

NEWSLETTER OF THE **DETROIT CHAPTER** OF
THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN INCORPORATED

February
2017



Hawk's



Cry II

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TAIDETNewsletter@Comcast.Net

THE CW50



TUSKEGEE AIRMEN CONTACT LISTING

(OFFICERS-BOARD MEMBERS - 2012)

NAME	E-MAIL	PHONE
President — Miguel Thornton	migueltornton@gmail.com	(732) 625-0475
1st Vice President —Gwen McNeal	zetaphil1@hotmail.com	
2nd Vice President —Eric Love	condor1L@yahoo.com	
Treasurer — Gregory Whiting	gwhitin1@yahoo.com	
Secretary — Theodore Whitely	bettytedwhitely@aol.com	
Parliamentarian — Robert Tillman	majorbobtillman@gmail.com	
Sergeant At Arms —Larry Sargent	sgtsgt209@yahoo.com	
Membership —Bill Welborne	welborne313@gmail.com	
Hawk's Cry II —Eric Palmer	TATDETNewsletter@comcast.net	
Ways & Means — Tony Stevenson	nighthawk172@yahoo.com	
Planning — Eric Love	condor1L@yahoo.com	
Public Relations — Eric Palmer	TATDETNewsletter@comcast.net	
Historian —Lawrence Milben		
Good & Welfare —Tony Stevenson	nighthawk172@yahoo.com	
Youth Programs — Brian Smith	bsmith1995@aol.com	
Speakers Bureau —Alexander Jefferson	alexjeff01@juno.com	
Chaplin —Dr. Theodore Whitely	bettytedwhitely@aol.com	
Additional Board Members		
Hugh Barrington Jr.	HFBarringtonJr@aol.com	
William Thompson Jr.	Wilthom273@yahoo.com	

Alternate Information Contact Information

Washington Ross	washingtor@aol.com
Shirley Rankin	s-rankin22@hotmail.com
William Henderson	wfastfac@aol.com
William Thompson	wmhortont@aol.com
Donald Carter	mccar10@att.net
Brian Smith	bsmith1995@aol.com

CENTRAL REGION

Marv K. Abrams—TAI Central Region President
abramsmk@aol.com

SITES OF INTEREST

Simply SELECT The Link

[National Organization](#)
[TA National Museum](#)
[TA National Historic Site](#)

ON THE COVER: Logo for CW50 show: Street Beat. For Black History Month DOTAs Alexander Jefferson and Frederick Henry were interviewed and will appear on it.

PUBLISHED BY:

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THE PRESIDENTS' PAGE



THE NEXT TWO CHAPTER MEETINGS

Thursday, 9 February 2017 and 9 March 2017 @ 1900 hours (7:00 p.m.)

Please Arrive between 6:30 & 6:45pm-before doors are locked.

At 613 Abbott in Downtown Detroit (3rd and Abbott)

REMEMBER: CHAPTER MEETINGS ARE ALWAYS THE 2ND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS

Please Wear Tuskegee Airmen Marked Clothing to Meetings to Show Uniformity

Greetings to you all!

OUR BEST IS BEFORE US

2017 - YEAR OF GROWTH

Since we have closed the door on 2016 (A BANNER YEAR), let's welcome the challenges of 2017. We are very happy that God has shown favor on us.

Let's see what is already on our plate.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| = February and March | Presentations all over the state |
| = April 9 – October 9, 2017 | EAA/Young Eagles |
| = April 12, 2017 | Metro Detroit Youth Day Planning Breakfast |
| = April 28, 2017 | St Clair County Veterans Activities |
| = April 29, 2017 | Michigan Military and Space Heroes Banquet |
| = May 19, 2017 | Star Base Youth Program SANGB |
| = | Classes and Hands on activities |
| = May 26-28, 2017 | Detroit City Airport Youth Programs |
| = June 24-25 | Detroit River Days Air Show and Sales |
| = June 26, 2017 | Detroit Fire works |
| = July 13-16 | National Conference TAI, Orlando, Florida |
| = August 19-20, 2017 | Selfridge ANGB 100th Anniversary Air Show |
| = August date TBD | Heritage Festival, Idlewild, Michigan |
| = September 2-4, 2017 | Thunder Over Michigan, Willow Run |
| = November date TBD | 29th Annual Museum Banquet and Honors |
| = December 7, 2017 | Annual Membership Dinner |

There are many other things that we shall be involved in. We plan to bring at least 20 cadets into our Chapter and assign them to a mentor. They will go through orientation and obtain and understanding of the Airmen. We shall have an educational program that will help them with their standardized testing, reading and writing. Our membership chair has set goals for new members that he will share with us.

There are several positions in Leadership that need to be filled either elected or appointed. We will appoint folks for the remainder of the term. We need you for the success of our chapter.

The best is yet to come. Are you ready?

REFLECT RE-ESTABLISH RE-DEDICATE

BRING YOUR LAP TOPS TO OUR NEXT TWO MEETINGS, ANY PERSON THAT WILL BE WORKING WITH OUR YOUNG FOLKS (EAA/YOUNG EAGLES) WILL NEED TO HAVE A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK. WE MAY COMPLETE THE PROCESS ON LINE FOR FREE AT OUR NEXT TWO MEETINGS.

These are notes for February and March.

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| = February 7, 2017 | Canton Public Library | Film and Q & A |
| = February 23, 2017 | John R, King Academy | Film and Q & A |
| = February 26, 2017 | Michigan Veterans | Ypsilanti, MI |
| = March 16, 2017 | Distinguished Warriors | Det. Urban League |
| = April 29, 2017 | Michigan Veterans Program | Saginaw, Michigan |

Offices that need to be filled

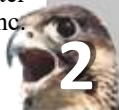
- = Parliamentary
- = Ways and Means
- = Planning
- = Public Relations
- = Good and Welfare

Be Blessed,

Miguel Thornton
President

Detroit Chapter
Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.

The Hawk's Cry II



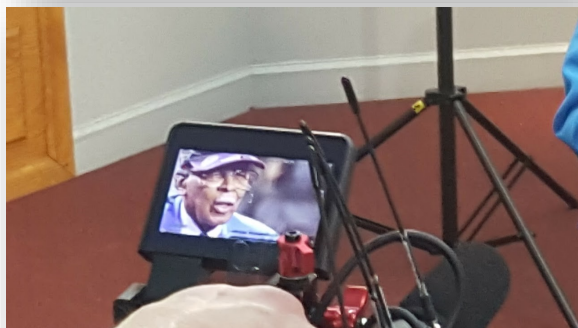
LOCAL HAPPENINGS

These are some “behind-the-scenes” pictures from a filming done at the [Tuskegee Airmen National Historical Museum](#).

Amyre Makupson, retired news anchor and director of public affairs at [WKBD](#) in Detroit interviewed DOTAs **Alexander Jefferson** and **Frederick Henry** for Black History Month for a CW50 show called [Street Beat](#). The interviews will initially air on [Street Beat](#) on [channel 50](#) on Saturday, February 11th at 8:30 am and then clips will be shown throughout the early morning on [channel 62](#), Monday, February 13th at 7:25, 7:55, 8:25 and 8:55am. [Street Beat](#) goes behind the headlines to focus on community issues and stories of interest to Metro Detroit presented in an upbeat mix of in-studio interviews and pre-produced packages by a crew of local people dedicated to improving our city. Contact Street Beat via [email](#).



LOCAL HAPPENINGS



The Hawk's Cry II



Rochelle Riley: Lt. Col. Alex Jefferson is a wingman for history

Rochelle Riley, Detroit Free Press Columnist 9:12 p.m. ET Jan. 13, 2017



(Photo: Ryan Garza, Detroit Free Press)

A Detroiter's war as a Tuskegee Airman and POW in Germany fuels his mission to preserve the unit's legend. Television and black history combined Thursday night (Jan 12) to bring the world a unique celebration of culture, music and achievement. Called ["Taking The Stage."](#) it featured an eclectic mix of stars honoring the [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#), which opened last September. The highlight of the event was a salute to six surviving members of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, black pilots who escorted bombers across Europe. They included my friend, **Lt Col. (Ret) Alexander Jefferson** of Detroit, shown here in a photo from 2014. It was a magnificent and glorious moment to watch Gen. Colin Powell and President Barack Obama salute those heroes. **If you missed the column on his amazing life, here it is again:**

Originally published Oct. 16, 2005

The first thing you notice about Lt. Col. Alex Jefferson, retired, is that you can take the man out of the Army, but you can't take the Army out of the man. At 83, his attire is spick-and-span, his pants perfectly creased, his shoes a mirror if you need one. His slight frame is ramrod straight. The second thing you see as he walks you around his three-bedroom house is that he should charge admission. If Detroit's Museum of African American History really wants to prosper, it need do no more than establish a wing for one of the great stories of the Second World War, the tales of the Tuskegee Airmen, the military's first black pilots, who were trained at a remote training complex near Tuskegee, Ala. The Airmen, formally the 332nd Fighter Group, comprised three black squadrons. The Black Red Tail Angels, so named because the tails of their planes were painted red, flew 15,553 sorties and 1,578 missions, mostly escorting bombers as they hit strategic targets across North Africa, Sicily and Europe. The black bomber escorts made history because they never lost a bomber to the enemy. That Tuskegee museum wing would have a special place for Jefferson, who was shot down while flying over France and was held in German prison camps for nine months. It would be the perfect home for the former prisoner of war's history, which is documented in thousands of photographs, artifacts, awards and medals that now reside with Jefferson in his east side Detroit home. Like much of American history lived by black heroes, the Tuskegee Airmen's exploits took decades to gain the national attention they deserved. They fought in a war that changed the world, but it didn't change their world in America. They returned home not to recognition of their contribution, nor appreciation for the prisoners of war, but to an America where black people were segregated, denigrated and treated with disdain. They returned to a country whose commercial airlines would not let them be pilots. "I went back home after being treated as an officer and a gentleman in Germany because of the Geneva Conventions," Jefferson said, "and coming back, we walked down the gangplank in New York harbor and a little white soldier at the bottom of the gangplank said, 'Whites to the right, niggers to the left.' " Coming back home. Back to racism. Segregation. 1945. "There was no sense of saving the world. We knew that we were knocking down barriers, but to be able to fly! The government gave me a \$40,000 airplane to play with. ... " For a young man who had dreamed of flying since he was 4 years old, growing up with his family in a little house off Michigan Avenue, the dream far outweighed the hurts. And his parents had taught him a valuable lesson that carried him through the war and through his life: "I was taught by my mother and my father, just because somebody calls you a dirty name, you're angry on the inside, that's that person's problem. He's the stupid one. He's the ignorant one. Because if you become so torn up, you lose sight of your objective, then that person controls you. "Many guys who went south as Tuskegee Airmen encountered racism. Many times, it caused them to not complete the mission," he said. "I knew that I wanted to fly. I knew the system. I knew how to cope with the system. And I was determined to become a pilot. " Many of the nearly 200 surviving Tuskegee Airmen live in metro Detroit, where they've established the National Museum of the Tuskegee Airmen at Historic Fort Wayne on the Detroit River. Their story should be a part of the required curriculum in American high schools. And few of the stories are as compelling as that of Jefferson, who was flying his P-51 Mustang, named Margo, over southern France when he was shot down. It was Aug. 12, 1944, three days before the invasion of southern France. Jefferson spent nine months as POW, knitting his own socks, listening to BBC broadcasts of the Allied advances, doing camp chores and drawing sketches of his imprisonment and about the war. Those last months were spent at Stalag VII-A, 20 miles north of Dachau. It was the camp featured in the movie "The Great Escape." Jefferson arrived a month after the mostly failed escape attempt led to 50 recaptured POWs being executed. His history, historic photos and sketches are featured in his new book, "Red Tail Captured, Red Tail Free" (Fordham University Press, \$29.95). The book, 56 years in the making, is the result of thousands of hours of Alex Jefferson working in his basement. It should be a part of every public school and community library in America. It's the story of a young Detroit man who graduated from Chadsey High and Clark College in Atlanta, went to the airbase where he learned to fly - then went off to help save the world. Alexander Jefferson was born Nov. 15, 1921, the year that the General Motors Building was completed on Grand Boulevard. His father was Alexander Jefferson, a lifelong Republican with an eighth-grade education who was a math whiz but spent his entire life as a laborer at Detroit Lubricator Co. His mother was Jane White Jefferson, a 1910 graduate of Clark, whose grandfather was instrumental in founding Morehouse College in Atlanta. The family lived on 28th Street, two blocks north of Michigan, in a house that became a stopping point for Southern relatives looking for better lives. Jefferson calls his father an "unofficial railroad conductor for those travelers." Jefferson was an exceptional student because his mother demanded it and because he had the acumen. He dreamed of flying, built model airplanes. He knew he'd be a pilot. But he also knew racism. "My uncle would drive down from Atlanta, and I knew on Hwy. 25 and 27 where to buy gas," he recalled. "So I knew racism."



LOCAL HAPPENINGS

He graduated from Chadsey in 1938 as the world was changing, then headed to Atlanta to attend Clark, his mother's alma mater. "Four years in Atlanta, I had a Model A Ford. I was a big man on campus. But I weighed 90 pounds dripping wet," he said. "So what did I do? I became a cheerleader, with all the pretty girls. I made all the games. But that's all a part of life. Calculate. Know what you want to do and go to it. "During my senior year at Clark, the Army came through with recruiters to recruit guys going to Tuskegee. We had to be college graduates, and I wanted to quit during my senior year and my dad said, 'Hell, no, graduate first.' As soon as I graduated, June 1942, I went down to the Federal Building down on Lafayette and took the exam. I passed the written exam and flunked the physical because I weighed only 115 pounds. I went to drink some water, eat bananas and they swore me in July '42 into the Reserves. I thought I was going to go to Tuskegee. They said go home and wait." Jefferson attended Howard University until April 1943, when he got his notice to go to Tuskegee Army Air Field, where he spent nine months in pilot training. His unit was reassigned to Selfridge for overseas training. "After 4, we're free so we drive to Detroit to go to the Valley, and the Valley is vibrant. It's kicking," he said, referring to Paradise Valley, where black jazz and clubs and life abounded. "If I can get to my house at 28th and Michigan Avenue, if I can get there before 11 o'clock, I've got a bed. But my dad said don't come into his house after 11 o'clock. "Today, I realize and remember that I respected his house. I don't even question. Kids today say, 'I'm going to go home and tell him I can sleep in my bed.' I never had that kind of an attitude." In Europe, Jefferson's job was to escort the bombers at high altitude "and then go down on the deck and look for opportunities - trains railroad stations, barges on the river, look for things of opportunity," he said. He had flown 18 long-range bomber escort missions before Aug. 12, 1944, when he was assigned to knock out radar stations on the coast of southern France. "The group had four or five targets," he said. "These radar stations sat up on a cliff. Sixteen airplanes ... went in by groups of four. The first would fly through. Then the second. The third and fourth. I was the last member of number 4. I was number 16. "By that time the whole side of the cliff was alive with anti-aircraft ... At about 50 feet, the darn shell came up through the floor right in front of me. Fire. And I had to pull up. I pulled up to get some altitude to bail out." He hit his release button on his safety belt and was thrown out. "I remember watching the tail go by with all the fire and I pulled the D ring" on his parachute. "You're supposed to count 1-2-3. I was too darn close, so I just pulled it. And all I could see was green. "When I hit the ground and rolled over, a German said, 'Ach zo.' ... I landed right in the middle of the guys who shot me down. That was the beginning of nine months in Germany." Jefferson was taken to a villa, to an officer. "As I walked in ... I saluted. And in perfect English, he said, 'Lieutenant, have a seat.' Turns out the guy had graduated from the University of Michigan in 1936 and had gone back to Germany, and they put him charge of artillery." The German asked Jefferson questions, but then shared information. "He could describe how you catch the Oakland streetcar behind the library behind J.L. Hudson. He knew more about me than I knew about myself, my grades in high school and Clark ... He even knew how much taxes my dad paid on his house." When liberation came, Jefferson stopped at Dachau concentration camp to view some of the worst atrocities of war. "I saw Dachau, where the ovens were still warm. You opened the door with the half-burned bodies," he said. After the war, the Tuskegee base closed, and the unit moved to Lockbourne Air Force Base in Columbus, Ohio, where Jefferson met his wife, Adella McDonald, who packed parachutes. The couple married there and stayed in Columbus until 1947, when they came to Detroit. He worked for the post office while attending Wayne State to get his teaching certificate, and later a master's degree. He spent 30 years with the Detroit Public Schools before retiring as a vice principal in 1979. His wife died in 1970. They had two daughters. He is among the heroes of World War II, but he is not bitter that not everyone knows the story of the Tuskegee Airmen. "You've got to remember, a lot of guys got killed. We came back, we survived. We were too busy raising families. We got mortgages, buying houses, raising kids, fighting this new job under racist circumstances. We were too busy living." Jefferson's personal accomplishments are equally impressive. He has mentored young students, including five from Detroit who went on to attend the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. Between them and the hundreds of speeches he gives each year all over the country, he is living the appreciation he earned 60 years ago. Now enshrined in the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame, and wearing his Tuskegee Airmen wings as a bracelet on his right arm, history has given him something that no one can take away. His book tells his story. The students he mentored give him honor. And he is proud to be an American. His legacy lives on.

Contact **ROCHELLE RILEY** at 313-223-4473 or riley@freepress.com

Alex Jefferson

Age: 83

Title: Lt. Col., US Army, Ret.

Fame: Tuskegee Airman and World War II POW

MYOB: His significant other is Lillian Eustace, who also lives on Detroit's east side. "When we have an argument, I go to my house, she goes to hers. And the next night, we go out to dinner."

Current duties: Travels the country speaking about the Tuskegee Airmen and about personal responsibility. "You don't let a child wait until he's 20 to decide what church. You start him off at the age of 2 or 3. ... You don't wait until a child is 15, 16, 17 to decide he's going to college. You tell him when he's a child of 2 or 3 that he's going to college."

Drives: A 1998 "black on black, interior black, completely black Lincoln Town car," which he plans to drive "until the wheels fall off."

Survival tip: "You rise to the occasion and you do what you have to do. You only get scared two weeks later when you sit down and really think about what happened. Then you get scared and you shake. But while it's happening, you're too busy."

'Red Tail Captured, Red Tail Free'

By Lt. Col. Alexander Jefferson

Fordham University Press, 168 pages, \$29.95

The book is available at Barnes & Noble and Borders, or from Jefferson at 313-368-0674.



LOCAL HAPPENINGS

TAI monthly General Membership will be held Thursday, February 9, 2017, at 7:00 PM. All members who have not paid their dues for 2017 please plan to do so at this meeting. Thank you!

Bill Welborne
Membership Chair.

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This award-winning documentary was shown pre-released on selected AA aircraft worldwide to celebrate diversity for Black History Month 2016.

American Airlines

The Hawk's Cry II



DETROIT CITY COUNCIL

MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS



TASK FORCE MEETING

DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2017

FROM: 3:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

**LOCATION: COLEMAN A. YOUNG
MUNICIPAL CENTER, 2 WOODWARD,
13TH FL, IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE, DETROIT, MI 48226**

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IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CALL (313) 224-1245 OR (313) 628-2993

Put this on your calendar!

Council President Brenda Jones, Chair • Councilmember Scott Benson, Co-Chair



Tuskegee Airmen Dr. Arthur W. Ward of St. Louis Joins Lonely Eagles

January 17, 2017 By TAI STL

Dr. Arthur W. Ward was born in Kansas City, Missouri, on July 31, 1922. He enrolled at Kansas State Teachers College of Pittsburg (now Pittsburg State University). His undergraduate study was interrupted by military service, with enlistment in April of 1942 into the U.S. Army Air Corps to become a fighter pilot. He served as an "Aviation Cadet Fighter Pilot Trainee" at Tuskegee Institute and Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, flying such planes as the AT-6, PT-17, BT-13, P-40, therefore, he is a Documented Original Tuskegee Airman (DOTA) (1). He is a part of the collective group of Congressional Gold Medal of Honor recipients known as the Tuskegee Airmen. From May 1944-February 1945, He served in the Philippine Islands. Upon discharge he resumed his education and earned the Bachelor of Science degree in June, 1948 and the Master of Science degree in 1949 in Industrial Education, both from Kansas State Teachers College. Dr. Ward and his wife both accepted teaching positions on the faculty of Garfield High School, in Mexico, Missouri. He assumed multiple teaching responsibilities as an Industrial Arts and Drivers Education Instructor, in addition to teaching Photography and serving as Head Basketball Coach. In his final year at Garfield, he was Coordinator of the Diversified Occupations Program. In 1955, Dr. Ward received a Letter from Southern University asking him to join the faculty as a Professor in the Industrial Education Department. During his time at Southern University, he took an academic leave in 1971-73 to complete the Doctorate Program at Indiana University-Bloomington. His dissertation title was "Characteristics of Instructional Personnel of Industrial Teacher Education Programs in Traditionally Black Institutions". During his years as a professor, he authored many articles for publications and journals in Industrial and Vocational Education. Dr. Ward retired from Southern University in 1990. He was a life member of the American Council on Industrial Arts Teacher Education and a member of the American Vocational Association. Dr. Ward served as a Deacon at the First Presbyterian Church of Scotlandville in Louisiana and was a professional photographer. In 1999, Dr.



To hear him speak SELECT Image:

Arthur Wilbur Ward Collection Veterans History Project (American Folk life Center Library of Congress)

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN
Hugh J. White Chapter
St. Louis, Missouri



Ward and his wife, Eunice relocated to Florissant, Missouri to be near two of their daughters. He was the guest speaker at many events in the St. Louis Metropolitan area about his aviation experience. He was the main speaker at the 2007 Veterans Day Program at the John Cochran Veterans Hospital in St. Louis. Dr. Ward passed on Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at the age of 94. Arthur was a loving husband, encouraging father and great teacher to many. He leaves to cherish his memory: Daughters: Deborah S. Ward; Joyce Renee Ward Brooks (John), of St. Louis, Missouri and Granddaughters: Carmen Renee and Leah Victoria Brooks of Chicago, Illinois. He was predeceased by wife, Eunice Mae and middle daughter, Jo Beatrice Ward.



Fred Johnson, Tuskegee Airman and educator, dies at 92

Brittany Horn, The News Journal
Published 2:19 p.m. ET Jan. 19, 2017 / Updated 7:10 p.m. ET Jan. 19, 2017



He was the only commissioned black navigator from the state of Delaware to serve in World War II, **Fred T. Johnson**, Delaware's last surviving documented Tuskegee Airman and a respected Wilmington educator, never considered himself a hero. Instead, he liked to say he was a part of history, a past rich with progress for African-Americans in the United States military and progress for African-Americans within the state of Delaware. Johnson died Tuesday at the age of 92 after a battle with pneumonia and the flu. The lifelong Delawarean was a part of the military's desegregation that began with the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of 992 fliers that graduated from a segregated pilot training program at Tuskegee Airfield in Alabama between 1941 and 1946. Though Johnson never went to combat, he played a role in changing the military's perceptions of black Americans and became one of 16,000 African-Americans who are considered part of the Tuskegee Airmen. He was the only commissioned black navigator from Delaware to serve in World War II. "He was like most Tuskegee airmen," said retired Brig. Gen. Ernest Talbert, a friend and a former C-141 pilot who served 37 years

on active duty and with the Delaware Air National Guard. Talbert was the state Air Guard's first black general. "If you ever meet them, they're all very modest yet personable types of individuals, men of great accomplishments in their own right, but they rarely ever brag about it." His accomplishments were many, though, both in the military and in the world of education, where Johnson was a part of the initial faculty to staff the first high school for African-American students in Sussex County – William C. Jason High School – and later became the first black educator at Wilmington's Warner Junior High School. He worked there and eventually served as chairman of the science department until his retirement in 1981. Fred Johnson recounts his time spent as a Tuskegee Airman in this file photo taken at his home Wednesday, December 31, 2008. Johnson joined the military in 1943 and graduated Class 42C and was commissioned as a 2nd Lt. After his discharge, he went on to teach various subjects. Here, Johnson appears with a group of photos of fellow airmen. He is second from the left, bottom row. (Photo: EMIL/Special to The

News Journal/EMIL) "They loved him," said his wife, Margo, who was married to Fred for 38 years. "He always said you have to be firm, fair, and consistent. He didn't bring race into it. He was just a teacher. And he earned the respect of the children and of their parents." That was what made Johnson special, said his loved ones and friends. Despite race playing such an important role in the progress Johnson helped to foster, the man never boasted of his achievements or took much credit for them. "We wanted to prove that we were equal, if not better, than a lot of people," Johnson told The News Journal in 2013 when he was [given a replica of the Congressional Gold Medal that the Tuskegee Airmen received in 2007](#). "We had a lot of indignities in some cases, but there were those who came along with us. We just knew that we were as capable as the next person." Johnson opted to leave Indiana University where he was studying pre-medicine to volunteer for the Army Air Corps in September 1943. He then narrowly missed being assigned as a draftee to the submarine force as a part of the Navy's first effort to assign African-Americans to their subsurface fleet. But Johnson's "volunteer" status earned him the ability to choose, so he enrolled in aviation training as part of the Tuskegee Airmen. "He is a hero to me," Talbert said in 2013 when Johnson was awarded the replica medal. "He was part of the 'Greatest Generation.' But more so than that, he's one of those people that put



on their backs the progress of our entire race – knowing that their performance was being looked at under a microscopic eye." Fred Johnson holds up his discharge card as he recounts his time spent as a Tuskegee Airman in this file photo taken at his home Wednesday, December 31, 2008. Johnson joined the military in 1943 and graduated Class 42C and was commissioned as a 2nd Lt. (Photo: EMIL/Special to The News Journal) He was also [inducted into the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame in 2016](#). Outside of his flier status, he was a father to three children and a role model for many more. His children and wife knew him best as the quiet man always willing and ready to put a smile on the face of those who needed it. His wife, Margo, remembers the days he spent taking care of his parents and her mother, as well as the love he poured into the students he taught each day. It's only now, after his passing, that the role he played in history has become more apparent, said son Todd Johnson. "Growing up as a black man in the 1920s, '30s, '40s, you would

think you would have a lot of bitterness and anger about the way he was treated," he said. "But my father didn't have that." In fact, race didn't seem to register with Johnson. When he wanted to go to an Officer's Club during his service, but was told he wasn't allowed inside, Margo said her husband didn't see the problem. "Officer," he said pointing to his wings on the uniform. "Officer's Club," he said pointing to the building. That's how he told Margo the story for years and years. Fred Johnson, 84, of Wilmington, recounts his time spent as a Tuskegee Airman as he holds up a photo in "Lonely Eagles" by Robert A. Rose, D.D.S., in this file photo taken at his home Wednesday, December 31, 2008. (Photo: EMIL/Special to The News Journal) "To him, it was simple," she said. Years later, at the nursing home about five minutes from Johnson's Fairfax house, Johnson used that same matter-of-factness to greet the nurses and see how people were doing. He urged Margo, a former art teacher and artist, to keep pursuing her work and to keep creating despite his declining health. But no matter how much time had passed, even if only a few hours, it was his wife's voice and presence that would perk him up the most. "We were a good match," Margo Johnson said Thursday. "I was lucky to have him in my life."

Johnson is survived by his wife and his sons, Todd Johnson of New York and Eric Johnson of Washington, D.C. A memorial service will be held at 6:30 p.m., Feb. 23 at Howard High School of Technology to commemorate his life. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in his memory to the Tuskegee Airmen Scholarship Foundation. Contact Brittany Horn at (302) 324-2771 or bhorn@delawareonline.com. Follow her on Twitter at [@brittanyhorn](https://twitter.com/brittanyhorn).



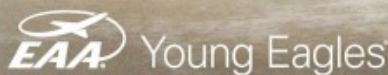
Why I Fly Young Eagles

"My neighbor, Robert Shurney, a NASA engineer, got a friend of his to take me flying in his Cessna 172 when I was 12 years old. After that flight I spent many hours building airplanes and rockets. I eventually earned a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering, and later in life I dedicated myself to educating other underrepresented youth to careers in aviation."

"I started EAA Chapter 1351 around the turn of the century with the sole purpose of doing Young Eagles rallies. Several of the Young Eagles I flew went on to pursue careers in aviation, and several are in the Tuskegee Airmen Flight Academy, an aviation program run by the Tuskegee Airmen National Museum, where a dedicated student can earn a pilot certificate."

> Brian Smith, Ph.D., EAA 495180

President and founder of EAA Chapter 1351 in Detroit, Michigan. More than 750 Young Eagles flown to date.



Visit YoungEagles.org/volunteers
to become a Young Eagles volunteer pilot.

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2009 Edition

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Eric Palmer

TAI-Detroit Chapter Newsletter Publisher/Editor

TAIDetNewsletter@Comcast.net

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Bill Welborne

welborne313@gmail.com



**Tuskegee Armymen, Inc.
Detroit Chapter
P.O. Box 44825 Detroit, MI 48244**



ATTENTION ALL CHAPTER MEMBERS: To ensure we have adequate coverage of local activities, please get your local and recent Tuskegee Armymen related news stories to the editor ASAP. Contact info inside

