers; so you could have a TP, HEI, API and an empty one delivered or all the same depending on OPS requirements. The Chute is moved from one container to the next and if a chute is damaged, any chute off any other Bulk Loader will work.



A couple of challenges the Weapons loaders will face. The gun access point is over 7 feet off the ground, thus the chute is around 8 feet long. The system is designed to be hooked up and disconnected when the chute is empty - however, if/when a jam occurs, the chute/AIU is going to be heavy!! There is a "maintenance platform" where the chute is stored when not in use and is designed to be stood on while hooking up to the aircraft and during loading. There is a safety rail for the loaders to hang on to if needed.

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One real neat thing on the AIU and Gun Interface; NO TIMING!!! When you open the access cover on the gun system, you lift a lever, when you hook up the AIU and pull the lever down, everything is timed!! Great idea and really works well!

The only issue was there was no way to remove the AIU if the gun system jammer - so now on the AIU there is a compressible gear that allows the AIU to be removed in that situation!

The loader is pneumatic driven - similar to the 20mm system and with 181 rounds, loading is quick. You can upload, upload and download at the same time or download the aircraft. The same goes for replenishment by the AMMO guys, however, there is no replenishment table. The safety rail is extended and the chute is attached to a down load plate, an ammo tray is attached to the AIU, the download bins slid underneath and they are ready to go! Live and spent rounds are separated as they are on the 20mm systems today.

Couple other options the bulk loader offers; if extra containers are bought (I suspect they will be), the ammo guys can remove one or as many containers as need to be emptied and re-fill as they choose using a forklift to set the full one on the trailer. If the containers are empty, they can be moved by hand or forklift. New full containers set in place and the turn is down. This can be done on the flight line using the MHU-83 as needed. The chute can stay with the unit or the loaders can keep it with them on the line. (I too suspect that the AMMO guys will have a Replenishment Chute set up) As with the 20MM, it can be hand cranked or external air can be used.

One person from Hydraulic International and me were lucky enough to be the first to load a full load of ammo using the 25MM Bulk Loader was happy everything worked well. It was attempted a few months later by some personnel not as well trained, with other than great results!

As with any new equipment, it will take some training, the gun and loader uses light weight material so "Kid Gloves" will need to be used as not to force and break something that is close tolerance. Once they have done it a few times, it will be a smooth operation and game on!!

Jeff Hamburg



Aircraft Armament Chiefs Association Recognition Program

The AACA Charter advocates for support and sponsorship of awards and recognition activities for Aircraft Armament Specialists. The AACA Recognition Program was introduced to the membership during the annual AACA membership meeting in 2012.

I briefed membership on the purpose of the Program---that it serves to recognize individual excellence achieved in aircraft armament loading, armament system maintenance, and supervision of either operation. The awards are designed to:

- Support the Aircraft Armament Community
- Recognize superior performers
- Inspire excellence through recognition
- Increase morale, and
- Promote the preservation of the Aircraft Armament Community and Heritage

A Recognition Program Policy was developed, and the program was presented to membership in 2013. The AACA Recognition Program was approved

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by member vote during the annual AACA membership meeting in 2013.

The AACA Recognition Program recognizes the 2W1 Annual Award winners that have been selected through the HAF, MAJCOM, AFRC and ANG "Recognition and Awards" Programs. membership approved recognizing the 2W1 Annual Award Winners with a certificate and coin. We moved forward with designing a coin, and the AACA membership voted to approve the current recognition coin design in Feb 2014.

The BOD approved the purchase of 150 coins, which we received in April 2014 thanks to the hard work of Evan Godwin and the rest of the AACA BOD. An AACA Recognition Program Committee was formed, which consists of Eric McGowan (ACC), Ed Runkle (AFGSC), Jeff Hulme (AFMC), Dave Kerr (HAF), and Mike Cannon (PACAF, USAFE, ANG, AFRC, AFSOC). Each committee member works with their MAJCOM Functional to receive annual award results and copies of the awards package. The committee members ensure that the recognition certificates are made for each award winner. They provide a recognition certificate, and coin to their MAJCOM Functional or the Weapons Managers for each award winner.

To preserve the significance of the AACA Recognition Program, the Recognition Coin and Certificate of Recognition are appropriately presented to the annual award winners (i.e., by the Functional Manager, or the Wing Weapons Manager, or the Commander during Awards Ceremony or Weapons all-calls). All award winner names are announced in the AACA Newsletter and on the AACA website.

The Committee distributed certificates and coins for 29 deserving annual award winners in 2014, and for 25 deserving annual award winners in 2015 from these commands:

AFGSC	AFMC	USAFE
ACC	HAF	PACAF

AETC stood up their Annual Awards program in 2015.

Recurring annual AACA Recognition Program expenses are provided through the AACA budget, as a separate line item approved with each annual budget report. Annual program expenses may include the cost of AACA Recognition Coins, AACA Certificates of Recognition, and postage fees. Currently, the Committee members are covering the cost of certificates and postage, so there has not been a need for recurring annual program expenses.

To date, we have used 54 of the 150 coins that were purchased in 2014. The remaining coins should last 2-3 more years.

The AACA Recognition Program policy is reviewed and approved annually by the BOD to ensure that the program continues to benefit AACA members and members of the Armament community.

If you would like to help by heading up one of the following MAJCOMs, please contact Mike Cannon: PACAF, USAFE, ANG, AFRC or AFSOC.

Mike Cannon

Here are the remaining 2014 2W1 Award Winners from PACAF, USAFE, and HAF:

PACAF Annual Armament Systems Awards

Technician of the Year: SrA Aaron Havener
Squadron Lead Crew Member
18 MXG/MXL, Kadena Air Base

SrA Havener aced 14 MPRL/SAE evals with a 100% pass rate, and earned the MXG "Hot Shot Load Crew of the Month" award. He generated 8 aircraft in support of WSEP 2014 with 23 missiles, 9.3K rounds of ammo that resulted in a 97% fir rate while capturing a



Top Performer award. SrA Havener deployed in support of a joint service ATR, performing more than 200 maintenance and loading operations that enabled 192 missions and 397 sortie hours with a 96% MSE rate.

Supervisor of the Year: TSgt Carl Richardson, Jr
Lead Weapons Expeditor
35th AMXS, Misawa Air Base

TSgt Richardson oversaw 1.4K system reliability checks, 224 gun lubes that were critical to the wing's 99% release rate (400 bombs and 29K rounds). He arranged 30K 20mm HEI uploads, resulting in 100% reliability on 14.7K rounds fired which enabled the 1st Jordanian gun fire in 10 years. TSgt Richards troubleshot a faulty BRU-57; R2'd equipment and directed munitions upload in less than 40 minutes that enabled aircraft expenditure of 2 GBUS with 6 confirmed KIAs.

Manager of the Year: MSgt Sammie E. Jones, Jr
HH-60 Weapons Section Chief
718th AMXS, Kadena Air Base

MSgt Jones inspired 62 armament warriors while leading the AF's #1 HH-60 unit in support of 18.2K GAU-2/18 maintenance operations. He reversed a 6-year .50 cal repair flaw and also engineered the Hung Gun Local Check List rewrite that eliminated 17 critical errors. MSgt Jones overhauled CSAR maintenance, he submitted 25 HAF approved AFTO 22s, resulting in clarification of 10K round NDI that reclaimed 10K man-hours. MSgt Jones invented AFSC's 1st IVI concept.

Load Crew of the Year: SSgt Shawn Feller, SrA Jody Fregia, SrA Kyle Sorenson
3rd AMXS, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson

This load crew aced 72 WS evaluations with a 100% pass rate and claimed the wing's Load Crew of the Year trophy. They also achieved perfection

through 24 QA evals. The crew executed 43 Exercise CHECKER Flag loads, and loaded 3 AIM-9s that contributed to 12/12 missiles fired during WSEP. They deployed during Exercise COPE THAW that flew 76 sorties, and loaded 66 AIMs while generating 11 aircraft for 71 CAC scrambles/intercepts. The crew streamlined a \$64M SPRAM account and led their unit's CAF launcher data collection for SPO 2LM study.

USAFE Annual Armament Systems Awards

Technician of the Year: SrA James M. Goetter
Weapons Load Crew Member
31st AMXS, Aviano Air Base

SrA Goetter earned a stellar 100% pass rate on 81 WSS evaluated loads and fixed 51 pilot reported discrepancies, earning Aviano's Load Crew of the Quarter and Armament Technician of the Year. He loaded 7 aircraft during Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE that bolstered NATO's unified response, and 18 aircraft during Exercise GREEN FLAG that spurred the squadron's 99% release rate. SrA Goetter was a Romania WTD deployer, performing 8 acft check-outs and loading 96 bombs to ensure a 100% release rate.

Supervisor of the Year: SSgt Bryan C. Brown
Weapons Load Crew Chief
48th AMXS, RAF Lakenheath

SSgt Brown resolved 23 PRDs and contributed to a 99.5% release rate for the wing's highest flying hour program in 4 years. He instructed a wire repair class for 30 technicians and led QVI gun bay inspection training for 60 technicians, reducing repeat/recur rates by 25% and enabling a 92% QA pass rate. He executed 2 EUCOM taskings; generating 6 aircraft in less than 11 hours to ensure 1st USAFE wing on-status. SSgt Brown steered the first operational F-15E JASSM release for IOC delivery, praised by Office of SECDEF.



USAFE Armament Supervisor of the Year, 2014, SSgt Bryan Brown, Weapons Load Crew Chief, 48th AMXS, RAF Lakenheath, receiving the AACA Recognition Coin and Certificate.

Manager of the Year: MSgt Yamil Davila
 WS Superintendent
 48th MXG, RAF Lakenheath

MSgt Davila led USAFE's largest load training program; 4.8K MPRLs/385 SAEs for 52 load crews, producing expert crews supporting 960 munitions/32K rounds/99% release rate. He led a 4 TDY pack-out, validating UTC requirements of 1.2K items w/ 0 shortfalls. He masterminded an AFSO-21 event to lean bomb rack maintenance, cutting waste by 40% and 897 items while increasing output by 32%. MSgt Davila postured the wing's AGM-158B by certifying 31 crews in less than 60 days and 1st CAF F-15E load/release.



CMsGt Christing Beaudion, 48 Wing Weapons Manager, RAF Lakenheath, presents the AACA Recognition Coin and Certificate to USAF Armament Manager of the Year, 2014, (S)MSgt Yamil Davila, WS Superintendent, 48th MXG, RAF Lakenheath

Load Crew of the Year: SSgt David Gondek, SrA Scott-Bledsoe, SrA Devon Wooldridge
 52nd AMU, Spangdahlem Air Base

This load crew achieved a 96.3% pass rate on 54 WSS evaluated proficiency loads, and earned a 100% pass rate on 10 QVIs/3 PEs by QA. They deployed to Exercise BALTICOPS, loading 63 BDUs/14K rounds of ammo for a 100% release and fire rate. They accomplished 300 EOR inspections in support of 5K+ hours flown, and deployed to Lask Poland; identifying and clearing jammed rounds to prevent a gun removal. This load crew graduated from the CAS-AIT course, revamped the AME storage area, and completed the F-16 boresight course.

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CMSgt Ed Olson, USAFE Armament Functional Manager, presents the AACA Recognition

Coins and Certificates to the 2014 USAFE Load Crew of the Year, SSgt David Gondek, SrA

Scott-Bledsoe, and SrA Devon Wooldridge 52nd AMU, Spangdahlem AB. Assisting with the presentation were SMSgt Chris Kreyling, 52 Wing Weapons Manager, Spangdahlem AB,

CMSgt Scott Chord, 702 Muns/CEM, Büchel AB and CMSgt Brad Plante 52 MMG/CEM, Spangdahlem AB.



HAF Lt. Gen. Leo Marquez Award

Technician/Supervisor of the Year: TSgt Robert Kurz

Alternate Mission Equipment Section
20th EMS, Shaw Air Force Base

TSgt Kurz analyzed a 10-year inspection history and was able to detect an aircraft structure time change discrepancy that affected the gun system on the entire F-16 Fighting Falcon fleet across the Air Force. TSgt Kurz was swift to identify program and process failures, and then find legitimate corrective actions. He accounted for 2,400 pieces of equipment valued at \$122M, tracked down the equipment history, and realigned inspection cycles while closing the loop on the errors unreconciled from the past 2 years.



TSgt Robert Kurz, 20th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, Shaw AFB, the recipient of the Lt. Gen. Leo Marquez Award for Outstanding Technician Supervisor Munitions Missile Maintenance for 2014.

In August 2014, our schoolhouse Chief, Ray Lapham asked about the feasibility of recognizing Technical School Top Graduates with an AACA recognition coin. During the next BoD meeting, the program was approved as no-cost to the AACA (because it was not previously included in the budget). In true weapons fashion, we fast-tracked the program. We designed and purchased 100 Top Graduate

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recognition coins, and shipped them to Chief Lapham in time to recognize Top Graduates by the end of the year.

This could not have happened without the amazing generosity of Jeff Hamburg, who stepped up and donated over \$400 to purchase 100 Recognition coins for the Top Graduate Program. So a big thanks goes out to Jeff Hamburg, to Evan Godwin who quick-turned the coin purchase, and to Ray Lapham, who manages the program.

The Top Graduate Program is governed under an AETC Instruction. It defines a Top Graduate as the number one graduate in a class. Top Graduates are recognized for superior academic achievement and high standards of leadership, teamwork, and character.

To date, the AACA has recognized 17 Top Graduates. Ray Lapham provides the AACA with names and photos of each Top Graduate, which we put in the AACA NewsLetter. He also personally presents an AACA Top Graduate recognition coin and recognition certificate to each Top Graduate on behalf of the AACA.

Here is a list of recent Top Graduates that our AACA has recognized:



Top Graduate
A1C Sara Ashley Fisher
From: Marysville, Ohio
Gaining base: Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona
GPA: 97% on the A-10 Course



Top Graduate AIC Jordyn A. Ricks
From: Fort Wayne, Indiana
Gaining base: Fort Wayne, Indiana
GPA: Top Graduate

Top Graduate
SSgt James Samuel Crook
From: Lincoln Park, Michigan
Gaining base: Selfridge ANG, MI
GPA: 100% on the A-10 Course



CMSgt Ray Lapham, presents a coin to Top Graduate A1C Jasmine Tivonne Orr
From: Fort Worth, Texas
Gaining base: Osan AB, ROK
GPA: 100% on the A-10 Course





CMSgt Ray Lapham, presents a coin to Top Graduate
 AB Jeremy Devlin
 From: Lutz, Florida
 Gaining base: Hickam AFB, HI
 GPA: 100%



CMSgt Ray Lapham, presents a coin to Top Graduate
 AIC Ryan Young
 From: Foley, Alabama
 Gaining base: Spangdahlem AB, Germany
 GPA: Top Graduate on the F-16 Course



CMSgt (ret) Lenny Krombel presents a coin to Top Graduate
 AIC Julian Lopez
 From: Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
 Gaining base: Langley AFB, Virginia
 GPA: 97%

CMSgt Ray Lapham, presents a coin to Top Graduate
 AB Michael D. Trotter
 From: Huntington, Indiana
 Gaining base: Dyess AFB, Texas
 GPA: 98.33% on the B-1B Course

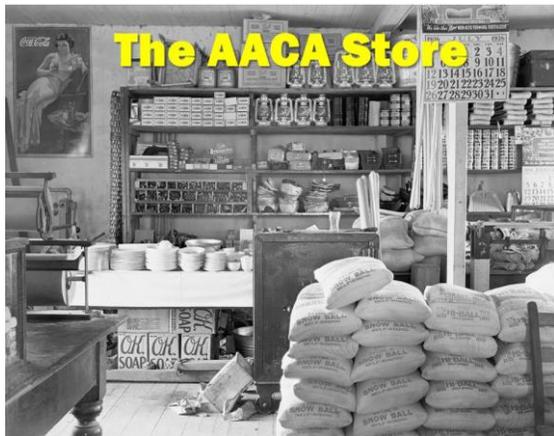


CMSgt Ray Lapham, presents a coin to Top Graduate
 AIC Nicholas B. Ramsey
 From: Benton, Tennessee
 Gaining base: Eielson AFB, AK
 GPA: 99%



CMSgt Ray Lapham, presents a coin to Top Graduate
 AIC Justin Van Arman
 From: Marshall, Michigan
 Gaining base: Elmendorf-Richardson JB, Alaska
 GPA: 98% on the F-22 Course

Without Weapons.....Just Another Airline



Hello Chiefs! This year, in addition to the merchandise available for sale in the store, we're going to try something new to raise more funds for the Association. Each quarter, we will raffle an item during the General Membership (GM) meeting. The Store Keeper, in coordination with the BOD, will determine what item(s) will be raffled and will advertise it in the newsletter and on the Association website at least one month before GM meeting. As we raise more funds, we'll be able to purchase more expensive raffle items.



This first quarter will be a 50/50 cash raffle. Here's how it'll work:

1) Tickets may be purchased in \$5 increments. (\$5 = 6 tickets)

2) Check, money order, or PayPal preferred

3) Send an email to Joel Paxton and I indicating your intent to buy-in and total.

4) Send money to Joel at:

105 Monroe Ct
Carrollton, VA 23314

5) Joel will notify you and I the money was received and I'll assign you tickets via email and keep your physical tickets for the drawing.

6) I will draw the winning ticket during the GM meeting and Joel will send a check to the winner (NOTE: The winner does not have to be a participant in the GM telecom)

Thanks for your continued support of the Association! Pictures and prices of store merchandise are on our AACA website:
<http://armamentchiefs.org/wordpress/aaca-store/>

We're always looking for new merchandise ideas to sale in the store, so if you have an idea of a good money-maker we should have available in the store, or something you'd like to see us raffle this year, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Thank you much!

Evan Godwin

evangodwin1@hotmail.com

(571) 210-8311



AACA Moving Forward

A new strategic plan is being drafted and currently being reviewed by the Board of Directors (BOD). The plan consists of three time frames (near term, mid-term, and long term) that will encompass specific goals and



objectives each year. The plan will be provided to the general membership for review.

Two new ideas will be of Mentorship and Career Networking. Mentorship will be a program that will allow any active duty member to sign up and have a mentor to support their career goals. The idea behind this is to provide advice and a roadmap of objectives and goals to enable the mentee to meet their challenges and provide additional opportunities.

The Career Networking is for any Aircraft Armament Chiefs Association (AACA) member to sign up for career transition information. This will be to guide, inform, and network transitioning members from one job or another. The intent is based on transition 2W100's to the civilian world, but the program will embrace those who are civilians and may want to transition to other type of work (i.e. Contractor to Federal Government).

One program we give back to our community and the other is to provide support to our fellow membership personnel. Both programs fall within our constitution and charter. The strategic plan goals for each of this are to be up and running by 1 Oct 2016.

We will also begin an initiative in constructing the 462/2W1 historical society. Volunteered members will begin putting together historical information into one binder with the goal that this information is developed into a journal and one day a book on Aircraft Armament System Specialists. For the short term, the team will be formed, information gathered, and framework of how this information will be catalogue, stored, and updated. Each quarterly Newsletter will have a historical article based on the information collected. There will be a historical representative position assigned; much like there is an AACA store manager. We will also

begin addressing museums, military history departments, and other military associations (i.e. VFW's) to display and pass along our heritage and possibly collect stories. If you are interested in being part of the h462/2W1 historical society team please send Evan Godwin, AACA Secretary, and email indicating your desire to be part of the team.

The strategic plan is based upon our vision and goals as an association and when the strategic plan goes out for general membership review, your valued inputs would be much appreciated as we take the next steps in our continuous improvement process of the AACA. More information to follow at the next General membership meeting in March 2016 as well as at the AACA 2016 Hampton Roads Reunion.

Sincerely,
Michael D. Lucchesi
AACA President

Check It Out

In case you haven't noticed, we've launched a new website: <http://armamentchiefs.org>. Although the domain name remained the same, we've added a lot of enhancements. The site now gives a place to announce current events, membership information, recognition and memoriam, the AACA store and more. It also gives you a place to view historical data with regards to the 2W1/462 career field and the AACA organization. In the future we will add a Members Forum to discuss what's on your mind.

Additionally, we have a FaceBook address: Aircraft Armament Chiefs Association, "like" us and let's share what's on your mind

Visit the new site and please send any comments/suggestions for the website to Bob Sherrill at Email: AACAwebmaster@cox.net