



CAF RISE ABOVE®

Inspiring young people to RISE ABOVE adversity using the lessons and stories of the Tuskegee Airmen and the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP).



February is Black History Month and educators all across the country are using the wealth of educational resources we have available on our website. These include free, downloadable posters, PowerPoints, classroom activities, Tuskegee Airmen profiles, a Virtual Museum, and a selection of webinars that include interviews with Tuskegee Airmen.


We created these resources so these stories of WWII aviation would be available to young people, and inspire them to achieve their dreams. Our hope is, by telling the

stories of the Tuskegee Airmen and their strength of character and ability to Triumph Over Adversity, these kids will use these stories as inspiration RISE ABOVE their own challenges in life.

The isolation caused by Covid-19 and the relentless negativity in the news cycle, many people have struggled to maintain hope and optimism during these times. But the struggles we face today pale by comparison to the struggles and sacrifice made by all Americans 80 years ago. In spite of the incredible adversity they faced, the Tuskegee Airmen were able to RISE ABOVE. We thank our educators for using this month to carry these stories forward, and we thank all of our supporters for helping to make that possible!

Tail Winds,

Doug Rozendaal
CAF RISE ABOVE Leader



TUSKEGEE *Airmen* Essay Contest

SEE PAGE 2 FOR DETAILS!



Photo courtesy Eddie Kyle

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CAF Red Tail Squadron Essay Competition

RISE ABOVE

The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II

In honor of Black History month, the CAF Red Tail Squadron is sponsoring an essay contest saluting the Tuskegee Airmen. The story of these courageous American heroes represents the core values of the Six Guiding Principles:

AIM HIGH

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

USE YOUR BRAIN

BE READY TO GO

NEVER QUIT

EXPECT TO WIN

CONTEST RULES

- ★ Using the [Six Guiding Principles](#) (Aim High, Believe in Yourself, Use Your Brain, Be Ready to Go, Never Quit, Expect to Win) describe how the Tuskegee Airmen achieved success, or choose a goal for yourself and show how you could use the Six Guiding Principles to achieve that goal.
- ★ Entries will be judged on overall content, including spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- ★ Each entry must be an original composition written by the student.
- ★ The Essay Contest is open to students in the 4th - 12th grade in an accredited school or home school program during the academic year.
- ★ Entries must adhere to the following word count guidelines:
4th - 5th grades 250 words
6th - 8th grades 350 words
9th - 12th grades 500 words
- ★ Footnotes, citations, endnotes, and essay titles will not be counted as part of the word count allotment.
- ★ Entries must be typed. Each page of the essay must include the author's name, name of school or home school program, address and telephone number in the upper right hand corner of each page. This information will not be counted as part of the word count allotment.
- ★ Entries become property of the CAF Red Tail Squadron and will not be returned.
- ★ Winners will be requested to send their photograph to be featured along with their essay on the CAF Red Tail Squadron website and newsletter.
- ★ Entries must be emailed prior to 5:00pm on or before March 15, 2021. Email your entry to: info@cafriseabove.org
- ★ Essay contest winners will be announced on March 30, 2021.
- ★ Prizes will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in each grade category as follows:

1st place: An autographed print of "Tuskegee Tales" autographed by Lt Col Alexander Jefferson

2nd place: A RISE ABOVE hat

3rd place: A 99th Squadron Tuskegee Airmen patch



A Call to Service

By Michael J. Martin

During the war years, many young men and women stepped forward to answer the call to serve their country. America was under attack and the need to defend itself was long overdue. It took Pearl Harbor as the catalyst to suddenly engage the country's unyielding resolve to stand up for justice and defend its way of living.

It was absolutely unacceptable to allow the tyrannical rein of mad individuals to adversely influence society and alter the way of life for free men and women, the United States had come too far to let it all slip away without a fight. The twisted ideals of a few world leaders were warping the fabric of society and forced the American culture off course. As with all wars, the youth stepped up to defend their homes, their families, their loved ones, and the cherished American ideals and beliefs.

Not all who joined the ranks achieved the same levels of success. Today we honour our Tuskegee Airmen and we revere our Women Air Service Pilots. Too often we forget the majority who performed roles that were every bit as important as the flyers whose heroic deeds we laud. The nurses, mechanicals, the planners, the grunts, and the GI Joe's, they all contributed equally, and in their own ways. No, they were not divebombing a warship, or engaging in gut wrenching air-to-air combat, but those heroics could never have happened at all, if the engines were not tuned, the airplanes fuelled, and the armaments made ready, checked, and then doublechecked, by the faithful, loyal and trustworthy ground crews. These same pilots had to eat and sleep and many other Tuskegee Airmen supported them with healthy food and clean clothes. If they were hurt, then more Airmen stepped up to nurse them back to health and dress wounds.

Over two thousand young men stepped up with a dream to pilot fighter and heavy airplanes as Tuskegee Airmen, but half of them never made the cut, were released, or failed to succeed and joined other parts of the war efforts. Does this make their desire and commitment to serve any less than those that flew those daring missions?

In my eyes, no it does not.

It takes blind courage to step up. It demands an unbending bravery to even try. You must push yourself to your personal limits, and beyond. You must learn it all, learn it very fast, and even in the beginning when it all seems to be unlearnable you must preserve and push yourself forward. Physically you must endure even more untenable hardships. No, flying is not for everyone. We see it even today with the high wash-out rates at local flight schools. Even for me, earning my pilot's licence was one of the most challenging things that I have ever done. It was more difficult than earning a graduate degree, and by many times. When you are young, you have no fear. You think of yourself as invincible. But, as you age, the risks seem to outweigh the gains. Thank goodness we had so many bright young people step up to answer the call, as I fear that the wiser, older folks may never have earned the same outcomes that the youth achieved.

So, what happens to those who washed out? Did they continue to fail? Did they lose their way after this misstep? No, they refocused and searched for new ways to serve. After the war years, these wash-outs discovered roles and responsibilities to re-enter the post-war society and contribute in a meaningful way. They were already high achievers just to get into the Tuskegee program so you do not lose your drive because of one failure. The measure of a great person is not that they failed, it is how they picked themselves up, dusted themselves off, readied themselves again, and start over. It is this unsinkable spirit that makes America great. The call to serve was no less for those who failed to fly, but they helped to win the war in other ways. They simply found out where they fit better and started anew.



We are excited to announce we are offering incredible books about the history of the WAFS and WASP written by award-winning author, Sarah Byrn Rickman!



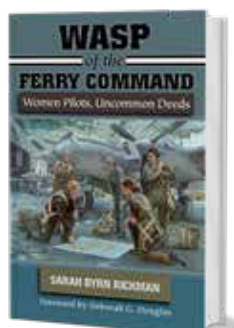
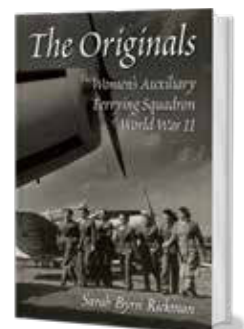
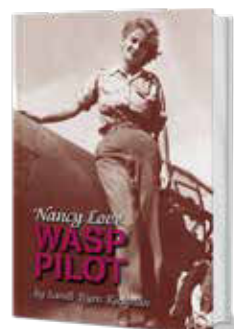
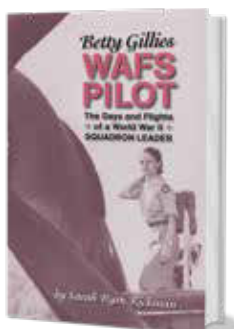
“Why are you writing fictional stories about women pilots when there’s a real untold story that needs telling?” With those words, Nancy Batson Crews set my writing career and my life on a new path.

Nancy Batson was one of 27 experienced women pilots who joined Nancy Love’s WAFS (Women’s Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron) in fall 1942 and who went on to ferry single-engine fighter aircraft in World War II. She inspired me to write the story of those first 28 women who were the core of what grew to 303 women pilots flying for the Army’s Ferrying Command.

I’m Sarah Byrn Rickman, author of 10 books—and counting—about the women ferry pilots who helped us win WWII. A former journalist, I began this journey in 1999 when Nancy Crews introduced me to five more original WAFS. They told me their stories. I did further research. I wrote their story—*The Originals*—my first book, and still my best seller.

A journalist who aspired to write the Great American novel, I found my authorial niche writing about real women pilots. Inspired by them, I learned to fly. I fulfilled 13-year-old Sarah’s dream that began when I read about Amelia Earhart. The journey, not the certificate I earned, was the best part. It enhanced my understanding of flight and what drove those women—all men and women who fly—to do it. To want it. That journey manifests itself in the pages of my biographies and histories of these women.

[Visit our webstore to purchase your own autographed copy of her books!](#)



We have numerous events that are still in the planning stages, closely monitoring local Covid cases and restrictions to finalize details, so [please check our event calendar often for updates.](#)

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
April 17	Thunder over Louisville P-51C Mustang	Louisville, KY
June 5-6	Chennault International Airshow RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit	Lake Charles, LA
June 19	1940's WWII Era Ball RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Boulder, CO
July 3-4	Kansas City Airshow RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	New Century, KS
July 26-August 1	EAA AirVenture RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit	Oshkosh, WI
August 6-8	Wings and Wheels Spectacular RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Owls Head, ME
August 14-15	Props & Pistons Festival RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Akron, OH
November 3-7	Rise Above Tallahassee RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Tallahassee, FL
November 13-14	Stuart Airshow RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Stuart, FL

To book RISE ABOVE for your event contact Kristi Younkin,
Logistics Coordinator, at
logistics@cafriseabove.org or call (479) 228-4520

GREETINGS FROM THE AMBASSADOR TEAM!



*Volunteer Coordinator
Melanie Burden*

Our squadron is built on the heart of volunteers who give freely of their time to help on the road or from their own home. If you want to make a difference and be a part of a community, while learning something new and having fun, WE WANT YOU!

We have ample opportunities to volunteer within the squadron:

- The Exhibit/P-51C Mustang
- Photography
- Virtual Museum
- Education
- Graphic Design
- Marketing, and
- Creative Writing

If you are interested in joining our team, please go to our website at cafriseabove.org and find out how you can become a CAF RISE ABOVE Ambassador today!

OUR MISSION IN ACTION

Enjoy this letter written by Dr. Harold Brown to students!

Dear 3rd grade students,

It was a privilege to read your letters describing your joy in learning about the Tuskegee Airmen.

The story you heard about the Tuskegee Airmen is important because it teaches you that through hard work, dedication, courage, and commitment, you can achieve your dreams and goals. As third graders, you may not understand this, but I am certain that Mrs. Harrell will explain this in more detail.

There are several questions asked in your letters that I will respond to in the remainder of this letter.

When I was 11 years old and in the 6th grade, I had a dream of becoming a military fighter pilot. For the next six years, I spent much time building model airplanes and reading a number of books about flying. Clearly, it became my passion and I pursued it until I graduated from high school.

In June of 1942, I applied for military flight training and was accepted for training in December of 1942.

I successfully completed the military flight-training program and graduated on May 23, 1944, with my badge, which looked like flying wings, proudly displayed on the left side of my shirt and the gold bars on my shoulders indicating that I was a second lieutenant.

I fought in World War II as a “Red Tail Fighter Pilot” in the 99th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group. Our job was to escort the heavy bombers on missions to targets in Europe. We had to protect the bombers from being shot down by enemy fighter planes.

On my 30th mission my plane was badly damaged and I had to parachute out of my plane in enemy territory. I was captured and became a prisoner of war (POW). I was in a prison camp until the war ended. I arrived home in June of 1945—at only 20 years of age!

During my military career, I flew many different planes. Some of the early planes only had a single propeller; the best example is probably our signature plane, the P-51C. Later I flew some of the first jets ever built. Maybe Mrs. Harrell or one of your other teachers could help you look some of the planes up on the Internet so you can actually see what the planes looked like (Some of the planes include the PT-17 Stearman, the AT-6 North American, the P-40, and the P-51 Mustang; some of the jets include the F-80, the F-84, the F-86, the C-45, the B-25, and the B-47).

After I retired from the military, I became an educator (like your teacher), except that I taught young adults at the college level. To do this, I had to go back to college to get advanced degrees (Masters and Ph.D.). My career as an educator was very rewarding; I was an educator even longer than I was in the military!

In closing this letter, I will give you my best advice: Stay in School! This is absolutely the most important advice I can give you. Without a solid education, you will find it hard to accomplish much in your life and the lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen will never help you. This would be a terrible loss! So, I beg you to stay in school.

Second, you received a red dog tag, which lists the six guiding principles of the Tuskegee Airmen. These principles were extremely important to me; I have used them throughout my life, and preach them to all of the students I come in contact with. Follow them—they will never let you down.

In closing, it was a pleasure to share some of my personal history with you and I urge you to heed the lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Sincerely,
Dr. Harold Brown
Lt. Col. USAF (Ret)
99th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group



WE NEED YOU!

Make a [one-time or recurring donation](#) to help us ensure that the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP is passed on to future generations, so that their strength of character, courage and ability to triumph over adversity may serve as a means to inspire others to RISE ABOVE obstacles in their own lives and achieve their goals!

Give [online](#), by calling 888-928-0188, or by mail at:

**CAF RISE ABOVE
971 Hallstrom Drive
Red Wing, MN 55066**

Please be assured that the CAF RISE ABOVE Squadron responsibly and carefully allocates donation dollars to further our mission. If you believe, like we do, that the values based educational potential of these two initiatives are relevant and important for young people today, we would appreciate your continued support. We are also interested in your comments and suggestions about the program and will [welcome any input](#) you have to offer.

The CAF RISE ABOVE® is an educational outreach program of the [Commemorative Air Force](#), (CAF) a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. [Your contribution](#) is tax deductible less the value of the benefits given in return for your contribution noted above, if any. CAF FEIN # 74-1484491



Find great treasures AND honor the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and WASP!

[Visit our online store.](#) *Shipping is included for state-side orders!*

Introducing Tuskegee Airman Sherpa Lined Hoodies!

Featuring full color designs of some of history's most famous Airmen: [Lt Col Lee Archer](#); [Brig Gen Charles McGee](#); [Lt Col George Hardy](#); and [Gen Benjamin O. Davis](#).



For \$99 you can join the exclusive ranks of the Top Flight Club!

There's no better way to support our mission to educate, inspire, and honor through flight and living history experiences than by joining a Top Flight Club!



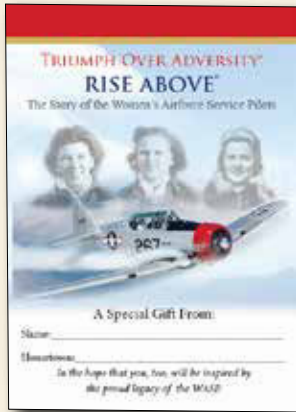
Why 99? *(for each membership)*

[Join RISE ABOVE: RED TAIL](#)

The 99th was originally formed as the U.S. Army Air Forces' first African American fighter squadron, then known as the 99th Pursuit Squadron. The personnel received their initial flight training at Tuskegee, Alabama earning them the nickname Tuskegee Airmen.

[Join RISE ABOVE: WASP](#)

The Ninety-Nines was founded November 2, 1929, at Curtiss Field, Valley Stream, Long Island, New York. All 117 women pilots at the time were invited to assemble in mutual support of the advancement of women in aviation. In 1942 members of the Ninety-Nines were asked to join the Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) class of 43-W-1 in Houston, Texas.

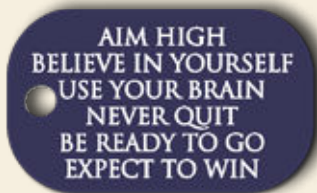
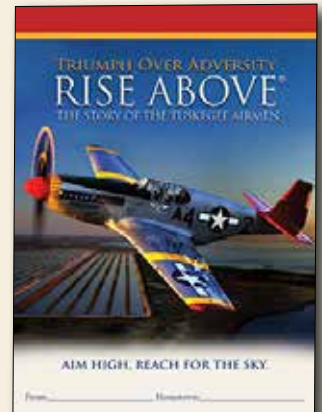


Our Inspiration Packs are perfect for the parent, teacher, youth leader or community group looking for a tangible reminder of the lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen or the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)!

Cost is \$95 each pack, includes s/h

The [Inspiration Pack: WASP](#) pack includes:

50 each CAF RISE ABOVE: WASP dog tags featuring the Six Guiding Principles and the "Triumph Over Adversity – RISE ABOVE: The Story of the Women Airforce Service Pilots" booklets.



The [Inspiration Pack: Red Tail](#) pack includes:

50 each CAF Red Tail Squadron dog tags featuring the Six Guiding Principles and the "Triumph Over Adversity – RISE ABOVE: The Story of the Tuskegee Airmen" booklets.



The [RISE ABOVE Back-to-School Campaign](#) provides free electronic resources to support and inspire educators and students to Triumph Over Adversity and work together to persevere through their challenges. School kick-off resources and "flight plans" will be available for PreK, primary, elementary, middle, and high schools. Inspiring short videos about WWII Tuskegee Airmen and Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) are also included to help educators and students "rise above" crisis and challenges. Teachers can use these resources to provide help to students setting personal achievement goals for the year.

Be sure to watch the [Back-to-School Campaign graphic novel](#) that features video interviews with Tuskegee Airman Dr. Harold Brown talking to students about applying the Six Guiding Principles to their lives!



Check the free RISE ABOVE Resource Kits!

Our [free, downloadable RISE ABOVE Resource Kits](#) provides users access to posters featuring the Six Guiding Principles, PowerPoint's, classroom activities and a wealth of material about the Tuskegee Airmen or the WASP.

Want to go a step further? Check out all the supporting [educational resources](#) - look for **RESOURCES** in the menu bar. Be sure to check out the books about [Tuskegee Airmen](#) or [WASP](#) that are available!

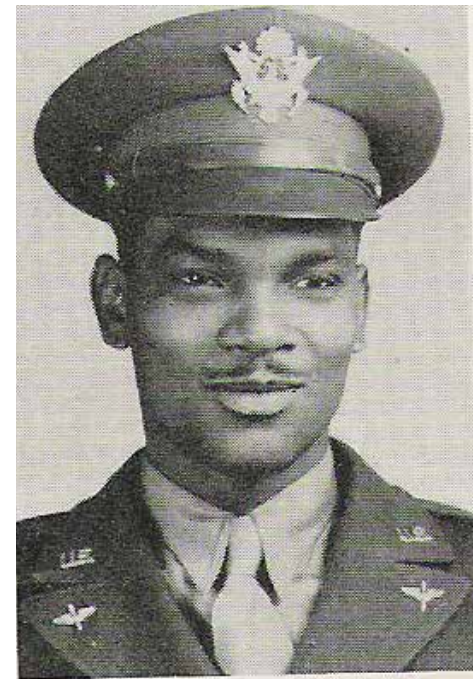
TUSKEGEE AIRMEN: DID YOU KNOW?

On this date, the following Tuskegee Airmen events occurred:

9 February 1943: Six 99th Fighter Squadron pilots engaged in a mock dogfight over Tuskegee Army Air Field with six pilots visiting from Craig Field, Alabama, for practice. During the mission, 1st Lt. Sherman W. White had an engine malfunction and was forced to crash-land, but he survived. (99 Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

9 February 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew three patrol missions and one dive-bombing mission. On the bombing mission, eight P-40 pilots dropped 1,000-pound bombs on a road junction at Aquino, Italy. (99th Fighter Squadron War Diary for February 1944)

9 February 1944: The 366th Service Group moved to Montecorvino, Italy, where it would continue to service the airplanes of the 332nd Fighter Group. (366th Service Squadron history, call number SQ-SV-366-HI).



SHERMAN W. WHITE, JR.
First Lieutenant

TUSKEGEE AIRMAN QUOTE OF THE MONTH



"I'd like to pass on what I call my four 'P's' — perceive, prepare, perform, persevere — dream your dreams but get the good education to accomplish the desires and needs of the country. Always seek excellence and always do your best in things that you do.

Finally, don't let the negative circumstances be an excuse for not achieving."

~Tuskegee Airman Brigadier General Charles McGee



Thomas Marvin Ellis
The first enlisted administrative clerk of
the 301st Fighter Squadron
June 29, 1920 - January 2, 2018



More than a decade before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, a group of young African-American men made a statement of their own, overcoming racial prejudice and the racial stereotypes of the day to shine as aviators in World War II.

Thomas Ellis, a native of San Antonio, Texas, was only 6 months married, in June 1942, when he was drafted into the Army Air Corps. "I never received an 1-A classification, just draft papers..." Ellis was drafted in June 1942. He went through basic training in Newport News, VA and was then sent to clerical school in Tampa, Florida. He was sent to Tuskegee in October, 1942 to support the 99th Fighter Squadron. He was the first enlisted man in the first all-black fighter group.

At Tuskegee, he was chief clerk over a team of five clerical staff. Soon promoted to Sergeant Major, he was in charge of payroll, maintaining service records, updating classifications, handling correspondence and other high-level clerical duties. He also kept a journal of all cadets' progress through the flight training school. This included noting crashes and washouts.

He went back to Newport News to deploy to Europe with the rest of the 99th in late 1943. This was the unit's first experience with complete segregation - theaters and mess halls were roped off for "white" and "colored" ("how we hated that word"). German POW trustees were assigned to work in the kitchen and other public areas and they could sit and move about wherever the rest of the white population could. "Here we were, going to fight for our country, and those Germans, who originally wanted nothing more than to kill Americans, were being treated better than we were!" The Tuskegee group threatened a protest about the segregated conditions but the brass heard about it and were ready for them with tanks and other armament. Nothing happened and the group got on the boat.

Ellis was reassigned to run the clerical group for the 301st Fighter Squadron out of Ramitelli Air Base in Italy in 1944. He had the same general role as before, but now also had to write to deceased or Missing In Action (MIA) unit members' families regarding the soldiers' situations. "That was really hard - I knew everybody and we were very tight, like a family."

Sgt. Major Ellis was involved in the 332nd Fighter Group's transfer to Taranto Italy under (then) Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr. He distinguished himself in his duties in Salerno, Montecorvino, Anzio, Foggia, Naples and Rome, being awarded seven Battle Stars before being discharged in September, 1945.

Postwar:

Ellis had worked in a department store in San Antonio so he went back there since he had a wife and child to support. He took the USPS mail carrier exam and passed so then worked as a mail carrier until his retirement in 1984. At the same time, he led a jazz quintet that played in the San Antonio area for years in "some of the best clubs and restaurants." He gave that up in 1994.

Ellis, a San Antonio native, was buried with full military honors January 12, 2018 at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. His wife, Janie, died in 2016.

Sgt. Major Thomas Ellis, we thank you for your dedication and promise to always remember your faithful, steadfast resolve in your service to our nation in its time of need, despite the ignorance that was so prevalent in your early life.

Sources:

Personal interview with the CAF Red Tail Squadron
[My San Antonio](#)

[Joint Base San Antonio](#)
[Military Times](#)



Thomas Ellis (bottom center) during his time serving with the Tuskegee Airmen from 1942 to 1945



Visit [Tuskegee Airmen Profiles](#) and take a closer look at the lives and accomplishments of some of the famed Tuskegee Airmen. New profiles are added regularly and will grow as the staff and volunteers of the CAF Red Tail Squadron continue their tireless efforts to research and share the remarkable stories of these important American figures.

We invite you to share stories and photos with us to feature! Contact LaVone info@cafriseabove.org, by calling (888) 928-0188, or by mail at:

CAF RISE ABOVE
971 Hallstrom Drive
Red Wing, MN 55066

AND THEN THERE WERE WOMEN!

Janet Harmon Waterford Bragg (born Jane Nettie Harmon)

March 24, 1907 — April 11, 1993



Janet was an American amateur aviator. She was the first African-American woman to hold a commercial pilot license.

Life

Janet Harmon was born on March 24, 1907, in Griffin, Georgia. She was the seventh child in a family with African and Cherokee ancestry. Harmon attended Episcopal schools and Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, and qualified as a registered nurse in 1929. Shortly after graduation she left Georgia for Illinois and was hired as a nurse by Wilson Hospital in Chicago. She married Evans Waterford; this first marriage fell apart in two years. After the divorce Harmon continued to work as nurse, this time for practicing doctors, and attended the Loyola University. In 1941–51 she worked as a health inspector for an insurance company. In 1953 she married Sumner Bragg; together the Braggs managed nursing homes for the elderly in Chicago until their own retirement in 1972. Sumner died in 1986 and Janet survived him until 1993.

Aviation

In 1928, Bragg became the first black woman to enroll in the Curtiss Wright School of Aeronautics in Chicago. In 1933 Janet (then Waterford) enrolled at Aeronautical University, a segregated black aviation school managed by John C. Robinson and Cornelius Coffey. She was the only woman in a class with 24 black men. In 1934 she provided \$600 of her own money to buy the school's first airplane, and helped in building the school's own airfield in Robbins, Illinois. In the summer she learn to flying and obtained her private pilot's license. In 1943 she applied to join the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) program. When she went in for an interview, Ethel Sheehy, assistant to the head of WASP, denied her an interview because she was black. A few weeks later, she received a rejection letter from Jacqueline Cochran, head of WASP, for the same reason. Her application to the military nurse corps was rejected, also on racial grounds. She then travelled to a flight school in Tuskegee, Alabama, and completed the Civilian Pilot Training Program. She was denied a pilot's license in Alabama, for being a "colored girl", but managed to receive a license at Pal-Waukee Field, Illinois.

Bragg was involved in the inception of the National Association of American Airmen, designed to represent the nascent profession to the government.

Source: [Wikipedia](#)

The [CAF Red Tail Squadron Virtual Museum](#) is a community collaborative effort, made up of photos and information of artifacts pertaining to the Tuskegee Airmen submitted from all around the country. Anyone with an item of significance to the Tuskegee Airmen, or has visited the location of a memorial in tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen, can share their knowledge by [submitting your own virtual artifacts](#).

[Tuskegee Airmen Art Collection By Chris Hopkins](#)

Submitted by: Chris Hopkins

Location: [Chris Hopkins online Tuskegee Airmen Collection](#)

About: Hopkins describes himself as a visual narrator. The artist began the series during his service to the Air Force Art Program. "It was received much better than I anticipated," he said. "I am proud of this body of work." Over the years, the series became a personal mission and passion. The project is a heartfelt tribute aimed at accurately portraying the battles over Europe and the stateside work of these first black fighter pilots, their support crews, their families, their predecessors and their legacy, Hopkins said.

The Tuskegee Airmen challenged racial segregation and paved the way for the integration of the armed forces. At the beginning of World War II, the United States armed forces were still segregated and the U.S. Army Air Corps refused to train African Americans as pilots. In response to a lawsuit, the Army Air Corps agreed to an experiment training pilots and crews at Tuskegee University, Alabama. Hopkins began work on his Tuskegee Airmen series as part of his work for the Northwest chapter of the Air Force Art program. Over the years, the series has moved beyond the Air Force Art program to become a personal mission and passion for Hopkins. The Tuskegee Airmen project is a tribute that consists of more than 60 works that accurately portray the foreign and domestic exploits of the first African American fighter pilots, their support crews, their families, their predecessors as well as their legacy. This body of work has been created with tremendous attention to detail and accuracy.



Butterflies

[Be sure to visit the Virrtual Museum to see more of the Tuskegee Airmen Art Collection By Chris Hopkins](#)



Tuskegee Airmen Traffic Control

ARCHIVE PHOTOS - TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

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Class 45-A-SE graduated from flight training on March 11, 1945, at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama

Order unknown: Vincent O. Campbell, Luzine B. Bickham, John Albert Burch III, Ernest M. Cabule Jr, William J. Coleman, Edgar A. Doswell Jr, Clarence C. Finley Jr, Joseph E. Gash, Betrand H. Holbert, Edward M. Jenkins, Robert Jones Jr, Wilber Moffett, Thomas J. Morrison Jr, Harry S. Pruitt, Marsille P. Reed, Clayo C. Rice, Eugene J. Richardson Jr, Alfred H. Smith, John B. Walker Jr, Harry P. Winston, Samuel L. Broadnax



B-25 Crew 7-6 May 1945
617th Bombardment ~~Squad~~ (M) Squadron
477th Bombardment Group (M) -later Composite Group
USAAF

1. to r.

Sgt. Cleveland Albritten, Engineer-Gunner
Cpl. Clifton V. Nichols, Armorer-Gunner
2nd.Lt. Edward T. Dixon, Pilot
Cpl. Arnold F. Bowen, Radio-Gunner
2nd.Lt. Ivan J. McRae, Co-pilot
F/O Wendall R. Smith, Navigator-Bombardier

Godman Field, Ky.



It's easy to forget just how different America was in the 40s. You might guess that the WASP faced a lot of discrimination as female aviators, but would you have guessed that at some airports where they made fuel stops, they weren't allowed in the restaurant because they were wearing PANTS?



Visit [WASP PROFILES](#) and take a closer look at the lives and accomplishments of the Women Airforce Service Pilots in order to inspire others, especially girls and young women, to RISE ABOVE expectations and find a greater appreciation of their potential.

New profiles are added regularly and will grow as the staff and volunteers of the RISE ABOVE: WASP continue their tireless efforts to research and share the remarkable stories of these important American figures.

We invite you to share stories and photos with us to feature in upcoming editions!

Contact LaVone info@cafriseabove.org, by calling (888) 928-0188, or by mail at:
CAF RISE ABOVE
971 Hallstrom Drive
Red Wing, MN 55066

WASP PROFILE: Mildred Axton
Class 43-W-7
January 8, 1919 - February 6, 2010



Axton was one of the first three Women Airforce Service Pilots to be trained as a test pilot and was the first woman to fly a B-29.

Born in Coffeyville, Kansas in 1919, Veteran Mildred Darlene "Micky" Tuttle Axton first flew as a child at age 11 in an airplane when local stunt pilots offered to take people for rides. After graduating high school, she enrolled at Coffeyville Community College and in 1940, graduated from Kansas State University with degrees in chemistry and math.

At that time, Kansas State University began offering pilot training classes in anticipation of U.S. involvement in World War II. Axton applied and was accepted to the program. She went on to successfully complete the course and became one of the few women to possess a pilot's license at that time. Following U.S. involvement in World War II, many of Axton's friends and family, including her husband and brother, were called into

service. Hearing stories from her friends and family of the horrific losses overseas, Axton felt obligated to help in any way she could. In 1943, she traveled to Topeka, Kansas, and joined the newly established Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP), formed August. 5, 1943. After passing the physical exam, Axton was sent to Avenger Field training base in Sweetwater, Texas. There, she received intensive flight training under a variety of conditions.

After completing six months of training, Axton was assigned to Pecos Army Air Field in Reeves County, Texas. There she was stationed as a flight test engineer, checking B-20s, B-25s, B-26s and B-29s before approving them for active service. In 1944, three months after arriving, Axton was forced to end her service with the WASP after her mother fell ill and could not care for Mildred's daughter. Axton later became a test pilot, becoming the first woman to pilot a B-29 bomber.

After deactivation, she was employed by Boeing Airplane Company in engineering flight test as a flight test crew member. From 1958 to 1960 she taught biology, general science, aeronautics and debate at Wichita, Kansas, East High School.

Micky was inducted into the International Forest of Friendship and received numerous awards, including "Distinguished Service Medal" by the International Confederate Air Force, "Aviation Historian of the Year," and "Distinguished Alumni" by the American Association of Community Colleges. The Jayhawk Wing of the Confederate Air Force named their beautifully restored PT-23 after Micky. "Miss Micky" is painted on the nose of the plane.

On March 10, 2010, Micky Axton's family was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal by Act of Congress. It is the highest award that Congress can give a civilian.

Sources:

[WASP Final Flight](#)

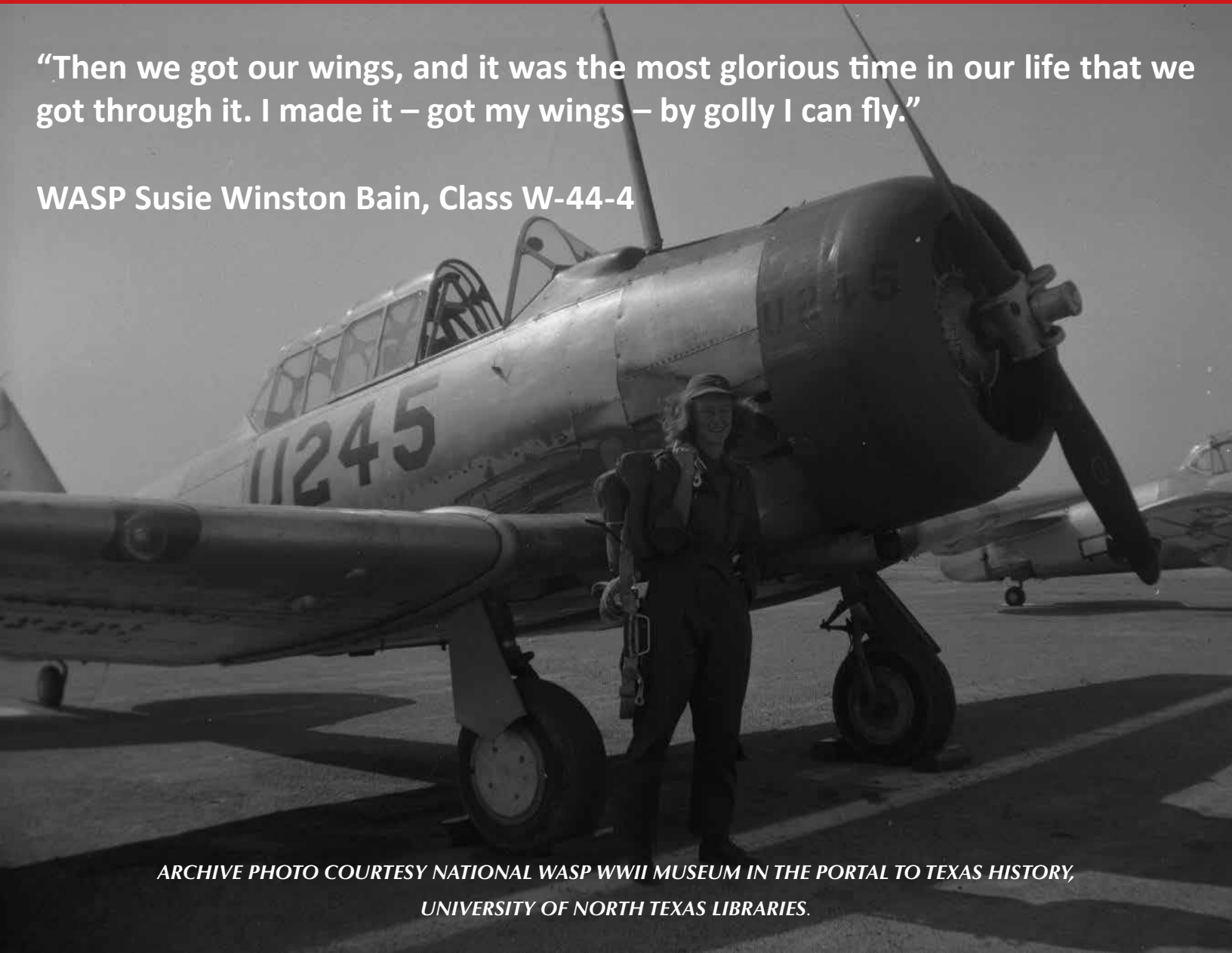
[Blogs VA](#)

[Kansas Historical Society](#)

WASP QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Then we got our wings, and it was the most glorious time in our life that we got through it. I made it – got my wings – by golly I can fly.”

WASP Susie Winston Bain, Class W-44-4



*ARCHIVE PHOTO COURTESY NATIONAL WASP WWII MUSEUM IN THE PORTAL TO TEXAS HISTORY,
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS LIBRARIES.*



Photo courtesy Hemlock Films.

*Still shot taken from the CAF RISE ABOVE:
WASP movie shown in the Exhibit.*

The [CAF WASP Virtual Museum](#) is a community collaborative effort, made up of photos and information of artifacts pertaining to the WASP submitted from all around the country. Anyone with an item of significance to the WASP, or has visited the location of a memorial in tribute to the WASP, can share their knowledge by [submitting your own virtual artifacts](#).

Women Airforce Service Pilots Memorial

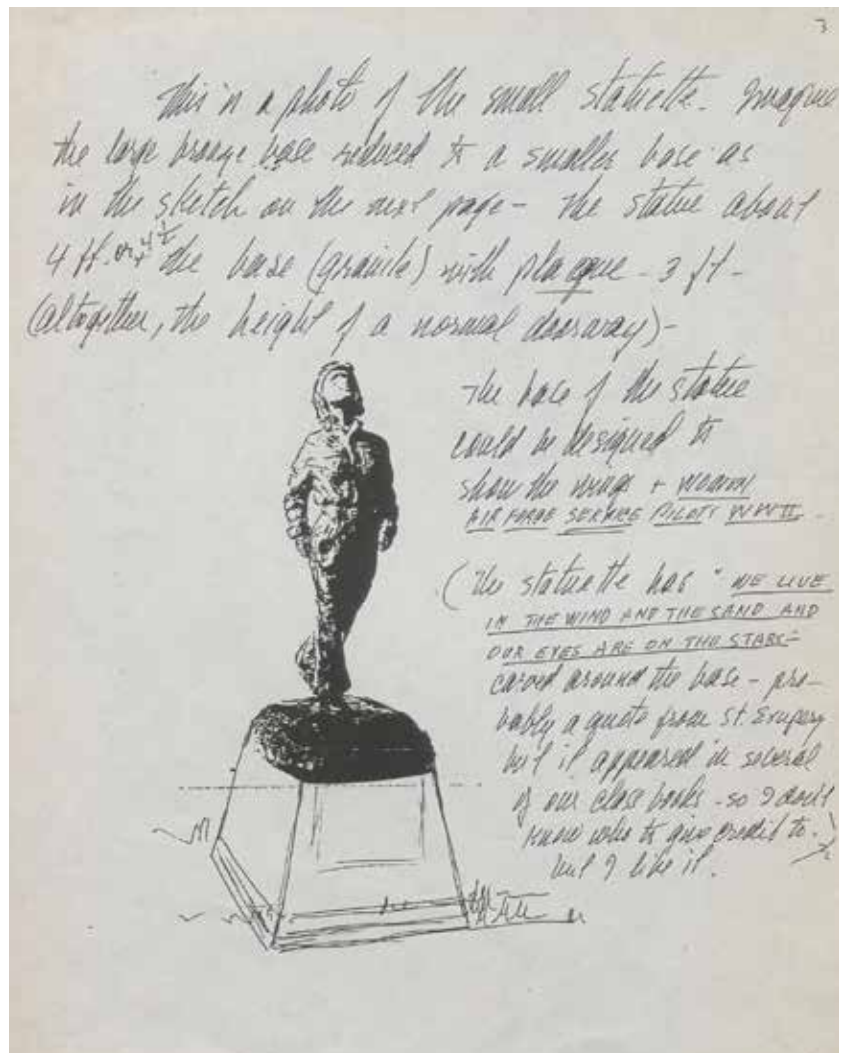
Submitted by: LaVone Kay

Location: The West Texas campus of the Texas State Technical College now occupies much of the former Army Air Force base where the WASPs trained in the 1940s

About: WASP pilots trained at Sweetwater Army Air Field (Avenger Field). Today, Avenger Field is a municipal airfield and campus of Texas State Technical College. A monument on the campus bears the names of 1,074 women pilots who received their WASP silver wings here. A low-relief memorial sculpture honors the 38 women pilots who died in service.

A memorial to the Women's Airforce Service Pilots created in the 1990s as part of the WASP museum previously located at this site, but has now moved to a hanger on the other side of Avenger Field.

Sketched image of the WASP statuette courtesy of The Portal to Texas History, University of North Texas Libraries.



ARCHIVE PHOTOS - WASP

PHOTO COURTESY NATIONAL WASP WWII MUSEUM IN THE PORTAL TO TEXAS HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS LIBRARIES.



Class 43-W-5 Ringing the Bell at Avenger Field



Eleanor Brown dressed in a flight and carrying several items, including what appears to be a map. She is seen standing in a dirt road outside of a building



First Day Cover for Jacqueline Cochran Stamp, March 9, 1996

*Thank you to the donors who have joined us at the supporter level of \$100 or more.
Pledge your support and join the ranks! Names are listed in the online [Honorary Flight Log](#).*

* denotes a new [Top Flight Club](#) member of the RISE ABOVE: RED TAIL

** denotes a new [Top Flight Club](#) member of the RISE ABOVE: WASP

Carmen B Abad-Fitts
Diane Abel-Bey
Anthony M Adamany
Jeannie L Adams
Jeroline Adkinson
James E Allen Sr
Reginald M Allen
Tommy Allen
Rosenwald Delano-Alzheimer
Lawrence Amrose
James Anderson
George Anton
Gary W Ardison
Lillard G Ashley
*Daniel Arnold in memory of
Connie Nappi-er, Jr.
*Michele Aziz
Thadius Baham
*Gary Baker
Fred R Banker
Barbara Barnes
Richard Barry
Velvet C Bass
Jan Batteux
Charles Beasley
Jim Bell
William J Belleau
**Roger Bestland
Mary Beyer
Lillie Bingham
Dennis Bishop
Don Blinn Jr
Cubia Bolden
Vickie Bonner
James W Bowdre
Glenn R Bowman
Cindy Boyd
Brenda Boykins
Terrence C Breidenbach
Robert L Brown
William Brown
William Brown Jr
Mrs. Dale Buffaloe
Frank T Buggs
Ann W Burke
Eugene And Carol Burnett
Douglas G Burns
Bob & Lynn Burtness
Phillip B Bush II
Anita L Butler
Richard Byrd

Bennie Callies
*David Cantin
Robin S Carden
Aaron Carr
Kenneth J Carr
Annie J Carter
Thomas A Carter
William P Cason
Myron Chace
**Patrick Chambers
James D Chandler
Edna Chase
Sam W Chatman
Patricia A Cheeks
Peter Church
Carl Clark
Randy Clark
Dorothy Clarke
Nell Clay
Francis H Cole Jr
John C Coleman
Leroy Connelly
Victor Conti
M D Cooper
Samuel Cosby
Oreal Cotton
Duane Cox
Ronald Cox
Walter Cox
Donald Crews
Ada J Crooks
Kenneth Karl Dahn
Anna Daily
James E Daley
Michelle Darang-Coleman
Ralph F Darr Jr
Ernest A Dash
Dale H Davenport
Ella Davis
Harold Davis
Maurice Davis
Leslie Dawkins
Lorraine Day
Peter De Forest
Paul Deutsch
Judith A Dillon
William L Dods
Kenneth E Dorsey
Herbert Douglass
Kenneth Dove III
Lionel B Doyle

Doreen Dozier
Daniel L Drake
Thomas Drehs
Fred Driver
Arthur Drye
Ed Duncan
O'Neil G Eastmond
Robert Eatinger
George H Eddings Sr
Anthony Edwards
Dennis Elston
Sylvia Eng
David A England
Janice English
Dianne M Engram
C Roy Epps
*Adckinjo Esutoki
Wesley Ezell
Charles Fantroy
Thomas J Fenaughty
Joseph Feskanin
Adrienne Fields
Irving Fields
Mr. & Mrs. Jesse Finch in honor of
Tuskegee Airman Capt Chares Tate
Virginia Finch
Gladys Fisher
Kenneth Fletcher
Gary L Foreman
Peter Forker
Anne Fortson
W Beall Fowler
Edward France
James A Franklin Sr
Robert Franklin
William Frazer
David E Freeman
Joyzell Friason
Kathleen Froehlich
Raymond Fudge
Austra Galloway
William L Gayler
Eugene Gaynor
Barbara George
Charlotte Gibbs
Maurice Gibson
John Gilbert
Alleng Gillette
James A Gillick
Donald Goings
Nora Goldschlager

Duboise Gooden
David Goodman
Donald G Goodwin
Peter Graham
Walter Greenfield
Robert H Griffin
James Thomas Grimes Jr
Raymond O Gross
Annie L Hall
James D Hall
Randolph Hamilton
Frank W Harris
Robert A Harris
William T Harris
James E Harrison
Carnie A Hayes Jr
Mark Healy
James Heinzen
Franklin J Henderson
James D Henson
William E Herbert
Patricia A Herschkowitz
Don Heuer
High Energy Devices
Anthony Hill
Sam Hill
Eddie Lee Hillsman
Richard & Rosa Holdredge
Richard Hollister
Michael Hooks
William F Horton
Harold K Hoskins
Cathy Hovanes
Thomas T Howard
William H Hubbard
James Huddleston
*Russell Huotari
John K Ijem
Mary Simpson Irwin
*Philip Jack
Auban A Jackson
Eric R Jackson
Theresa Jackson
Dwight Jaynes
Cyprian E Jenifer
Barbara Jenkins
Raymond A Jeter
Sandra Renee Jewett
Betty Johnson
C L Johnson Sr
C Johnson
Dorthy Johnson
Gertrude Johnson
Robert A Johnson
Theresa L Johnson
Pamela E Johnson-James
Booker R Jones

Frederick Jones
George Jones
Richard Jones
Wayne M Jones
Ted Jordan in honor of Mr. Downs
Cornelius J Joseph
Collins F Kankam
Rick Karr
Crosby Kearsley in honor of
Crosby McKin-ley Kearsley Jr.
09NOV1931-27AUG2018, SSG
USAF
John Keenum
*Carla Kendrick
James E Kerrins
Jamelle King
James King
Roosevelt Kitchens
Gerry Knasiak
Paula Knickerbocker
Jerol D Lackey
Walter J Lake
Philip R Landon
Hanford Langstroth
Beverly Leaks
J & E Lean
John Michael Lee
Thomas R Leveck
David Levy
Robert C Lewis
David T Lindsay
Mark B Lindsay
Dorothy Lloyd
Stanley F Lofton
Estelle J Long
Larry F Lottier Jr
Kenneth L Love
Clark Lowe
Robert M Lundquist
Lorraine Mabazza
Lucille Zenzele Magwood
Kris Mailey
Truly M Marks
Donald L Marshall
James Marshall
Michelle Martin
Sam Massey
Robert S Maternowski
Michi Matsuda
Patricia Mayo
Bob McAlester
James F McCall
Shon and Kaaryn McCall
Terrence B. McCloskey
*Jacqueline McMullen Adams
Wallace A McCutchen
Yvonne McGee

Preston McKee
Thomas McMahon
Myron McMullen
Cheryl C McQueen
Darlyne Menscer
Selina Duncan Metoyer
Jennifer Middough
Phillip Miller
Anthony L Miller
La Verne Miller
Joanne Mitchell
*Steven Moland in honor of
Tuskegee Airman George Greenlee
Darren Moore
Nathaniel P Moore
Nathaniel Moore
Ronald Moore
John Morrow, Jr
Harry Morton
Charlotte Moss
Alphonse Mudd
Charles F Murphy
Thomas E Nelson
Timmy Nelson
Obie N Newman
Terry J Newton
Linda Nhambure
Nathan Niebauer
James Noblitt
William Norcross
Robert & Nancy Norvel
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Curtis Pettaway
Roger Phillips
Thomas Pickering
Marie O Pitts-Mosley
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*Joseph & Diana Pulvi-renti
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Robert Ratcliff
Troy Ratliff
Maganendra P Ray
Mary Kay Reece
Fredrick Reed
Claudette Reid
James Reid
Shirley Reid
Roberta R Repta
Alfred Reynolds
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Diane Riddick
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Chuck Rikli
Coram Rimes
Arthur G Roberts
Eva Robinson
Thomas E Robinson
Thomas E Robinson
Wayne A Robinson
Benjamin And Betty Rodg-ers
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James F Rogers
Kenneth Rogers
George W Rohe
Jeanne M Roper
William Rountree
Loretta Ryder
Susan Padgett Sadler
James Sandham
Charles Scribner
Matthew S Sena
Mark Shanahan
Brooks E Shelton
Richard C. Shirley
Stephen Siben
E Ricardo Simms
Anne Simpson
Donnie Simpson

Marcus L Sisson
Raymond E Sitter
Scott Smedira
Cris Smith
R Bram Smith
R Earl Smith
*John Knight Smith
Aaron Speller
James W Stanton
Leo Staten
John E States
Miriam Stephens
James Steuernagle
Buddy Steves
Bruce Stewart
Thelma Stewart
William B Stimmel
Gary Strausberg
Stephen Sumandra
Clifford H Swensen Jr
**LaVern Tate
Larry S Taylor
Marlin Taylor
Maurice Taylor
Judith L Tharp
Anthony C Thomas
Karen L Thomas
Ruby Thomas
William C Thornton
William R Tiefel
Robert E Tiefenbacher
Jim Timble
Glenn Timm
Jackie Tompkins
Bert Trimuel
James Tuck
Robert O Tyler
Ricardo Vecchione
Kenneth Voss
Thomas P Waddock
Donald J Waldvogel
Tracey Wallace

Larry J Wallman
Kenneth Wantuch
William C Wanza
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Rodney & Tina Washington
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Lloyd White
Andrew Williams
Berestrand Williams
Beverly Y Williams
Calvin Williams
H Candis Williams
Marsha L Williams
Roman E Williams
Shuwanda Williams
Faith Williamson
Janice Hoffman Willis
Glenn Wilson
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