

# MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS

## Aircrew Safety Award of Distinction

The listed crewmembers launched on a 13+ hour combat mission to Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. During their third and final aerial refueling of the mission, they experienced a brute force disconnect with a KC-135. When the tanker crew called, and executed break-away procedures, the boom nozzle failed to unlatch as commanded independently by both the tanker and bomber crew. As a result, damage occurred to both the boom nozzle and the B-1's Universal Aerial Refueling Receptacle Slipway Installation (UARRSI). Because the B-1's fuel receptacle was damaged and the valve failed to close, the crew experienced an unstoppable fuel stream over the cockpit windshield and they were still over an hour from the Forward Operating Location (FOL) with no reasonable emergency field. The B-1

crew's emergency was compounded by an unrelated failure of the primary oxygen system (MSOGS). The crew computed the rate of fuel loss and determined that if they elected to remain at optimum cruise altitude, they could conserve enough fuel to reach the FOL while preserving their limited supply of backup oxygen. While on the approach into the FOL, the crew lost all outside cockpit visibility from the streaming fuel and began to deplete their backup oxygen as fuel vapor entered the cockpit. Beyond the scope of the emergency checklist, they used the alternate windshield anti-icing system to clear a 4 inch field of view (using engine bleed air) at the bottom the windshield. Continued use of the anti-ice system led to a windshield hot caution light, so the crew opted to wait until decision height to use the system. The cleared field of view only allowed them to see the partially-obscured runway while fully configured on a 7 degrees AOA approach. Because the active runway did not have a precision approach, the crew opted to fly an opposite direction approach despite a slight tailwind. Capt Pierce executed a flawless landing on centerline, at which time they lost all visibility prior to braking. Given the crew's extensive systems knowledge, management of crew resources under intense pressure, airmanship and ingenuity, they preserved a \$283 million combat asset, which returned to the fight.

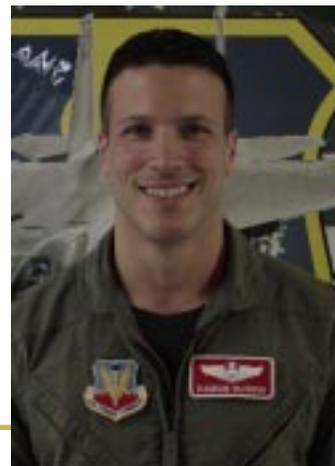
**Cpts Orrin Pierce, James Dykas, Ed Brennan and Brian Pearson,  
37th Bomb Sqdn., 28th Bomb Wing, Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota**

## Pilot Safety Award of Distinction

Capt Olivieri was scheduled as number two of a 2-ship F-15C Night Vision Goggle (NVG) upgrade sortie. During take-off roll, Capt Olivieri selected full afterburner, and both engines responded normally. Passing 140 KIAS, and just prior to initiating nose-wheel lift-off, the number two engine let out a deafening "bang." In addition to fire coming out of the front of the intake, engulfing the entire canopy, the aircraft also began a noticeable yaw to the right. It was later determined that Capt Olivieri's engine suffered a catastrophic electronic engine control failure, causing the afterburner to fail which resulted in an instantaneous loss of thrust. With the aircraft still on the runway surface, Capt Olivieri correctly made the decision to abort the take-off. He immediately selected idle power while steer-

ing the aircraft to keep it on the runway, and dropped the tail hook as per Dash-1 guidance. Capt Olivieri then applied maximum braking, bringing the F-15 to taxi speed prior to the departure end cable. He steered the aircraft into the hot brake area, pointed it into the wind, and coordinated with the Supervisor of Flying (SOF) for fire crews to come inspect his brakes. While waiting for the fire crews, both brake-stacks on Capt Olivieri's jet caught fire, requiring him to perform an emergency egress of the aircraft. Fire crews were on the scene moments after the fire initiated; allowing the fire team to control the fire before a dangerous situation developed, and any significant damage being done to the aircraft. Capt Olivieri's quick reactions and skill averted the destruction of a \$38 million combat asset and potential loss of life. Capt Olivieri's superb handling of the high-speed abort and quick coordination for fire crews saved the Air Force a valuable combat asset.

**Capt Damian L. Olivieri, 60th Fighter Sqdn.,  
33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, Florida**



# Flight Line Safety

Award of Distinction

As the crew reported to their E-3 Airborne Warning and Control aircraft to perform preflight checks for the first Red Flag night sortie, SSgt Lopez noticed the Electronic Command Signals Programmer (ECSP) cabinet was powered up without air cooling. He immediately removed power from the equipment and notified maintenance and the Deployment Commander. After informing maintenance of the situation, he found that the aircraft had been powered up for 25 minutes. He then coordinated with the Operations Superintendent to restore cooling air and perform a ground check of the equipment. The Operations Superintendent then coordinated with maintenance to have the ground check of the equipment performed.

By assisting maintenance with the ground check of the equipment, SSgt Lopez kept the delay caused by the ground check from having an impact on the aircraft's scheduled takeoff time. SSgt Lopez distinguished himself by flawlessly and expeditiously handling a critical incident with quick reactions and superb crew resource management. Through superior airmanship and crew coordination, SSgt Lopez averted a potential mishap. The ECSP is not field repairable and would have required depot level maintenance, and left undetected, would have failed catastrophically with a mishap cost of over \$1.1 million. SSgt Lopez's undivided situational awareness and knowledge of technical orders broke the chain of events to prevent a mishap, and prevented a mission abort of a High Value/Low Density Air Force asset.

**SSgt Eric Lopez, 964th Airborne Air Control Sqdn.,  
552nd Air Control Wing, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma**



# Ground Safety

Award of Distinction

While performing a routine hangar security check, MSgt Klazura smelled smoke in the latrine area of Hangar 201. He immediately instructed TSgt Harken to activate the fire alarm and notify the Fire Department by telephone. Both MSgt Klazura and TSgt Harken then conducted a physical sweep throughout the hangar to notify and evacuate any personnel who were inside the building and to ensure the offices located inside were secured. MSgt Klazura initiated the evacuation of aircraft 91-0393 from the hangar. Both Sgts Klazura and Harken opened hangar doors and moved equipment away to facilitate aircraft extraction. The aircraft was ready to go when the tow team arrived. MSgt Klazura

escorted the on-scene commander and fire fighters to the area where he had first detected the smoke, which was blowing out of the heater vents in the women's bathroom. He then instructed the fire fighters to the area where the boiler was located. The fire department discovered that the boiler unit was glowing red-hot at approximately 1100 degrees Fahrenheit, and was mere minutes from exploding. Afterwards, MSgt Klazura coordinated with civil engineers to get the boiler repaired without negatively impacting mission requirements. MSgt Klazura and TSgt Harken's incredible poise, composure, and training prevented the boiler from exploding and damaging or destroying a historical building valued at over \$1.25 million. Additionally, their immediate and calculated actions during an emergency situation prevented potential injury or death of personnel and the loss of a \$31 million aircraft and support equipment.

**MSgt Anthony W. R. Klazura, 366th Aircraft Maint. Sqdn.,  
366th Fighter Wing, Mt. Home AFB, Idaho**

