2008 MACKAY TROPHY TO BE AWARDED
TO CREW OF BONE 23

Washington, DC, July 21, 2009 – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) will present the 2008 Mackay Trophy to the members of the United States Air Force Crew of “Bone 23” – Major Norman Shelton, Captain Kaylene Giri, Captain Louis Heidema, and First Lieutenant Boyd Smith. Bone 23 is a B-1 bomber crew from the 37th Bomb Squadron, Air Combat Command.

The B-1 crew of BONE 23 distinguished themselves as aircrew members, 37th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar on 13 July 2008. On that date, while flying in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, they were tasked with supporting troops in contact at Vehicle Patrol Base Wanat in Afghanistan.

Confronting a two hundred-strong enemy force that was attempting to overrun their base, the Joint Terminal Attack Controller requested a two thousand pound guided weapon. When the crew of BONE 23 realized friendly forces were in Danger Close range, they suggested a five hundred pound guided weapon, instead. Faced with a critical fuel situation, the crew coordinated to move their tanker closer providing more time on station and, within thirty minutes, BONE 23 accomplished three bomb runs decisively slowing the enemy attack, allowing coalition forces to regroup. The distinctive accomplishments of the BONE 23 crew reflect great credit upon themselves and the United States Air Force.

The Mackay Trophy is one of the most important awards in the United States Air Force, and was first presented by Clarence Mackay in 1912 and deeded to the National Aeronautic Association. The trophy is administered by the United States Air Force and the National Aeronautic Association. It is awarded for the "most meritorious flight of the year" by an Air Force person, persons, or organization.

The Mackay Trophy will be presented at the NAA Fall Awards Banquet on November 2, 2009, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia.

The National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit, membership organization devoted to fostering America's aerospace leadership and promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States.

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