



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).

June 2022

2022 AirVenture Oshkosh, Wisconsin July 25-30, 2022

Come visit the CAF Rise Above Traveling Exhibit at KidVenture and meet Tuskegee Airmen Lt Col James Harvey and Lt Col George Hardy

[Click here for schedule](#), subject to change!



Lt. Col. James Harvey III is best known as the first African American USAF jet fighter combat pilot to fight in the Korean War. Harvey and his 332nd Fighter Group Weapons pilot team won the USAF's inaugural "Gunnery Meet" team competition in 1949. He was recently granted his wish to be honored for the 1949 inaugural 'Top Gun' competition win. His story was captured and told in this 10-minute documentary, [The Untold Story of the First Top Gun Competition](#).

[Click here to read his profile.](#)

Lt. Col. George Hardy is an American retired pilot and military officer. In World War II Hardy served with the Tuskegee Airmen and flew 21 combat missions. In the Korean War he flew 45 combat mission as the pilot of a bomber. In the Vietnam War Hardy flew 70 combat missions piloting an AC-119K gunship.

[In this interview he reflects on his service and his experiences since.](#)

[Click here to read his profile.](#)

Meet and greet authors of *What Grandma Did* and *The Women With Silver Wings*
Books available for purchase and can be autographed!

At KidVenture, Oshkosh, Wisconsin

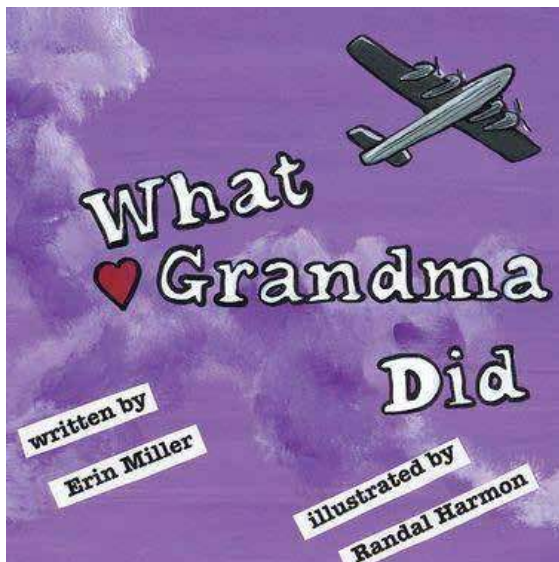


Erin Miller

Wednesday July 27 from 9:15am - 12:15pm

Erin Miller is the granddaughter of WASP WWII pilot Elaine Danforth Harmon. Erin and her family organized and advocated, leading to the unanimous passage of a bill that allows WASP to be buried at Arlington.

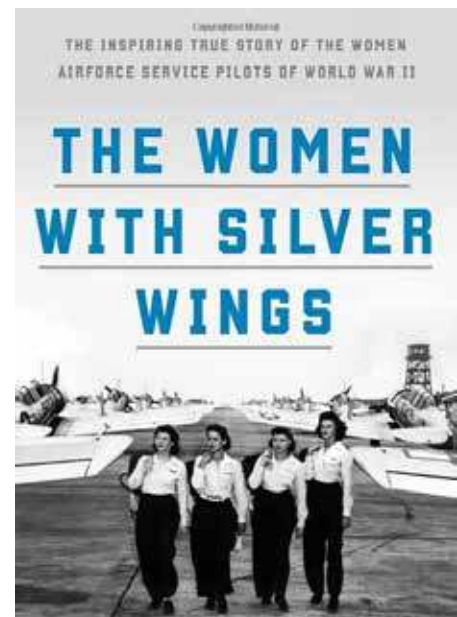
What Grandma Did by Erin Miller is a fantastic treat for young girls and women—and, who are we kidding— young boys and men, too! It tells us about the brave women (our grandmothers and great grandmothers) who served as Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) during World War II.



Katherine Sharp Landdeck

Thursday July 28 from 9:00am -12:00pm

After over twenty-five years of research, historian Katherine Sharp Landdeck delivers the definitive book on the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II. *The Women With Silver Wings* takes us alongside the WASP from the Golden Age of Aviation in the 1930s, through the war years, and into their lives after the war. We get to know the women as they fly the fastest military planes of the war and cheer for them as they spend the 1970s fighting to not be forgotten. Their story inspires readers to learn more about these women and to follow their own dreams.



**Thank you to our
Ambassadors for
being our “Boots on
the Ground!”**

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



Ambassador Deidre McGee at
Boulder, Colorado



Ambassador Phil Peterson at Hill
AFB, Utah



Trey Reed attended the event at Boulder
with his grandfather, Mark Reed!

Guests in the spirit of the 1940's
WWII Era Ball.



Karina Lawson visited us at Hill AFB.



Aisha and Jose from Northrop
Grumman stopped in also.

Our son who is almost 4, was enthralled with this movie. I was surprised because it was more adult in nature. We watched it 4 times over the course of the two day air show. The team gave he and his sister special dog tags, which they are thrilled with. I found the message of 'only you can stop you' from succeeding, was impactful. Their stories were truly inspirational, and the determination of the group of airmen, in the face of such adversity, was profound.

Our daughter who is almost 6, has a bomber jacket from the WASPS, from my sister who is in special ops with the Air Force.
~Claire



I liked the movie and the planes I drew
this red tail plane in your honor. You
guys are super cool.
By: Ally Edstrom.





America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen

FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

Calvin J. Spann

November 28, 1924 – September 6, 2015

Class: 44-G-SE

Graduation Date: 8/4/1944

Service # T64642

Calvin J. Spann was an original Tuskegee Airman and fighter pilot with the 100th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group. Spann received his wings from the Tuskegee Flight School as a part of the graduating class of 44G. As a member of the United States Army Air Corps, he served in Europe during World War II, where Spann flew 26 combat missions before the end of the war in the European Theatre.

During Spann's wartime service (1944–1946), he was assigned to the 332nd Fighter Group under the command of Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., who on September 2, 1941, was the first African American officer to solo an aircraft under the U.S. Army Air Corps. Davis would later rise to the rank of General in the United States Air Force.

While assigned to the 332nd, he flew in the longest bomber escort mission of 15th Air Force, a 1600-mile round trip mission on March 24, 1945 from Ramitelli, Italy to Berlin, Germany to destroy the Daimler-Benz manufacturing plant. During that same mission, Calvin and his squadron commander, Captain Roscoe Brown, engaged one of the new Nazi M.E. 262 jet fighters with their P-51 Mustangs, and Roscoe became the first black pilot to shoot down one of the new German jets.

Despite this achievement, after his military service, Spann found it difficult to obtain work as a pilot. The racial climate of America at the time was not friendly despite Spann's worthy credentials and service to the country. Spann eventually settled in New Jersey, raising three children and excelling in pharmaceutical sales. He also owned a restaurant and bar along with a real estate business.

Later in his life, Spann spoke at schools, churches and organizations about the Tuskegee Airmen experience and how their courage and valor helped them to triumph. During these speeches, he encouraged students to make a commitment to excel in the study of mathematics and science, and reminding them that through preparation and perseverance they can succeed.

[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.

“I was determined, because from the very beginning — I don’t know why or where it came from — but the rumor was out there that because I was black, I couldn’t learn. I was determined to prove that wrong.”

~Tuskegee Airman Calvin Spann



Class SE-44-G graduated August 4, 1944

George L. Bing, John E. Edwards, William H. Edwards, James H. Fischer, Thurston L. Gaines, Jr., Robert E. Garrison, Jr., Newman C. Golden, Leo R. Gray, Paul L. Green, Conrad A. Johnson, Jr., Benny R. Kimnrough, John H. Lyle, Elbert N. Merriweather, Jr., Leland H. Pennington, Ronald W. Reeves, Maury M. Reid, Jr., William E. Rice, Robert C. Robinson, Jr., Calvin J. Spann, Thomas C. Street, Harold L. White, Joseph C. White, Robert E. Williams, Jr.

Photo courtesy Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell, AFB, Alabama



Honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots

FEATURED WASP PROFILE

Virginia Mae Hope

August 17, 1921- December 7, 1944

Class 43-W-7

Planes flown: AT-11, B-25, C-60, UC-78

Assigned Bases: Asheville Weather Wing HQ, (AACS) (N.C.) and Patterson Field, 2nd Weather Region HQ (Fairfield, Ohio)

Virginia Mae Hope was born August 17, 1921, the daughter of Robert Q. and Adaline A. Hope of Winnebago, Minnesota. Early in 1941, during a term at Northwestern University, she enrolled in a flight training course and obtained a pilot's license. In 1943 she enrolled in the Women's Air Service Pilots (WASP) and spent six months at its training camp in Sweetwater, Texas.

Virginia Hope was assigned to Army Air Forces Weather Wing, 69th AAF Base Unit, at Patterson Field, Fairfield, Ohio, in November 1943. The Weather Wing at that time supervised all weather units assigned to the Army Air Forces. Her duties included ferrying Weather Service personnel and planes on military missions. Virginia was known to say, "Isn't it just wonderful!" about her WASP career, though she and other female pilots faced blatant discrimination simply because they were women.

In November 1944, she secured a position in Oklahoma City ferrying surplus army planes to civilian airports for resale. On December 7, 1944, she and 16 other pilots were killed in a plane crash at Omaha, Nebraska.



[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.

“But what I loved was that the planes I flew never asked if you were a man or a woman; they flew just as well for me as anyone else.”

WASP Elizabeth “Betty” Wall Strohfus

Class 43-W-4



Class 43-W-4 members with instructor. Nancye Ruth Lowe Crout, Eileen Marjorie Roach Kesti, Mary Edith Engle, Isabel Madison Van Lom (Center), Virginia Malany Meloney, Virginia Hill Wood, Ruth Florey Underwood. Avenger Field, Sweetwater, Texas, 1943

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](#).

WE LOVE HEARING FROM YOU!

It was a great experience! It just reminded me of how far we've come as a nation and our ability to overcome so many things.

~ Deporhal Denmark

Thank you for the follow up. It was an impressive display, one that I was pleased to share with my 18-year-old daughter. Though I have read some about the WASPs, I learned even more with your film. The dedication and sacrifice of those ladies paved the way for my own career. Thank you for documenting their story and bringing it so professionally and engagingly to the public!

~Angie Faulise, Col, USAF (ret)

Former 99 FTS Instructor Pilot



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!

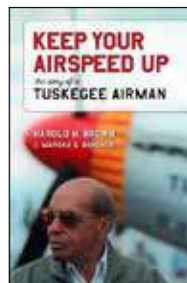
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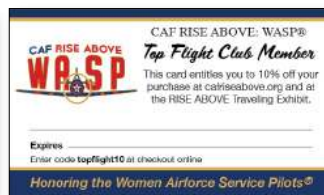
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For \$99 you can join the exclusive ranks of the Top Flight Club!

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®
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Red Wing, MN 55066



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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!