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386th Air Expeditionary Wing

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Boots on the Ground – One Gallon at a Time

Maj. Tom Crosson

386th AEW/PA

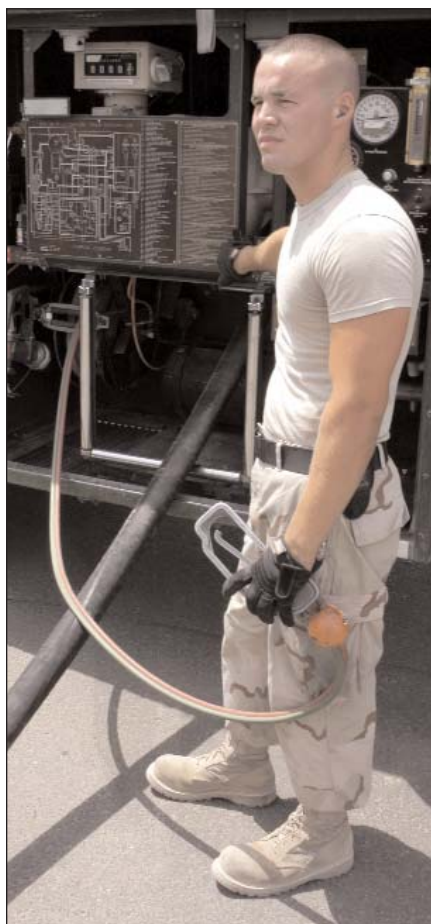
Historical records are often used to measure a person's success in any given field. These benchmarks often become the goals for folks who seek to obtain elite status by being known as the best in their chosen profession.

One record you probably won't see in the Guinness Book of World Records, but is phenomenally important to the success of the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing's mission is the individual Aerospace Expeditionary Force rotation aircraft refueling record. Airman 1st Class Robert Sawyer, a fuels specialist assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Logistic Readiness Squadron's Fuels Flight broke the individual AEF rotation refueling record August 18, when he uploaded his 1,625,431st gallon of JP8 fuel during his tour here.

He also has the distinction of being the first in his flight to reach the million gallon mark, which ironically occurred during a rare F-16 refueling from his home station at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany.

The 25 Airmen of the 386th ELRS Fuels Flight are responsible for the safe uploading of fuel to the wing's C-130s, coalition aircraft, the local Army C-12 detachment and all transient aircraft. For a flightline that averages more than 75 aircraft visits a day, keeping them all refueled and on schedule is no easy task.

What makes Airman Sawyer's feat more amazing is he broke the four month record in just over three months. Given that the fuels team is supporting a surge in the amount of flights thanks to a rotation of Army and Air Force units in the theatre of operations, Airman Sawyer may pass the 2 million gallon mark before the end of his rotation in September.



Air Force/Maj. Tom Crosson

Airman 1st Class Robert Sawyer, a fuels specialist assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Logistic Readiness Squadron's Fuels Flight, refuels a C-130 on the flightline Aug. 22.

To put Airman Sawyer's record into perspective, a C-130, his most common customer, takes an average of 2,500 gallons of fuel to top off while a C-17, the largest aircraft he sees, takes about 12,000 gallons. So far, he has refueled nearly 600 aircraft.

Although Airman Sawyer said he is a

very competitive person, the goals he set prior to his deployment were purely for personal reasons.

"Everyone's goal here is to break 1 million (gallons). I didn't think I'd be the first ... and I didn't think I'd break the (overall) record," he said. "Now that I broke the rotation record, I want to put it so far out of reach that nobody else can break it."

For Master Sgt. Stacy Baker, 386th ELRS Fuels Flight superintendent, the amount of fuel his team has moved is more than he has seen in his seven previous deployments. He said that Airman Sawyer's drive to accomplish the mission was representative of the entire flight.

"Airman Sawyer's stats reflect a great accomplishment. He has always been the type of troop, no matter what the conditions, that is always at the (dispatcher's) window ready to go."

Airman Sawyer said he has now set his sights on helping his flight break another record, the flight AEF rotation refueling record. The current record is just less than 16.3 million gallons. The flight has less than a month to pump 3.3 million gallons to catch that mark. The current flight already broke the single day refueling record, uploading 229,985 gallons on August 23.

Regardless of his and his flight's achievements over the past few months, Airman Sawyer said that he has enjoyed his time here and has felt that he is part of a team that had a significant impact to the wing's mission.

"I like the deployed environment better because every aircraft we refuel here is flying a combat mission. You can see the results of what we all do. It's nice to know that with out us, our 'boots on the ground' mission can't be done."

Keep Your Eye on the Ball

Maj. Kevin Gaudette
386th ELRS commander

For a lot of us, our time at the Rock is coming to a close. For most that's a good thing. It's a time to start thinking about getting back to our families, our friends, our lives. It's a time to wrap up a successful deployment and leave with a sense of accomplishment. Unfortunately, it can also be a time when we take our eye off the ball and get complacent. It can be a time when we forget to follow through and leave things better than when we arrived.

Let's break down some options for our return, if we run hard through the finish line:

- (1) Healthy
- (2) Carrying a strong LOE for 4 or 6 months of hard work fighting a war
- (3) A decoration in hand for exceptional performance, or some extremely strong fodder for an EPR and decoration back home
- Or some other options, likely if we take our eye off the ball:
- (4) Deceased
- (5) Injured
- (6) LOR or Article 15 in hand

The choice seems pretty clear, but it's up to each of us to choose going into the final stretch. As we all finish our rotations, two things will carry us home as war heroes: mental toughness and dedication to the mission. Mental toughness is what Americans have always been known for throughout our history, and dedication to the mission is what makes us Airmen the finest fighting force the world has ever known. Have you got what it takes to finish strong? (HINT: If you're an American Airman, the answer is yes ... I did the math for you).

So what will be your legacy? We'll all leave a little piece of ourselves at the Rock. You can't get around it. We've all been working ridiculous hours in even more ridiculous heat, completing a mission that never stops. We've all sacrificed time with our families, personal time, recreation, and wearing non-Air Force physical training T-shirts and shorts. Let's face it, the pace and the environment wear you down. With all of that work and sacrifice, every drop of sweat should count for something bigger than yourself when you leave.

As we get close to our departures, challenge yourself to rise above the fatigue and make sure you're leaving the Rock in better shape than when you arrived. Everything you've worked for over the course of the rotation to make things a little bit better will evaporate unless you stay focused. Put yourself in your new best friend's shoes. What would you have liked to find when you arrived? Make it happen now so your replacement doesn't have to start from the same point that you did. Make your sweat count.

The Rock is a small town. In fact it gets smaller every day. As you leave the Jersey barriers and concertina wire in the rear view mirror, what do you want to leave behind? A better process? A cleaner shop? A standard of excellence? Or a meaningless pool of sweat. And what do you want to take with you? Memories of the warriors you fought beside? Pride for making a sacrifice for something bigger than yourself? Or an injury that occurred because you took your eye off the ball for just a moment. Again, the choice seems clear. The execution is up to you.

It has truly been an honor serving here with the warriors of the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing. Best of luck for a strong finish and a safe return to friends and family!



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AEF 1/2 BONFIRE

Monday, Aug. 28 • 6 - 9 p.m.

Rock Softball Field

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Career enlisted aviators host career day

Flyers talk to Airmen about opportunities to cross-train into ops

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen
386th AEW/PA

Career enlisted aviators from the Rock hosted a career day Aug. 18 at the Flex Recreation Center.

More than 15 enlisted flyers from the 386th Expeditionary Operations Group were on hand at the event to hand out pamphlets, show videos and talk one-on-one with Airmen that may be interested in putting on a flight suit.

"We're here to raise awareness for the enlisted force about aviator positions available to them in the Air Force," said Master Sgt. John Farrell, a flight engineer with the 738th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, who organized the event. "We're always looking for new aircrew members and a lot of people are unaware of what our service has to offer them."

The Air Force offers many different opportunities for enlisted Airmen interested in flying. They can choose between: in-flight refueling specialist, flight engineer with a helicopter or fixed wing aircraft, loadmaster, airborne mission systems specialist, airborne battle management systems specialist, aerial gunner or an airborne cryptologic linguist.

"There are a lot of aviation career fields that enlisted Airmen can get into," Sergeant Farrell said. "We're just here to tell them what it takes, the process and what's available to them."

Quite a few of the flying positions are critically manned career fields. Therefore, interested Airmen have a good change to make the move if they are so inclined.

One group that really has the ability to make the switch are first-term Airmen. This is one group the flyers hoped to educate during the event.

"Things are wide-open for first-termers and the sky is really the limit," said Chief Master Sgt. Dave Niehaus, 386th EOG superintendent. "They can really see what's out there for them and go from there."

"Some Airmen think that once they're in a job that they're stuck," said Sergeant Farrell,



Air Force/Maj. Tom Crosson

Tech. Sgt. Alex Garrett, a loadmaster with the 738th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, talks with Airman 1st Class Sam Alvarado, 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, about different flying jobs for enlisted Airmen as Chief Master Sgt. Dave Niehaus, 386th Expeditionary Operations Group superintendent, watches on.

Interested in Flying?

- There are many Air Force aviator positions available for enlisted Airmen.
- In-flight refueling specialist, flight engineer with a helicopter or fixed wing aircraft, loadmaster, airborne mission systems specialist, airborne battle management systems specialist, aerial gunner and airborne cryptologic linguist.
- For more information, please visit www.a3a5hq.af.mil/a3o/a3ot/a3ota/cea/cea.htm or call Chief Master Sgt. Dave Niehaus at 442-5505.

who was a maintenance troop for ten years before cross-training. "But we have a lot of critically manned career fields and if they're interested we'd love to have them."

Attendees seemed very interested and were glad the aviators held the event.

"It was really nice they put this on," said Airman 1st Class Sam Alvarado, 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron. "I'd really like to be an aerial gunner ... but I want to see everything available to me and then I'll weigh all of my options."

"I am going to be filling out my paperwork after this," said Senior Airman Charles May, a C-130 crew chief with the 386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. "I've been flying with them as a flying crew chief, so I'm going to go ahead

and jump it up a bit.

"I want to be a flight engineer," he said. "I think there's a lot of respect that goes along with that and quite a few opportunities. Plus it will really give me more knowledge about the aircraft."

Regardless of potential cross-trainees, the enlisted aviators were glad to talk about what they do on a daily basis.

"Once they're interested we talk about some of the differences between being a career enlisted aviator and the rest of the Air Force," said Chief Niehaus, who has been an enlisted aviator for 23 of his 25 years in the Air Force. "We work very autonomously, flight pay ranges from \$150 to \$400 per month depending on years of aviation service, flight suits are furnished free of charge, so you don't have to replace your BDUs very often, and some of our career fields get a reenlistment bonus.

"But aviation service is demanding and performance standards are very high," he continued. "It is not for everyone, but I have never regretted choosing a flying career."

"If we only get one person to cross-train, then to me it was well worth it," Sergeant Farrell said. "We really have no goal. It's just awareness, a real casual event with some videos and once people see what's out there, that will help them go in the right direction."

Charity walk for multiple sclerosis scheduled

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen
386th AEW/PA

Walking is always good, but it's even better when it's for a worthy cause.

On Sunday, Aug. 27, a charity walk for multiple sclerosis is scheduled from 5:30 to 7 a.m. here at the Rock.

The event is similar to walks for multiple sclerosis held annually around the United States. They are used as fundraisers for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and usually have more than 200,000 participants. Last year's walks raised almost \$45 million nationally to support MS research and service programs.

The walking route here begins at the Rock Pool and is five miles long. However, participants can walk as far as they want to.

"I have been involved in MS for almost 10 years," said Tech. Sgt. Tim McKenna, airfield manager with the 386th Operations Support Squadron, who is organizing the event. "My sister-in-law was diagnosed with MS and I have been

2006 Rock MS Walk

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- The walking route begins at the Rock Pool and is five miles long. However, participants can walk as far as they want to.
- For more information, please contact Tech. Sgt. Tim McKenna at 442-2736 or 721-2305.

active at every base over that period that I have been stationed at."

Here in the AOR the walk will raise money in one of three ways. Participants can either get a pledge for each mile they walk or they can get a lump sum from a donor. Usually donations are around \$1 per mile.

"We also have shirts that have been designed for the walk by a company in West Virginia and donated to this event," Sergeant McKenna said.

The shirts can be purchased for \$5 each.

"We also have many other gifts and items that can be had for a donation, wrist

bracelets, water bottles and T-shirts (among other things)," he said.

Sergeant McKenna hopes the event will be a success and raise money as well as awareness about a disease that affects more than 400,000 people in the U.S. today.

"I want to bring the (base) populace together in an activity that relieves the troops from the day-to-day stress of the job in an activity where the common goal is to raise money to find a cure for this devastating disease," he said.

MS is an unpredictable, chronic and often disabling disease of the central nervous system, according to the national society. Symptoms vary dramatically from person-to-person and in the same person over time. They may be mild such as numbness or tingling in the limbs or severe such as loss of vision or paralysis.

The MS walk at the Rock is the first of its kind.

"As far as the NMSS is aware there has not been an MS walk here in this AOR," Sergeant McKenna said. "I hope we get a lot of people out to support the event."

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Fight Night Contender



Joey Gilbert, a contestant on "The Contender," signs an autograph for Airman 1st Class Michael Senerchia, 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron Force Protection Flight, left, and Airman 1st Class Jose Rodriguez, 386th Expeditionary Communications Squadron, Aug. 23 at the Rock Flex Recreation Center.

Air Force/Staff Sgt. Jonathan Pomeroy

C-12 detachment enjoys deployment

Tennessee, Wyoming guardsmen team up to take care of business

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen

386th AEW/PA

Heading back home in September, right along side Airmen of AEF 1/2, will be Soldiers from the U.S. Army Aviation Task Force C-12 Detachment here.

These 13 guardsmen, including eight from Tennessee and five from Wyoming, have become a staple here on base and are nearing the end of their six-month rotation. Their detachment is part of Third Army and the Coalition Forces Land Component Command at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

"The deployment has been very good and we've enjoyed our time at the Rock," said Chief Warrant Officer-5 Ricky Goodrich, who is deployed from the Tennessee National Guard. "We meshed together as a team and it was a very successful six months."

"It's been good," said Chief Warrant Officer-4 Clarence Shockley, who is deployed from the Wyoming National Guard. "We have made new friends from Tennessee and the bond between us is unbreakable."

The detachment's job during their tour here has been to transport distinguished visitors across the AOR.

"Basically we're an air taxi flying VIPs around," Chief Goodrich said. "We cover the entire AOR and we've been everywhere."

So far they have performed more than 250 missions, including more than 100 over combat zones, logged more than 950 hours and carried more than 1,200 passengers. And all without so much as a hiccup.

"We're very proud of what we've done here," said Sergeant First Class Aaron Cross, who is deployed from the Tennessee National Guard. "We've done a lot of missions, put up a ton of flying hours and we have not dropped one mission or had one accident."

Nine Army aviators from the detachment rely on three C-12 Hurons to execute the mission. The aircraft is basically a



Air Force/Maj. Tom Crosson

The U.S. Army Aviation Task Force C-12 Detachment here is made up of eight guardsmen from Tennessee and five from Wyoming. They will be returning home next month following a six-month deployment.

transformed civilian King Air 200 with some military modifications.

"The aircraft is very reliable," said Staff Sgt. Joe Todd, who is deployed from the Tennessee National Guard. "It's not as fast as some other aircraft, but it is very maneuverable and you can get it into places a lot of other aircraft cannot."

The det's C-12s have touched down everywhere from Africa to Afghanistan and from Baghdad to Munich and all points in between on their watch. They've flown the secretary of the Navy, the sergeant major of the Army as well as high ranking coalition officials.

"We've worked with South Korea quite a bit as well as the Australians," Chief Goodrich said. "They were both just great."

Typically the unit receives a mission from their battalion and works the entire process from there.

"Getting diplomatic clearances has been a challenge from time-to-time," Sergeant Cross said. "But we've worked with a lot of great NCOs at the defense attaché offices and they've helped us out a lot."

The guardsmen from Tennessee and Wyoming first met up in March prior to their deployment at Fort Bliss, Texas, for a week of refresher training. They will return there in less than a month after their deployment to demobilize, but will look back at their time here with pride.

"I was on the base's first sergeant council and working with other NCOs from around the Air Force was great," Sergeant Cross said. "They were real accommodating to us and anytime we asked for anything they were more than willing to help out."

"Working with the Air Force has been nice," Sergeant Todd said. "They've been very good to us and very hospitable."

"I often hear the Air Force refer to us as their Army C-12 brothers," Chief Shockley said. "And at times it was hard to remember we were Army and (they were) Air Force. We all seemed to work as one team and there was no line of distinction drawn between us. We are all brothers and sisters in arms."

The C-12 detachment will be replaced by guardsmen from Alabama and Alaska.

386th Expeditionary Operations Group AEF 1/2 Warriors



Airman 1st Class Curtis Hamilton, a life support technician with the 386th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron, does an inventory check on night vision goggles before aircrew members arrive.



Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Schott, a loadmaster with the 738th EAS, checks her night vision goggles.



(Above) Staff Sgt. Nick Sealy, a loadmaster with the 738th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, configures a C-130 Hercules in preparation for passengers and cargo. (Left) Capt. Kelsey Kramer, left, a tactics officer with the 386th EOSS, briefs aircrew members on the latest intelligence including threats and potential hazards before a mission.





(Above) Staff Sgt. Patrick Bowling, a flight engineer with the 738th EAS, goes through pre-flight checks. (Right) Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and civilians step onto an aircraft heading to Iraq.



(Above) Capt Ryan Hayes, an aircraft commander with the 738th EAS, goes through final checks as he prepares for takeoff.



A loadmaster with the 737th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, watches as the aircraft commander fires up the engines prior to takeoff.

Photos by
Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen

386th Air Expeditionary Wing Rock Solid Warriors



**Staff Sgt.
Tennyson Avecilla**

386th Expeditionary Services Squadron

Third Country National Escort,
Food Quality Assurance Evaluator

Home unit, base: 21st Services Squadron, Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

How do you support the mission here? We take care of the Air Force's most valuable asset, the "personnel." We provide various recreational activities like bingo, Texas hold'em, spades, intramural sports and events like bazaar, fight night, birthday meals, etc., that significantly contribute to troop's esprit de corps, relaxation and relieving stress. My primary duty is a TCN escort and food QAE and my job is to maintain vigilance to ensure the safety and security of every person here while ensuring nutritious meals are being provided by the contractors, which contribute to sustaining optimum health necessary for accomplishing the mission.

How many times have you deployed and what makes this one unique? This is my second deployment, but this is the first time for me to deploy as an NCO, and that is what makes it unique. I have more responsibilities now and I have to meet not only my superior's expectations but also meet the expectations of the other Airmen I work with and try to lead by example.

How does your job differ in a deployed environment vs. home base? I do not see any difference between my job at home and in a deployed location because wherever I am, I try my very best to provide the absolute best service that all of our Armed Forces personnel deserve.



**Senior Airman
Phillip Herndon**

386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

C-130H Crew Chief

Home unit, base: 317th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Dyess Air Force Base, Texas

How do you support the mission here? I am a C-130H dedicated and flying crew chief for the Blue Aircraft Maintenance Unit. I support the launch and recovery of my aircraft in and out of the AOR. Some of my duties include, but are not limited to: preparing my aircraft for its scheduled mission, configuring it to carry cargo or passengers, refueling or defueling, pre and post flight inspections, routine maintenance and maintenance integrity. I also ensure that the aircrew is provided with the safest and most reliable aircraft to meet their mission requirements.

How many times have you deployed and what makes this one unique? This is my second deployment with the Dyess team. This one is unique due to the excessive heat that this region produces.

How does your job differ in a deployed environment versus home base? With the exception of 12 hour shifts the work load is about the same. It is nice to experience the mission that we are all working towards.