



# 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 2022



**Ready for takeoff...** It's that time of year when our team resets, replans, and re-launches the new upcoming 2022 season of the Squadron's RISE ABOVE Exhibit. We are so proud of the expanded program including the RISE ABOVE WASP movie, a tribute to the brave women serving in the Women Airforce Service Pilots program of WWII. This gives the Commemorative Air Force the ability to reach new heights in our collective mission to honor the men and women of the greatest generation.

This year we will be adding some new faces to our Tour Team. To support this, we have utilized the past months planning and coordinating a one-week intensive training program to be held at the Rocky Mountain Air Museum. This will be a live immersive activity,

so to ensure our crew gets a real-world experience before heading on the road for a 10-month tour taking us from coast to coast. It's important to note, we 'live train' the team as the Red Tail Squadron's program was designed to be riveting and experiential, so we need to train how we fly...

One of the reasons for the success of the Commemorative Air Force, or the secret sauce if you will, is our strength in our volunteers. "People come for the planes but stay for the people". At RISE ABOVE, we call our members 'Ambassadors', and as we prepare the hardware of the tour, we must also support the training and development of our greatest asset. The squadron has spent years to ensure that we were historically accurate in representing the legendary Tuskegee Airmen and WASP. We are committed to continue to raise the bar and have our ambassadors knowledgeable and welcoming.

There is still lots to do but we are well on our way. This is your call to action, to be part of the team. Be a supporter, an ambassador, sponsor, enthusiast, or a friend to RISE ABOVE this year. Get involved and find a way to continue to inspire. Reach out today at [www.cafriseabove.org](http://www.cafriseabove.org).

**AIM HIGH | BELIEVE IN YOURSELF | USE YOUR BRAIN | BE READY TO GO | NEVER QUIT | EXPECT TO WIN**

*Bill Shepard*

Bill Shepard  
CAF Rise Above Tour Leader

## A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEWSEST TEAM MEMBERS!



### ***Don Larson***

I'm a private pilot who owns a seaplane and tailwheel and am also A&P licensed, working on my Moraine Sauliner 733. I started flying in 1980 and bought my first plane, a Navy N3N-3 five years later. I liked knowing that it had a history being one of the last biplanes flown by the Navy at Annapolis and was based at the American Wings Air Museum (AWAM) in Minneapolis.

That is where I made the connection with the MN CAF Wing where I met many wonderful people including Don Hines, Spook John's, Gerry Beck, Bob Odgard, Doug Rozendaal, and Jerry Kyser. Jerry and I did many flyovers, including opening the U of M Stadium. I met CAF Rise Above pilot Matt Quy at a show and we began doing formations together.

I have worked in the transportation industry for 40 years and been hauling wide and heavy loads for Caterpillar, I also worked in the oil fields in Wyoming until till COVID closed the operation down. It was then Matt invited me to call Bill Shepard about driving the CAF Rise Above Traveling Exhibit. This is a dream job, I will be able to see all the Warbird people I know and the country.

I look forward to meeting everyone!



### ***Deidre McGee***

I chose to support the efforts of the Tuskegee Airmen through volunteer work and am excited to become part of the team of the CAF Rise Above Traveling Exhibit. My son, Charles Matthew McGee, is the grandson of the late Tuskegee Airman, Brigadier General Charles McGee. We are very honored to be a part of this proud heritage. I feel it is extremely important to keep the legacy alive. This and future generations must know and understand the significance of the Tuskegee Airmen and how their bravery, knowledge, heroism and relentless struggles against racism forged a path for equal rights.

Rise Above!



### ***Kelly Collin***

I was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area and am now living in Grass Valley, CA. I have been interested in the world of aviation and its history since I was four and had my first U-control airplane. I am a photographer and have been attending the Reno Air Races as media since 2010. I have flown in many WWII airplanes over the years, including the B29 FiFi. I am so excited to be joining the team and have been dreaming of a job like this my whole life. My dad would be so proud. I can't wait to meet everyone!

## REMEMBERING AND HONORING THE LEGACY OF BRIGADIER GENERAL CHARLES MCGEE



“Hero” is a word tossed around so much in today’s society its meaning has become diluted. We too often call a sports figure who has a God-given talent to hit, catch, or throw a ball a “Hero.” Perhaps we should either be more sparing in attributing that status or, better yet, use a new word to describe those individuals who are real “Heroes.” I propose we use the word “Charles.”

Brigadier General Charles McGee set a standard in his 102 years on this earth to which all should aspire and few can hope to achieve. This is written the morning after his memorial service where a long line of incredible Americans paid tribute to the life of a man who really did change the world. Not by catching a pass that won a Super Bowl; or landing a stricken airplane safely. Charles’ entire life was about humble service to others.

Charles’ three children talked about what he was like as a husband and father. They told of his kindness and humility. Charles believed and served his faith, his country, his family, and his entire life was built on service to others. They shared his “4 Ps” --Perceive, dream your dream. Prepare, get a good education and learn to speak well. Perform, let excellence be your goal. And Persevere, do not let happenstance of birth be an excuse not to achieve. There were stories of soldiers in his command on whom Charles made a profound impact including

Astronaut Frank Borman whose Air Force flying career was saved because Charles went to bat for him.

His military service was regaled by a line of General officers with as many stars as the Milky Way. They spoke of his military service in 3 wars – WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. They spoke of his record 409 combat missions, an incredible record. About how the barriers broken by Charles and the Tuskegee Airmen made their personal careers possible.

His Pastor shared how Charles was always the first to pick up the tables and chairs after a social at the Church. And that at 99 he volunteered for a 3-year-term to chair a fundraising campaign for the church – an appointment that expired just weeks before his death.

Charles was an Eagle Scout and a distinguished young Eagle Scout spoke of Charles support for the Scouts. Charles would often say that if everyone lived by the Scout Oath, the world would be a different place.

Here at the CAF Rise Above Squadron Charles’ influence cannot be overstated. He was ever-present. Every year he would travel wherever he was requested to support our program and help us tell his story and the story of the Tuskegee Airmen. He was our inspiration and our biggest fan.

Nearly 25 years ago when the Red Tail Squadron was little more than a dream and our airplane was a pile of corroded aluminum on the hangar floor Charles gave us the inspiration and the vision to forge ahead. And when we started to develop the plan to build a traveling exhibit, we looked to Charles to refine the story. Along the way we’ve encountered adversities in our program. Charles was always available and always had a wise word to share that helped us find the way forward.

So was Charles a hero? He would object to that label. He was far more than a hero, he was Charles. Probably the finest man I have ever known, and one of the finest that ever lived. With his humble confidence he impacted countless people in a positive way and provided an example that all of us should aspire to, Service and Sacrifice above Self. We’re going to miss you Charles. Godspeed.

Doug Rozendaal  
CAF RISE ABOVE Leader



"I grew up learning that you treated others like you wanted to be treated." The general was one who did not tolerate self-pity or victimization. He told young people at schools and other public-speaking events. "Don't let the circumstances be an excuse for not achieving."

"We could have gone off, bowed our heads, and said they called me names and they don't like me and don't want me to serve our country. But look at what that would have meant, what we did accomplish."

To emulate his success, Brig Gen McGee had a formula he called "the four Ps".

**Perceive: Prepare, Perform, and Persevere.**

**Perceive:** Dream your dreams, find out what your talents are.

**Preparation:** That means getting a good education.

**Perform:** Once you've set a goal for yourself, and you've gotten the education for how to do it, it's all about doing it and doing it well

**Persevere:** Pressing on even when there is something (or someone) pushing back.



## Our mission in action!

Dear Squadron Leader Rozendaal:

WOW! Got my two caps and pin today. I am impressed.

You listened when I requested two caps. Thank you. The tie tack is made in the USA. Double thank you for USA sourcing.

To get back to the cap: Up close, this cap is even better than pictured. The design, quality, and overall workmanship are superior to anything I have seen before. Your logo is impressive in black and white - in color it's outstanding. Patch after patch contribute to make a colorful, PRIDEFUL, cap to wear with honor for all those who served. The designers and makers are to be credited.

We are losing our youth and using them to front for adult problems and conflicts. You're taking such a valuable message to everyone. My folks were of the Greatest Generation. They were important, their values were important. They were not perfect, but their messages of work-ethic, self-respect, self-reliance and basic decency are not to be trashed or forgotten. As you promote: you overcome your obstacles by self-reliance and persistence and using your brain and talents. Something we all need to remember to bring to mind a positive attitude. Everyone, regardless of age, race, or even country benefits from these values and I'm happy to support you.

Thank you for these super caps and tie tack. I've enclosed an additional gift of \$50; just a token of the value of these caps and tie tack.

*B. Hejdoneck*  
Barbara Hejdoneck







*America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen*

## FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

### **Lemuel Lewie Jr.**

November 8, 1919 – April 14, 2019

Lemuel A. Lewie, Jr. served as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Force with the 477th Bomber Group. He was drafted into the military service at Fort Jackson, S.C. in 1942. While waiting to go to Tuskegee for pilot training, Lewie was sent to Atlanta University for training at the Adjutant General's Administrative School in 1943. During his term of active duty, he trained in administration, chemical warfare, radio communications, aerial gunnery, bombardment, and aviation. In 1944, Lieutenant Lewie was sent to Tuskegee Army Air Force Base where he received pilot training with Piper Cubs. In 1945, he was sent to Midland Army Air Field, Texas where he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant.

He was then assigned to the 477th Bomber Group at Godman Army Air Field, Kentucky. Lieutenant Lewie was reassigned on special orders to Tuskegee for pilot training where he received basic training classes in AT 6 planes and advanced training in flying B25J planes. During this period, he was trained at Tuskegee's Moton Field to fly the PT-13 aircraft. Reflecting back to his training at Tuskegee, Lewie remembers his most memorable experiences include being the first student officer in his class to fly solo, his spectacular night flying, being trained by excellent officers, and serving as payroll master for the Corp of Engineers with a biweekly payroll of \$25,000.



[\*\*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.

**“Proper education and exposure to the world of Aviation will ensure, for our youth, the attainment of careers in the field of aero sciences and aeronautics. We must feed that hunger for experience well above the norm.”**

**~Tuskegee Airman Dr. Milton P. Crenshaw**



B-25 of the 477th Bombardment Group at Atterbury Army Air Field, Columbus, Indiana



*Honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots*

## FEATURED WASP PROFILE

### **Phyllis Burchfield Fulton**

WAFS, Class "The Originals"

June 15, 1911 - June 21, 2012

Planes flown:

PT-19, BT-13, AT-6, A-20, B-24

Training Location:

New Castle Army Air Base (Wilmington, Del.)

Assigned Bases:

New Castle Army Air Base (Wilmington, Del.)

Romulus Army Air Base (Mich.)



In fall 1942, Phyllis was instructing a Civil Pilot Training class for Midsouth Airways in Memphis. "Nancy Love called me and said there was an opening – was I interested? I was. I was in the middle of a class and flight instructors were scarce, but I went up to New Castle anyway and took my flight test on October 9 in a Stearman. I passed with no problems. My flight time in the Great Lakes was a big help. A lot of the girls hadn't flown anything bigger than Cubs and the Stearman was more than some of them could handle. But then they said I was too short to Qualify. I'm only five feet tall."

She went back to Memphis, but not without stopping enroute at Petersburg, West Virginia, to see her fiancé, Army 2nd Lieutenant George Fulton. They decided to get married that Sunday in Baltimore – October 11, 1942. "Then I went back to Memphis and picked up my class. Ten days later, I got a wire saying report back to New Castle immediately. I had been granted a waiver on my height."

Phyllis became number eighteen on the active roster. In January 1943, she was transferred, along with Del Scharr, Barbara Poole, Barbara Donahue and Katherine Rawls Thompson, to the 3rd Ferry Group in Romulus, Michigan. Then on August 24, 1943, Phyllis took emergency leave from the WAFS when George was seriously injured when he flipped a Jeep and badly mangled his left arm. She went to California to help him recuperate and applied for transfer back to Long Beach to be near him until he was out of danger, but Commander deArcy at Romulus told her no. Phyllis finally had to resign. After that, she followed George on whatever assignment he was given and eventually the Army sent him to Triest, Italy where they spent more than three years, returning to the U.S. in December 1951.

[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.



Amelia Earhart came to speak to our school. I was in the front row and she came forward and stood right in front of me and I felt she was looking right down at me.

WASP Ann Baumgartner Carl, Class 43-W-5



Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas, welcomes its first class of women pilots.

## 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](#).

### Comments from guests after visiting the CAF Rise Above Traveling Exhibit:

The selfless service you are giving to young folks can't be measured. You are ensuring young people realize they can rise above any obstacles they encounter if they believe in themselves. The Red Tails are your receipts to prove it!

I'm so thankful for what you all are doing to keep the Red Tail story alive.

Sincerely,  
LTC (Ret.) Phyllis Wilder



## 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**

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!

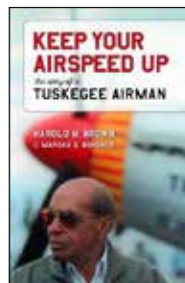
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**Why 99?** *(for each membership)*

## [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®  
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To bring RISE ABOVE to your event, contact:

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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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