



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).

March 2022



Our first event of 2022 is in the books! The exhibit traveled to the Wings Over the Rockies Exploration of Flight in Englewood Colorado. Rise Above Exhibit pilot Bill Shepard reports that it was a great event and well attended with an estimated 1200 visitors to the Rise Above Exhibit.

This was the first venue for our new docent, Kelly Collin, and our driver, Don Larsen. You will learn more about them in this issue. We also had a large showing of volunteers. This was a great opportunity to do some training and orientation after two years with very little activity.

Our next event is the Women in Aviation convention in Nashville later this month where will feature the WASP presentation. That is a big and growing event and we are excited to be a part of it!

Repairs on the Mustang are progressing on schedule. All of the parts needed for the repair have been acquired and Roush Aviation expects to ship our engine later this month. We are excited to get the airplane back in the air ASAP!

An important part of flying is recurrent training and every spring all of our pilots do both flight and ground training. Because of our limited activity for the last 2 years, we are upping our game and both of these areas will be expanded. It is a big commitment of time, but essential to our continued safe operations.

On a more somber note, all of us are watching the horrific things happening in Europe right now. Many are making comparisons to what happened in World War II, and where this conflict might lead.

"Lest We Forget" is a phrase that reminds us all to remember the value of, and the price that has been paid for our freedom. This has always been a major part of the mission of the Commemorative Air Force. Keeping memories alive and learning from them, is critical. Hopefully our leaders will find the courage and wisdom to lead America and the World during these uncertain times. Thoughts and prayers for a speedy resolution to this terrible conflict.

Tail Winds,

Doug Rozendaal
CAF RISE ABOVE Leader

Our mission in action!

What a start to an amazing year!

Our first stop on the Rise Above tour started at Wings Over the Rockies in Aurora, CO. Our team consisted of Bill Shepard, Melanie Burden, Kelly Collin, Don Larson and Deidre McGee. Along with three volunteers from The Carothers family. Alex, Carri and Gabriel.

We started Monday morning with an interview at the local TV station channel 31. Great job Bill. Because of that the museum experienced a large number of patrons coming just to see the exhibit.

We had classrooms of kids and adults join us for the exhibit along with many other museum visitors. It was a great way to celebrate Black History Month here in Colorado.

Can't wait for our next stop in Nashville, TN at the Women in Aviation Conference!

~Kelly Collin, Exhibit Coordinator



Photo courtesy Chuck Johnson



Bailie and friends are huge history buffs on the WASP and Tuskegee Airmen



Kelly Collin, Melanie Burden and Deidre McGee

I had the opportunity to visit the CAF Rise Above Traveling Exhibit last week when it was in Denver at Wings over the Rockies museum. It's a beautiful setup. The films of the WASP and the Tuskegee Airmen were very educational. They rose above many challenges and obstacles to become a very important part of the air war during WWII. I highly recommend this experience.

~ Chuck Johnson



WELCOME to the CAF RISE ABOVE team!



Alex Carothers



Carri Carothers



Gabriel Carothers

We are very involved in TAI in New Mexico. Our young black boys have been immersed in their legacy since they could walk. Flight suits at every age. We've met Brig Gen Charles McGee and many other DOTA. what an honor! When we lose a DOTA, it's like losing a family member. We were not able to attend their services, but when the phone rang, and Melanie was asking for volunteers for the Rise Above display, we were honored to be asked. It was a lot of fun to hang out in the Wings Over the Rockies museum with all the airplanes, the Rise Above trailer, and the new volunteers. It was so amazing to see groups and young people walk in with a question on their faces; then walk out part angry and part resolved—ready to be more than they thought they could be. We can't wait to meet the trailer and the plane the next time.

~Alex, Carri, and Gabe Carothers

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!





America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen

FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

Robert L. Martin

February 9, 1919 – July 26, 2018

Class: 44-A-SE

Graduation Date: 1/7/1944

Unit: 100th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group

Service # 0819462

On January 7, 1944, at the age of 23, Martin graduated from flight training at the Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama. He was a member of the 100th Fighter Squadron and the 332nd Fighter Group. With the rank of lieutenant, he immediately set sail for Italy and was attached to the 100th Fighter Squadron, which helped provide cover for Allied bombers on missions over targets in Europe.

Martin liked to say he flew “63 and a half” combat missions during World War II.

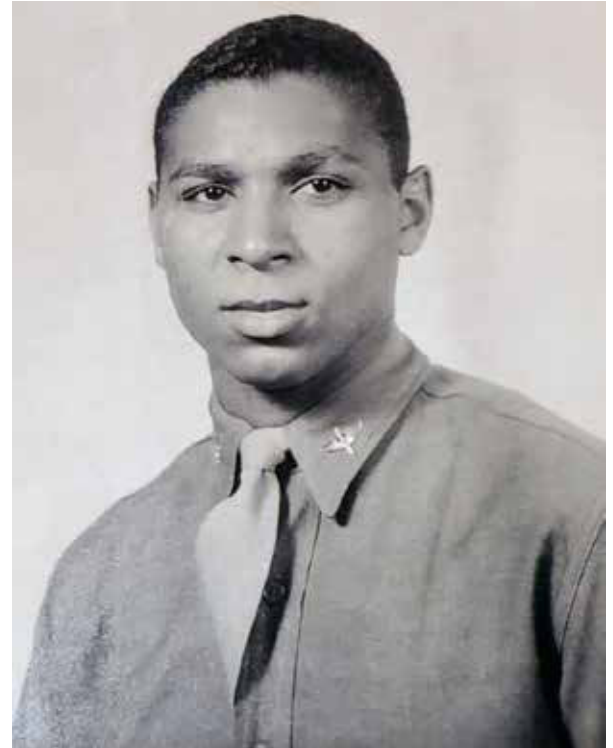
On December 9, 1944, Martin was returning to base from an escort mission when his P-51 Mustang suffered engine trouble. He was forced to land at a gunnery range Cuetelo, Italy. As the plane fell over the rough ground, the propeller was damaged. Martin was able to walk away from the crash landing.

On March 3, 1945, he was one of 24 Tuskegee Airmen conducting a rail-strafting mission in parts of Slovenia and Austria. Martin and Alphonso Simmons were hit by antiaircraft fire. Simmons was killed.

“I said, ‘I’m not going to fry, I’m going to get out of here,’” he recalled in an interview. “I got up high enough to bail out and my beautiful parachute opened and knocked me out — cut my chin open and floated me down to earth.”

He was spotted by members of Tito’s partisan forces, which controlled swaths of Yugoslav territory; Tito became Yugoslavia’s postwar Communist strongman. Taken to a farmhouse, Mr. Martin was greeted by one of Tito’s men as a “warrior on the side of the Allies.”

[**Read his complete profile online!**](#)



Learn more about the [**CAF Red Tail Squadron**](#), whose mission is sharing the inspiring legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen, America’s first black military pilots and their support personnel. Their strength, courage, and ability to triumph over adversity during WWII can serve to inspire others about how to succeed today.

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Someone asked me once what it was like to fly in combat. I said, ‘Well, it could be seven or eight hours of complete boredom and thirty to forty seconds of sheer bedlam.’”

~Tuskegee Airman Lt. Wilson V. Eagleson II



Instructor in front of cockpit talking through tube to Cadet Custis, in training for US Army Air Corps 99th Pursuit Squadron, 1st all-black combat pilot unit (African-Amer. fliers of WWII Tuskegee airmen fame), during flight school training at airfield.



Honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots

FEATURED WASP PROFILE

Marie O'Dean Bishop Parrish

February 25, 1922 - February 24, 2022

Class: 44-W-4

Training Location: Avenger Field (Sweetwater, Tex.)

Planes flown: PT-17, BT-13, AT-6, B-26, UC-78

Assigned bases: Greenville Army Air Base (Greenville, Miss.) and Tyndall Army Air Base (Panama City, Fl.)

When World War II started in Europe, the United States designated Avon Park, Texas as home to one of the hundreds of primary schools set up across America for young men to learn to fly. Convinced she was just as smart, if not smarter than the young cadets, Marie found an instructor and began taking lessons.

Once America was thrust into WWII, Marie packed up and headed for Houston, Texas, found a job in a bank, and continued flying lessons. After earning enough money to buy a third share in an airplane, she began flying with the Civil Air Patrol, patrolling the coast for downed aircraft and submarines. In 1943, she heard about the WWII Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) training program, and on her 21st birthday, she applied. She was granted an interview with the head of the program, Jacqueline Cochran.



Thus, she boarded a train to Fort Worth, Texas, passed her interview and all tests, including an Army physical, and was accepted into the WASP Class, 44-W-4. She then paid her way to Sweetwater, Texas, and from November 1943 to May 1944, she trained to fly 'the Army Way.'

Following graduation, her first AAF orders were to Greenville AFB, Mississippi, as an engineering test pilot in BT-13s and UC-78s. She was soon transferred to Tyndall AFB, Florida, completed B-26 training, and was retained as an air-to-air tow target pilot to train gunners for combat.

After earning her WASP wings, Ms. Parrish was assigned as an engineering test pilot at Greenville, Miss. After the red-lined planes were fixed, she and other WASP test pilots flew them to see if they were air worthy for the cadets to fly.

[**Read her complete profile online!**](#)

Learn more about the [**RISE ABOVE: WASP**](#), whose mission is sharing the story 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.

"I wanted to do something no one had done, pave the way and forever change the way of aviation. Someone had to do it, we had to start somewhere."

~WASP Deanie Bishop Parrish, Class 44-W-4



Women pilot trainees in class at Avenger Field in Sweetwater Texas - 1943.
LIFE Magazine - Peter Stackpole Photographer

Educational resources!

Find a wealth of information about the Tuskegee Airmen or WASP, educational resources and more. Look for [RESOURCES](#) in the menu bar!

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 and the WASP.

Purchase dog tags featuring the Six Guiding Principles, DVDs, and other materials to enhance your classroom activities in the [online store](#).



THANK YOU!

My Junior Girl Scouts and I just wanted to reach out to give thanks because you've been such an enormous help with our STEM Career Exploration badges! Since going remote, we're always looking for online material for the girls to use while working towards earning their badges. While doing some research on women in STEM, we discovered your [wonderful page](#) for additional resources, we have been using it as a reference ever since!

Please take care and best wishes,
LouAnne Taylor & her awesome Junior Scouts

WE NEED YOU!

Please help us ensure that the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and 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](#), or call 888-928-0188, or by mail at:

CAF RISE ABOVE
PO Box 416
Red Wing, MN 55066

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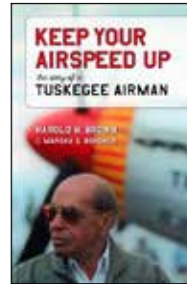
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For \$99 you can join the exclusive ranks of the Top Flight Club!

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.

Please mail correspondence or donations to our home office at:

CAF RISE ABOVE®
PO Box 416
Red Wing, MN 55066



To bring RISE ABOVE to your event, contact:

Kristi Younkin
Senior Logistics Coordinator
logistics@cafriseabove.org
(479) 228-4520

Doug Rozendaal
Squadron Leader
leader@cafriseabove.org

Kim Pardon
Public Relations/Media
PR@cafriseabove.org

For general inquiries, contact:

LaVone Kay
Marketing Director & Donor Support
info@cafriseabove.org
(888) 928-0188

Melanie Burden
Volunteer Coordinator
volunteer@cafriseabove.org

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RISE ABOVE: Red Tail - Keep an eye on our blog and don't miss out on a single story

Find an archive of all our best articles, featuring closer looks at original Tuskegee Airmen, the P-51C Mustang *Tuskegee Airmen*, and many more in-depth stories in our blog. [Check it out!](#)



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Join the conversation [@cafredtail on Twitter!](#) There's a lot going on here and you don't want to miss it. Want to help educate others about the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen? Retweet to spread the word!

