



The REDTAIL Review

The Official Newsletter of the 187th Fighter Wing

2016, Vol. 1, Issue No. 1





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About The REDTAIL Review

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September 11, 2001



Cover photo by Staff Sgt. Jared Rand: Capt. Richard Brennan, 187th Fighter Wing fighter pilot, shows Gen. David L. Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the improved avionics systems in the wing's F-16 Fighting Falcon July 19, 2016, at the Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala.

Commander's Corner

Ret. Col. Clarence "Ski" Borowski

Ripples in the 187th Pond

Wow! It doesn't seem like it has been 29 Iron Bowls since I enlisted in 1987: War Eagle! My first few years were spent in the bomb dump where I witnessed the end of the mighty F4 Phantom era before the unit's first F16 arrived. One of my favorite sayings is "The only constant in the universe is CHANGE!" During August UTA, I will hand over command of the Operations Group to Lt Col Chris "Fatty" Jones and do my final F16 sortie.

As the pilot with the most longevity in the 187FW, it will be a significant event in my life, but just like ripples in a pond, August UTA will end with my retirement and by Tuesday morning the ripples of change will have slowed. Change is good. It provides opportunities for new beginnings, new perspective, and new energy. The one thing that won't change is our common goal of EXCELLENCE IN ALL WE DO. That common goal is what makes us unique as an organization.

I am very proud to have been part of this unit for the last 29+ years, and as long as we are united in a common goal – this wing will always be successful! I applaud and thank you for allowing me to fulfill my lifelong dream and I am honored to have been part of EXCELLENCE.



Courtesy photo by Col. Clarence "Ski" Borowski

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Romanian Maintainers Visit 187th MXG





U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. William Rhodes, avionics element superintendent with the 187th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, receives a gift of appreciation from Romanian air force Lt. Col. Marius Cristea June 30, 2016, at the Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala. (Photo by A1C Hayden Johnson)

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Jared Rand

Fifteen members of the Romanian air force visited the 187th Fighter Wing here during the month of June to exchange information about the management and maintenance of F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft.

The monthlong visit was part of the State Partnership Program between Alabama and Romania. The Romanian air force has purchased several F-16s from Portugal, and they are receiving maintenance training from the Portuguese. But managing a squadron of aircraft requires more than just technical know-how.

“We get trained on how to fix jets and how to follow the procedures,” said Romanian air force Maj. Constantin Pecete, one of the lead maintainers with the group. “But the things that are not covered in that training are how to organize, what meetings you need to have, what plans you need to have, emergency procedures and things like that.”

It's a big help to us to see how things are done here, and they are done well.

He said that the level of experience in the maintenance group is what makes the partnership effective.

“We are a world-class maintenance organization,” Rhodes said. “We’ve been doing this for a long time. The National Guard has a lot of experienced maintainers that have been working on these exact same jets for more than 20 years. I think Romania recognizes that they can come to us, and the same people will be here five years from now. There will be some turnover, but it won’t be like an active duty unit where you would have all new people.”

Rhodes and Pecete both agreed that these in person visits are invaluable for strengthening partnerships between the two nations.

“It’s just like building any relationship,” Rhodes said. “The more time you spend with someone, the more you become friends and the more you can help each other out.”



Left, U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. David Shows, production superintendent for the 187th Maintenance Group, talks with Romanian air force 2nd Lt. Chirila Sandu June 8, 2016 at Montgomery Regional ANGB, Ala.



Center, Romanian air force 2nd Lt. Chirila Sandu, right, and Romanian air force Maj. Constantin Pecete talk with U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. William Rhodes, avionics element superintendent with the 187th Maintenance Squadron, about a U.S. Air National Guard F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft June 8, 2016, in the hangar at the Montgomery Regional ANGB, Ala.

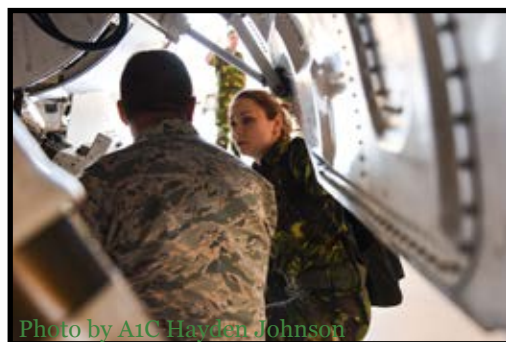


Photo by A1C Hayden Johnson

Right, Romanian air force 2nd Lt. Chirila Sandu talks with U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. William Rhodes, avionics element superintendent with the 187th Maintenance Squadron, about a U.S. Air National Guard F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft June 8, 2016, in the hangar at the Montgomery Regional ANGB, Ala.



Left, Members of the Romanian air force watch a Montgomery, Ala. Biscuit's Game June 8, 2016, at the Biscuit's Stadium in Montgomery, Ala.



Center, Romanian air force 2nd Lt. Chirila Sandu throws the first pitch at the Biscuit's Game June 8, 2016, at the Biscuit's Stadium in Montgomery, Ala.

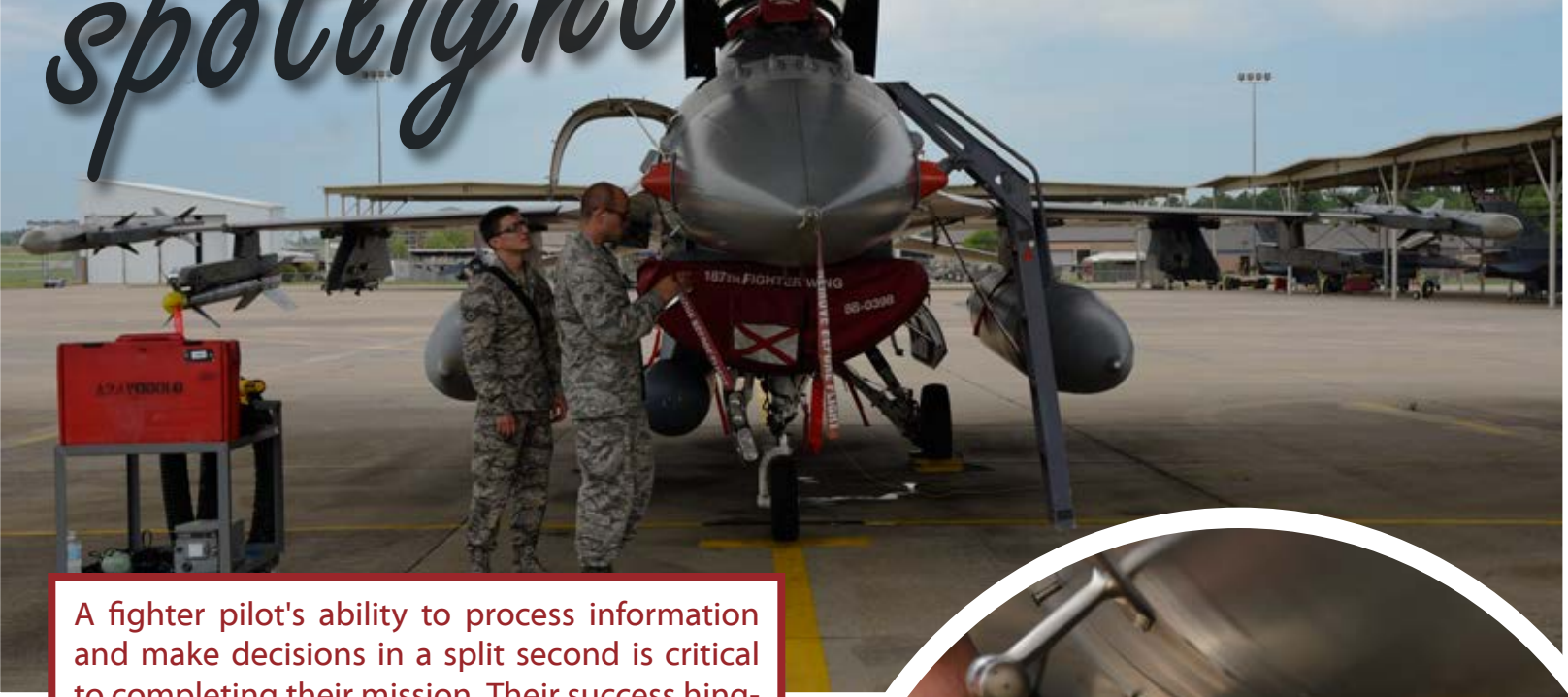


Right, Romanian air force 2nd Lt. Chirila Sandu holds a signed baseball June 8, 2016, from the Biscuit's Baseball team at the Biscuit's stadium in Montgomery, Ala.

Cover, Romanian air force 2nd Lt. Chirila Sandu, right, and Romanian air force Maj. Constantin Pecete talk with U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. William Rhodes, avionics element superintendent with the 187th Maintenance Squadron, about a U.S. Air National Guard F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft June 8, 2016, in the hangar at the Montgomery Regional ANGB, Ala.

FIGHTER AIRCRAFT INTEGRATED AVIONICS

spotlight



A fighter pilot's ability to process information and make decisions in a split second is critical to completing their mission. Their success hinges on receiving the correct information so they can make the right decisions while flying. You'll play an integral role in keeping these jets ready to go whenever they're needed. As a Fighter Aircraft Integrated Avionics Specialist, you will maintain the electronics and avionics systems that provide that information. You will specialize in troubleshooting, maintaining, and repairing everything from radar and communications systems to flight controls and weapons systems, providing the pilot with information to navigate their fighter from point to point and communicate with ground controllers. You allow them to excel in their job.



2A3X4

alpha • foxtrot • sierra • charlie



Tuskegee Airmen Legacy

Open House

Bringing the Community to the 187th Fighter Wing

View from a U.S. Air Force KC-135R Stratotanker July 14, 2016, at the Tuskegee Airmen Legacy Open House on Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala.





Photo by SSgt Jared Rand

Story and photos by
Airman 1st Class Hayden Johnson

Approximately 1,100 members of the community attended the first day of the Tuskegee Airmen Legacy Open House July 14, on base.

The two-day event was a partnership with the Alabama Air National Guard, U.S. Air Force, National Park Service, Golden Eagle Aviation, the Legacy Flight Academy, and the CAF Red Tail Squadron.

“It was a true partnership among all of us,” said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Paul Griggs, the 187th Force Support Squadron commander and project officer for the open house. “It could not have been accomplished without the great teamwork from everyone.”

Many unit members with the 187th Fighter Wing each did their part to ensure the day’s success, said Griggs. With the high attendance from the community, it took not only the unit’s efforts but also the city of Montgomery and other vendors participation.

“It is vitally important to form and cultivate partnerships, and strengthen these relationships with stakeholders in the community,” Griggs said. “I would say it is essential to our existence.

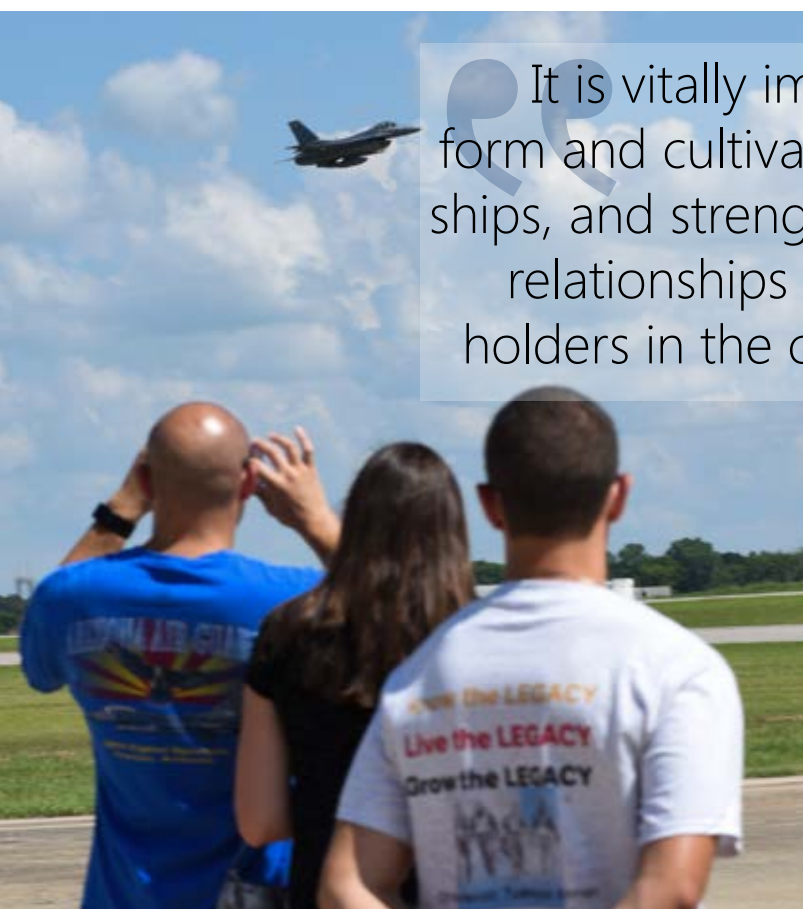
“We are very fortunate to be surrounded by a community and local government that is incredibly supportive of our mission at the 187th Fighter Wing. We wanted to display to our community partners that we are open for business, and we encourage non-military partners to come take a look at how our wing benefit’s the local community, state and country with air power,” Griggs said.

Opening the base to the community and continuing these partnerships provides an opportunity for recruiters to come into contact with those who may be interested in what the Alabama ANG has to offer.

“To have an event like this fosters community relationships,” said Master Sgt. Mark Word, the 187th Fighter Wing recruiting office supervisor. “It lets them know we are here to serve them.”

Providing more events like this in the future will continue the strong relationship with the community, government and area schools, expanding the Guard’s reach, said Griggs.

“I am proud of our wing’s mission, and our contribution to our community,” Griggs said. “I hope every wing member feels the same and will tell their friends and family about their story of how the Alabama ANG has changed their lives for the better.”



It is vitally important to form and cultivate partnerships, and strengthen these relationships with stakeholders in the community.



Photo by SSgt Jared Rand

Top left: Aerial view of Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., July 14, 2016, during the Tuskegee Airmen Legacy Open House.

Middle left: Visitors observe a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon flyover July 14, 2016, at the Tuskegee Airmen Legacy Open House on Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala.



Bottom left: World War II aircraft fly July 14, 2016, during the Tuskegee Airmen Legacy Open House at Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala.

Top right: Inside the main hangar July 14, 2016, during the Tuskegee Airmen Legacy Open House at Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala.

Middle right: Visitors tour the inside of a U.S. Air Force KC-135R Stratotanker July 14, 2016, at the Tuskegee Airmen Legacy Open House on Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala.



Photo by SSgt Jared Rand

Bottom right: Visitors wait to see the inside of a U.S. Air Force KC-135R Stratotanker July 14, 2016, at the Tuskegee Airmen Legacy Open House on Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala.



PADDLES UP!

Guardsmen represent 187th in Montgomery Dragon Boat Race



*Story and photos by
Airmen 1st Class Hayden Johnson*

Members of the 187th Fighter Wing, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., and their family members participated in the 7th annual Montgomery Dragon Boat Race and Festival Aug. 27, at the Riverfront Park in Montgomery, Ala.

The team raced three separate heats, the first one being the military challenge which included teams from the 42nd Air Base Wing, Squadron Officer College, and Air Command and Staff College. Although the wing did not place in the military challenge, they placed first in the second heat, and second in the third heat, ultimately performing better than last year.

“We didn’t do very well the first race, so I kind of gave like a motivational speech if you will,” said U.S. Air Force Maj. Jesse Proctor, the weapons officer with the 100th Fighter Squadron and team captain for the event. “I was like ‘you will focus on the drummer, you will be in sync,’ and we crushed it the second race.”

Along with the members from the wing who participated, the Alabama Air National Guard had a recruiter’s tent set up to provide information about career opportunities with the 187th.

“It puts our name out there,” said Master Sgt. Janice Nichols, a financial management technician with the 187th Force Support Squadron. “It puts the air guard out there in front of everybody, and it gives the community a sense that we are a part of the community.”

Proctor agreed. “The guard is different than the active duty,” Proctor said. “In the guard, I’m a community member, I’m a soccer coach for my kids, and that kind of stuff. It’s awesome, actually.”

Not only did the wing have an opportunity to interact with the local area community, but the team was able to meet people from other units in the wing. Team members included both officers and enlisted, from units like finance, communications, maintenance, security forces, and the wing’s pilots, including the wing commander, U.S. Air Force Col. Randy Efferson.

“We were all together,” Proctor said. “We didn’t really know each other, so I got to meet people I hadn’t met before. It was a lot of fun, and it was really cool seeing everybody out there.”

“I was like ‘you will focus on the drummer, you will be in sync,’ and we crushed it the second race.”



Above: Members of the 187th Fighter Wing, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., and their families race for the finish line Aug. 27, 2016, at the 7th annual Montgomery Dragon Boat Race and Festival at Riverfront Park in Montgomery, Ala.

Left: Members of the 187th Fighter Wing, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., and their families line-up before racing Aug. 27, 2016, at the 7th annual Montgomery Dragon Boat Race and Festival at Riverfront Park in Montgomery, Ala.

Right: Members of the 187th Fighter Wing, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., and their families huddle before the first heat Aug. 27, 2016, at the 7th annual Montgomery Dragon Boat Race and Festival at Riverfront Park in Montgomery, Ala.



CSAF Gen. Goldfein & CMSAF Cody

Visit the 187th Fighter Wing





*Story and Photos by
Staff Sgt. Jared Rand*

Photo by A1C Hayden Johnson

Gen. David L. Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and Chief Master Sgt. James A. Cody, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force, visited the Alabama Air National Guard's 187th Fighter Wing July 19, to see the wing's mission, meet Airmen, and thank them for their service.

During the visit, the Air Force's top officer and enlisted leader interacted with Airmen at a lunch meeting, all-call, leadership meeting, and hands-on tour.

During the all-call, Goldfein and Cody answered questions from the wing's Airmen. One member asked if Goldfein would continue to emphasize Total Force Associations between the active duty Air Force and the Air National Guard.

Cover/Above, Gen. David L. Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and Chief Master Sgt. James A. Cody, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force, address Airmen of the 187th Fighter Wing during an all-call July 19, 2016, at the Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala.

Right, Capt. Richard Brennan, 187th Fighter Wing fighter pilot, shows Gen. David L. Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the improved avionics systems in the wing's F-16 Fighting Falcon July 19, 2016, at the Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala.

I stand here as your chief today as optimistic as I've ever been, in terms of the future.

"There's history with this unit," Goldfein said. "This unit has a long history, culture, and heritage that we don't want to lose. So I'm going to look at if we've hit the sweet spot in preserving that heritage and associating in missions that are suited for that."

Goldfein also

spoke about his perspective on the future of the Air Force.

"I believe the recognition of what we bring to the fight and what we bring to the joint team, in terms of global reach, global vigilance, and global power, will result in greater and greater demand in the future," Goldfein said. "I stand here as your chief today as optimistic as I've ever been, in terms of the future."

Cody finished the all-call by thanking the more than 200 Airmen in attendance.

"Thank you for what you do every day," Cody said. "Business is not going to slow down for anybody. From the bottom of our hearts, we appreciate what you're doing and the sacrifices you make every day. We wouldn't be who we are or able to do what we do for ourselves and others without you."



Wing Throwback

----- May 16, 1971 -----

187th Reconnaissance Group RF-84 Thunderflash aircraft flyover May 16, 1971, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala. This flyover was the last official base flyby before the RF-84's retired, and the wing transitioned to the RF-4C Phantom II aircraft.

----- Courtesy photo submitted by R. Connor Warren -----





“All of our pods were not mission capable. Test stations weren't mission capable. Nothing in our shop was visibly ready.”

zero to one-hundred

EW Airmen Strive to be AF Top Shop after Adversity



In April 2014, the 187th Fighter Wing here deployed in the first ever six month Air National Guard wing deployment to Afghanistan. Upon returning, the 187th Electronic Warfare shop came back to the worst possible scenario.

“All of our pods were not mission capable,” said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. William Bateman, the NCO in charge of the 187th EW shop. “Test stations weren’t mission capable. Nothing in our shop was visibly ready.”

The purpose of the AN/ALQ-184 ECM pods are to jam radar or other detection systems.

The pods keep the wing’s F-16 Fighting Falcon and pilots safe when flying into enemy territory.

Although the task of getting the pods mission ready seemed impossible, the shop faced the challenge head-on, the same way they do today.

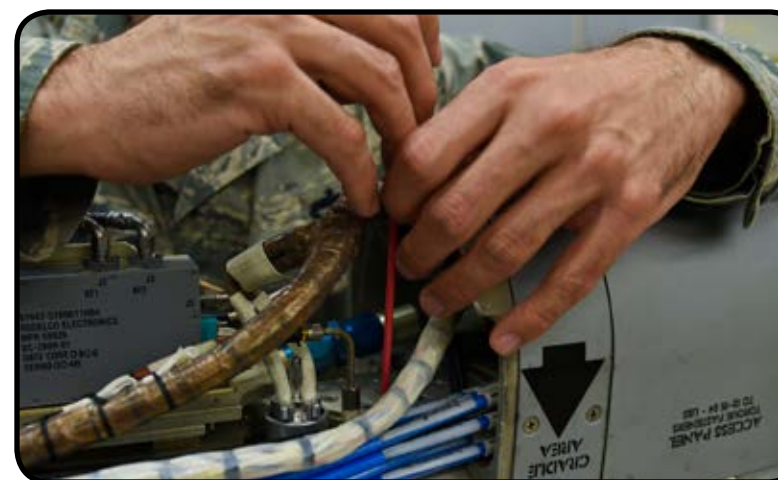
“We definitely always accept challenges,” said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Davis, a 187th EW technician. “We face them head on. We don’t want them to happen, but when they do happen, we definitely don’t mind working it out.”

With continued resiliency and hard work, the 187th EW shop now operates one of the highest Mission Capable Rate (MCR) units in the U.S. Air Force.

“At any given point, we have the ability to support any flying package possible,” Bateman said. “We can give more pods than you can give us airplanes.”

After the deployment, a schedule was created to develop, maintain and inspect the pods.

“We created a process where there are no surprises in our work,” Bateman said. “Going



Left, U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. William Rus, a 187th EW technician and production supervisor, demonstrates how he works on an AN/ALQ-184 ECM pod June 2, 2016, at the Montgomery Regional ANGB, Ala.



Right, U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. William Rus, a 187th Electronic Warfare technician and production supervisor, demonstrates how AN/ALQ-184 ECM pods are moved into the inspection area June 2, 2016, at the Montgomery Regional ANGB, Ala



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Christopher Eastridge, a 187th Electronic Warfare technician, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., and U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. William Rus, a 187th EW technician and production supervisor, demonstrates the inspection process June 2, 2016, at the Montgomery Regional ANGB, Ala.



AN/ALQ-184 Electronic Countermeasure pods sit June 2, 2016, at the Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala. “15417” is painted on each pod, referencing the scripture Isaiah 54:17, “No weapon forged against you will prevail.”

forward, it’s like clockwork. The pods still fail, and they may still break, but nothing is dramatic anymore.

“Because of the way they are testing them, they can almost forecast when things are going to go bad and get ahead of it.”

Although it may sound simple to “get ahead” of problems, Bateman said the knowledge required to be an EW technician is extensive. By just looking at a pod, it can be difficult to see whether it

is broken or not, but knowing what could be wrong makes the difference.

“You have to be invested to be a halfway decent troubleshooter,” said U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. William Rus, a 187th EW technician and production supervisor. “It’s going to take you three or four years just to comprehend everything. You’ve really got to put in the work to be able to fix it.”

The success made by the shop can be seen not only in their knowledge and operations but from their MCR remaining between 96

and 100 percent.

“It definitely takes a lot of effort to maintain the cycle and keep (MCR) at 100 percent,” said Senior Airman Christopher Eastridge, a 187th EW technician.

Both Bateman and Rus agreed that each member in the shop puts forth more than the effort needed to operate the shop. From

“They deserve more credit than they ever get for the work that they do, and their work product is evident. Every time I walk in there, they’re moving seamlessly. They do such great work.”

two years ago to now, the 187th EW shop has remained resilient to challenges and continues to work

hard every day to ensure their shop remains at a high MCR.

“Your work product is the final measure of you at the end of the day,” Bateman said. “They deserve more credit than they ever get for the work that they do, and their work product is evident. Every time I walk in there, they’re moving seamlessly. They do such great work.

“I am proud of the work that they’ve done and the work they continue to do,” Bateman said.

Quarterly Awards

Quarter in Photos



Airman of the Quarter

Airman 1st Class Austin Stringer
187th Fighter Wing
Security Forces Squadron



NCO of the Quarter

Tech. Sgt. William Coulter
187th Fighter Wing
Security Forces Squadron



SNCO of the Quarter

Master Sgt. Blake Trammer
187th Fighter Wing
Security Forces Squadron



A U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon flies in the pattern.

“To be a Airman mean upholding the highest level of intergrity possible and to go above and beyond in all tasks I am ordered.”

Airman 1st Class Austin Stringer

“To be an Airman to me means I am part of a team, but this is not an ordinary team that you would think of, such as football, or basketball. It's a very diverse team full of individuals that have a unique set of skills of all sorts of backgrounds. Inside this team, we all work together combining each of these skill sets working towards a single goal or mission. It doesn't matter what part of the team we play on, the team puts forth one combined effort for maximum results. Being part of this team is why I am proud to call myself an Airman.”

Tech. Sgt. William Coulter

Airman Leadership School graduates and 187th Fighter Wing leadership.
(Courtesy photo by Master Sgt. Cassandra Munford)



The 187th Fighter Wing participates in a Red Cross Blood Drive.



Romanian air force maintainers visit 187th Maintenance Group to learn more about F-16 Fighting Falcons.



A Total Force Association Airman works on a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon.



187th Security Forces Squadron participates in U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk familiarization flight.



187th Fighter Wing members cheer for the wing Dragon Boat Team at the Montgomery Dragon Boat Race and Festival.



NEVER FORGET



SEPTEMBER 11, 2001