



# ***Hawk's Cry II***



**January  
2019**

## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

- > Presidents' Page
- > Local Events
- > Local Happenings
- > Adventures of RedTail

***HawksCryII@gmail.com***

***f Tuskegee Airmen Hawk's Cry II***



# **Happy New Year**

***Official Newsletter of the***

**DETROIT CHAPTER of TUSKEGEE AIRMEN INCORPORATED**



# TUSKEGEE AIRMEN CONTACT LISTING

(OFFICERS-BOARD MEMBERS - 2019)

[DetroitChapterTAInc@gmail.com](mailto:DetroitChapterTAInc@gmail.com)

## NAME

**President**— Miguel Thornton  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**—Gwen McNeal  
**2nd Vice President**—VACANT  
**Treasurer**— Gregory Whiting  
**Secretary**— Theodore Whitely  
**Parliamentarian**— VACANT  
**Sergeant At Arms**—VACANT  
**Membership**—Bill Welborne  
**Hawk's Cry II** —Eric Palmer  
**Ways & Means**— VACANT  
**Planning**— VACANT  
**Public Relations**— Eric Palmer  
**Historian**—Lawrence Milben  
**Good & Welfare**—VACANT  
**Youth Programs**— Brian Smith  
**Speakers Bureau**—Alexander Jefferson  
**Chaplin**—Dr. Theodore Whitely  
**Correspondence**—Carlota Almanza-Lumpkin  
  
**Additional Board Members**  
William Thompson Jr.

## E-MAIL

[miguelthornton@gmail.com](mailto:miguelthornton@gmail.com)  
[zetaphil@hotmail.com](mailto:zetaphil@hotmail.com)  
  
[gwhitin1@yahoo.com](mailto:gwhitin1@yahoo.com)  
[bettytedwhitely@att.net](mailto:bettytedwhitely@att.net)  
  
[welborne313@gmail.com](mailto:welborne313@gmail.com)  
[HawksCryII@gmail.com](mailto:HawksCryII@gmail.com)  
  
[President@DetroitRedtail.org](mailto:President@DetroitRedtail.org)  
  
[bsmith1995@aol.com](mailto:bsmith1995@aol.com)  
[alexjeff01@juno.com](mailto:alexjeff01@juno.com)  
[bettytedwhitely@att.net](mailto:bettytedwhitely@att.net)  
[calmanza@umich.edu](mailto:calmanza@umich.edu)  
  
[Wilthom273@yahoo.com](mailto:Wilthom273@yahoo.com)

## Alternate Information Contact Information

Shirley Rankin	<a href="mailto:s-rankin22@hotmail.com">s-rankin22@hotmail.com</a>
William Henderson	<a href="mailto:wfastfac@aol.com">wfastfac@aol.com</a>
Donald Carter	<a href="mailto:mccarl0@att.net">mccarl0@att.net</a>
Brian Smith	<a href="mailto:bsmith1995@aol.com">bsmith1995@aol.com</a>
Detroit Chapter	<a href="mailto:DetroitChapterTAInc@gmail.com">DetroitChapterTAInc@gmail.com</a>
Hawk's Cry II	<a href="mailto:HawksCryII@gmail.com">HawksCryII@gmail.com</a>
Detroit Red Tail	<a href="mailto:DetroitRedTail@gmail.com">DetroitRedTail@gmail.com</a>

## CENTRAL REGION

**Marv K. Abrams**—TAI Central Region President

[abramsmk@aol.com](mailto:abramsmk@aol.com)

125 Wright Cove, Cibolo, TX 78108  
(210) 945-4361 (210)421-2485-CELL



*Befriend and  
Like Us*

[\*\*Detroit Chapter Tuskegee Airmen\*\*](#)  
[\*\*Tuskegee Airmen Hawk's\*\*](#)  
[\*\*Detroit RedTail\*\*](#)

WEBSITES OF INTEREST  
[Detroit Chapter website](#)  
[TA National Museum website](#)  
[National Organization](#)  
[TA National Historic Site](#)  
[Detroit RedTail](#)



*Follow  
Us*

[\*\*DetroitChapterTAInc\*\*](#)  
[\*\*HawksCryII\*\*](#)  
[\*\*DetroitRedTail\*\*](#)

ON THE COVER: Mural inside of the 100th Composite Squadron Civil Air Patrol building at the Coleman A. Young (Detroit) International Airport. The mural list the names of all of the pilot graduates, class by class.

# THE PRESIDENTS' PAGE



## THE NEXT TWO CHAPTER MEETINGS

Thursday, 10 January 2019 & 14 January 2019 @ 1900 hours (7:00 p.m.)

Please Arrive between 6:45pm & 7:00pm.

At Civil Air Patrol Building south of 11499 Conner, Detroit, 48213

**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

**Happy New Year! Happy New Year! Happy New Year!**

**First:** Happy Birthday to DOTA Fletcher Williams, who recently turned 100 years old.

**Second:** This is a new beginning the start of 2019. Our best is ahead of us. We can press on to greater achievements this year for our Youth and Our DOTA's. When you have a moment look back on our Mission Statement and Vision.

**Third:** Hopefully we can obtain more commitment from more of our members. We are a volunteer organization and we need you to commit to serve on one or more of our committees. All of the committees are important and by adding your presence to one that you have an interest in would help all of the recipients of our efforts. He is a partial list of our committees:

Membership	Bill Welborne, Chair
Scholarship	Gwen McNeal, Chair
Finance	Greg Whiting, Chair
Speakers	Alexander Jefferson, Chair, Eric Palmer (under-study)
Historical	Larry Millben, Chair
Merchandising	George Pettigrew, Chair, Eric Love, Co-Chair
Youth	Brian Smith
Ways & Means	Tony Stevenson
Social	TBD
Events	Miguel Thornton and Board

**Forth:** Ask yourselves where I may apply my gifts and talents that would benefit our organization. Am I willing to help?

### **Fifth: 2019 Events (of date):**

- ♦ Black Pilots Honoring DOTA's, January 16, 2019 at 6:30 PM. POC Andraes, at 313-505-3675.
- ♦ Kalamazoo Public Schools, dates to be determined
- ♦ 30TH ANNUAL SALUTE RECEPTION AND DINNER, FEBRUARY 23RD
- ♦ *We've been invited to speak at* Berkley High School Assembly, March 1, 2019 (see pg 3)
- ♦ St Clair Shores Memorial Day Parade, May 26, 2019
- ♦ Cruise, August 18, 2019
- ♦ TEAM Selfridge dates TBD
- ♦ Chapter Honors Dinner, date TBD
- ♦ Thunder Over Michigan, end of August.

**Sixth:** During the May 2019, we will take our chapter photo. Extra blue blazers will be on hand for those that do not have one.

**Seventh:** It is scholarship time. Please get with Gwen and pick up applications from our TAI Scholarship foundation. While you are at it, communicate the following organization's TA based scholarship also. <http://redtailscholarshipfoundation.org/index.html> They are NOT associated with TA Inc. But, money is money.

**Eight:** If it's to be then it's left up to me. We need your commitment it is the key and God is the answer.

**Ninth:** Sit back and binge watch some home made entertainment, RedTail on the Route, starring our own Eric Brothers, Palmer & Love. Access all six (6) episodes using this [link](#) or simply going to the Detroit RedTail YouTube channel.

TO GOD BE THE GLORY,

*Miguel Thornton*

**President**

Detroit Chapter  
Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.

# LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Hello,

We have been speaking to some teachers in the building and there is great interest in hearing you speak. We feel that being a small part of an assembly won't do your stories justice. Instead, if you are able, the US History teachers would like you to speak to their classes in a separate assembly. Their plan is to have a full day dedicated to black history, this is the plan for the afternoon:

- ♦ 12:40-1:20 Lunch
- ♦ 1:25-2:25 Tuskegee Airmen
- ♦ 2:30-3:30 Black History Month Assembly

Our Diversity Council would like to treat you to lunch, then give you an hour to share your stories before the assembly. We were thinking we could show an introductory video, then you can speak about what you would like, then we would do a panel discussion where the students could ask you questions. The assembly will follow after you have spoken, and you are more than welcome to stay and attend the assembly. Due to the change in plans, the date is tentatively set for either February 22nd, or March 1st. Is there a date that works best for you?

Thank You!

Kendall Grayson

## 30TH ANNUAL SALUTE RECEPTION AND DINNER

**FEBRUARY 23RD AT 6:00 PM  
AT THE CHARLES H. WRIGHT**

**MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY**

This years dinner is an event packed evening that includes a celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the winning of the First Top Gun Competition of the USAF in 1949, the premier of a new documentary on the Tuskegee Airmen and the ribbon cutting of the new exhibit of the Tuskegee Airmen.



## 2019 Young Eagles Rallies

At Coleman A. Young Airport from 10 AM to 2 PM on the following dates (registration at 9am):

- ⇒ April 14, 2019
- ⇒ May 19, 2019
- ⇒ June 09, 2019
- ⇒ July 14, 2019
- ⇒ August 11, 2019
- ⇒ September 08, 2019
- ⇒ October 13, 2019





# LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Hello to all BPA, Gilbert A. Cargill Chapter Members.

Please let me know if you can join us on January 16, 2019, 6:30pm, Coleman A. Young International Airport, CAP building which is south of the new terminal. Gilbert A. Cargill chapter is co-hosting an event honoring the DOTA (Documented Original Tuskegee Airmen), and what we hope to accomplish is (sharing with DOTA that we will continue Marching, it may or may not be physical but it will be in some form of awareness for the dreams that Martin Luther King planted within the minds of this nation) and Gilbert A. Cargill chapter will also continue the dreams of flight that DOTA planted within the minds of BPA members and others within this nation.

**It would be really helpful if you could let me know by January 7, 2019,** click reply or email ([andreas129@comcast.net](mailto:andreas129@comcast.net)), because we will need an accurate count, so we will know how to proceed on food and beverage. A small donation of \$10.00 would help us out greatly, I did receive donations from (8) eight BPA members during the January 2, 2019 meeting. Please place this event on your calendar, I hope to see you there.

Thank you very much!  
BPA, Gilbert A. Cargill Chapter, President  
Andreas

World War II was an incredibly complicated time to be African-American. Living in segregation and navigating through civil rights, the Tuskegee Airmen rose above the obstacles and earned legendary status. Here's a look at 5 Fascinating Facts About The Tuskegee Airmen:

1. "Never Lost A Bomber" Is A Myth- But Still The Stuff Of Legends: The Tuskegee Airman developed a glowing reputation of having never lost a bomber that they escorted. While they were indeed incredible escorts, this is a myth. Records show that bombers escorted by Tuskegee Airmen on seven different days: June 9, 1944; June 13, 1944; July 12, 1944; July 18, 1944; July 20, 1944; August 24, 1944; and March 24, 1945. With 179 bomber escort missions, they lost only 27, compared to an average of 46 among other 15th Air Force P-51 groups.
2. They Were Almost Disbanded Because Of Discrimination: Despite receiving a Distinguished Unit Citation for its performance in combat, the 99th Fighter Squadron was reported by NAFF Deputy Commander Major General John K. Cannon as ineffective. The squadron was accused of being incapable of handling complex situations and possessing low intelligence based on the pilots' race. The House Armed Services Committee held a hearing and if not for the intervention of Colonel Emmett O'Donnel Jr., the 99th could very well have possibly been disbanded.
3. Eleanor Roosevelt Helped Establish Them: First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt's historic flight with C. Alfred "Chief" Anderson in March of 1941 is commonly mistaken as the start of the Civilian Pilot Training Program at Tuskegee. She graciously arranged a loan of \$175,000 to finance the Moton Field building. In reality, the program had already been active for five months. That's not to say her actions weren't a huge boost. It was kind of a big deal for an African-American pilot to fly such a prestigious figure.
4. Tuskegee Airmen Were Not Just Airmen: The Tuskegee Airmen are most commonly associated with the North American P-51 Mustang and most people know that the 332nd Fighter Group painted the tails of their P-47s red, earning them the nickname "Red Tails." But many Tuskegee Airmen never saw any action; "Tuskegee Airmen" is an umbrella term for the navigators, bombardiers, mechanics, instructors, crew chiefs, nurses, cooks and other support personnel who went through Tuskegee.
5. Rare Opportunity For African-Americans: It was a constant struggle to get colored men up in the air. Up until WWII, the few African-Americans who learned to fly were either self-taught or learned overseas. The Appropriations Bill Public Law 18 passed by Congress on April 3, 1939 included an amendment that gave funds for training African-American pilots. Tuskegee University in Alabama was finally able to take up the torch in 1940 with the Civilian Pilot Training Program. Under pressure from civil rights groups and the demand of the war, the military selected Tuskegee University as the segregated training grounds for African American airmen because of its established facilities, commitment, and pleasant climate.

<https://worldwarwings.com/5-fascinating-facts-about-the-tuskegee-airmen/>



# LOCAL HAPPENINGS

## Tuskegee Airmen revisits career for at-risk teens in Wimauma

*Lt. Col. Alexander Jefferson delivered inspiring words to AMIkids YES program.*

<http://www.tampabay.com/hillsborough/tuskegee-airmen-revisits-career-for-at-risk-teens-in-wimauma-20190103/>

BY TATIANA ORTIZ Times Correspondent Published January 3

WIMAUMA — The words, “Nobody can change you until you change yourself” resonated through the room. As a group of youth males at AMIkids YES sat quietly in their seats, retired 97-year-old Air Force **Lt. Col. Alexander Jefferson** spoke firmly about his time during World War II as he sported an leather Air Force jacket dotted with various patches and a black cap that read Tuskegee Airmen Veteran. More than 40 individuals in attendance had the opportunity to hear about Jefferson’s military experiences as he lives to share his story about survival. As one of the seven original Tuskegee Airmen still alive in the Detroit, Mich. chapter, Jefferson recalls a mission in which he almost did not make it out alive. Jefferson and his officers got deployed to Italy with the 301st Fighter Squadron of the 332nd “Red Tail” Fighter Group on June 3, 1944. During his 19th mission, Jefferson’s P-51 Mustang got shot down. In the midst of all that he bailed out of his plane with an open parachute. Jefferson landed in a forest and soon became part of POW (prisoner of war) due to his capture



**40-50 People  
in attendance**

through the Nazi ground troops. “I was going 400 miles per hour and all of a sudden the shell came up with fire,” Jefferson said. “I was too low to bail out and had to pull up back on the stick to get more altitude in which I reached 1,000 feet.” The students said Jefferson left a positive impact. One vowed to better his life and not give up. Another said he’s more determined to earn his GED and possibly join the military. AMIkids YES opened in 1994. It serves

at-risk youth males between the ages of 14 and 18. The students, who have committed non-violent offenses and are in the state’s juvenile justice system, participate in a core curriculum of life skills, academics and more. The organization strives to positively impact the youth and protect public safety through the efforts of an innovative and diverse staff. Jefferson’s visit tied into the goals of the organization’s vocational training and job placement program, which aims to expand the career opportunities, internships and work experience possibilities. Through these services students can gain employment and become equipped with skills that will lead towards a brighter future. AMIkids YES regional job recruiter, Leerone Benjamin, said he considers Jefferson a true American hero from the past to the present. “Jefferson faced the enemy abroad and at home,” Benjamin said. “He also persevered and endured many hardships for the love of his country and family.” For more information, visit [amikids.org](http://amikids.org). Contact Tatiana Ortiz at [hillsnews@tampabay.com](mailto:hillsnews@tampabay.com).



Fred Henry being celebrated by the Blackstone Park Association. Left to right Winfred Blackmon, Association President Mozella Williams and Councilman Roy Maclaster.



# LOCAL HAPPENINGS

## Judge David Perkins Celebration



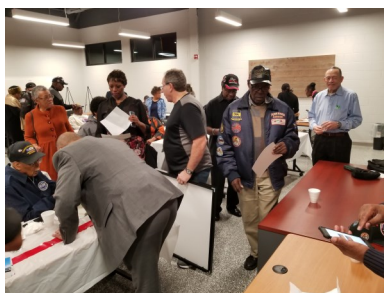
Last Fall, Detroit Chapter's own Judge David A. Perkins was elected to the Wayne County Probate Court. Just before Christmas about 300-400 of his closest friends gathered for dinner to celebrate his promotion. Many VIPs spoke in congratulations, including Hawk's Cry II Editor/Publisher Eric Palmer.

[View FULL Image Gallery](#)



# LOCAL HAPPENINGS

## Christmas Party



On 6 Dec 18, the Detroit Chapter held their annual Christmas Holiday dinner. Aside from chapter members, there were also Detroit City Airport, 100th Squadron Civilian Air Patrol and West Bloomfield chapter personnel amidst. A wonderful time was had by all.

[View FULL Image Gallery](#)



# A Final Goodbye To Tuskegee Airman Robert Taylor

Posted on December 26, 2018 Author Dennis J. Freeman

<http://wavenewspapers.com/a-final-goodbye-to-tuskegee-airman-robert-taylor/>

WHITTIER — **Robert Taylor** was like a favorite uncle to Simeon Ginyard. Ginyard, who serves as public relations chairperson for the Tuskegee Airmen Inc. Los Angeles Chapter, met Taylor, an air traffic controller during World War II, roughly about three and a half years ago during a chance meeting at one of the club's events. Ginyard said the two hit it off immediately and became good friends. That friendship came to an earthly end when the 95-year-old Taylor died in late November. A longtime resident of Carson, Taylor held the distinction of being a member of the prestigious Tuskegee Airmen fraternity with his service time being regulated to the Tuskegee Army Air Field in 1942 and the Mississippi native wrapping up his military career at Godman Army Airfield in 1946. Like other members of the chapter, Ginyard would whisk Taylor and his buddies around town for promotional events that involved anything related to honoring military members and the Tuskegee Airmen in particular. "I met him at a chapter," Ginyard said. "We became friends. I was the one who was taking guys. If it was a parade or event, I would call the guys up and see if they would be able to attend and I would pick them up if they didn't have any other way to go. I was like their own bodyguard. We had a very firm relationship. [Taylor] would call me up. He was just a fun guy to be around all the time." Ginyard, who made a presentation about Taylor during his funeral service at Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary Dec. 11, said one of the more overlooked or misconstrued aspects about the men and women who served under the Tuskegee commandership is the misnomer that to be a member of that club you had to be some hotshot flying ace. That's not the case at all, Ginyard said. "We consider ... that all personnel that was part of that experience was a Tuskegee Airman," Ginyard said. "We don't care if you were a pencil-pusher, if you were a custodian. You didn't have to be a red-tail pilot to be decorated. You were there. There are still a lot of stories that have not been told about the Tuskegee Airmen." In regard to being recognized or noted as a Tuskegee Airman, Taylor, who leaves behind a daughter and wife, was not one to talk about his exploits. His humble demeanor and selfless approach about his time in the military would not allow Taylor to talk about himself in that manner. Ginyard has discovered that Taylor, who did a decade worth of work as a fingerprinting specialist at the Carson Sheriff's Station, is not alone in that way. Other Tuskegee Airmen or others that share that experience are oftentimes not too eager to brag about or speak on what happened during their military endeavors. "There's something about them ... from the way that they were treated, they do not talk about their service," Ginyard said. "They never talk about it. I could never figure it out." By Dennis J. Freeman Contributing Writer





## Howard Tymony, 93, Tuskegee airman

Genoa Barrow Dec 17, 2018

[http://www.phillytrib.com/obituaries/howard-tymony-tuskegee-airman/article\\_0f7047b7-965c-587d-a7a0-838612a1639e.html](http://www.phillytrib.com/obituaries/howard-tymony-tuskegee-airman/article_0f7047b7-965c-587d-a7a0-838612a1639e.html)

Two weeks after being recognized as an Documented Original Tuskegee Airman (DOTA), solidifying his place in history alongside others who braved racism and discrimination in helping to integrate the U.S. military, **Howard Tymony** died on Nov. 29, 2018, in Elk Grove, California. He was 93. Tymony was born on May 31, 1925. He was drafted in 1944 at the age of 19 and spent 31 years in the U.S. military. He started out in the Army Air Corps and went on to serve in the Air Force and become a weapons expert. During World War II, Tymony helped load guns and arm planes flown by the 332nd Fighter Group. He rose through the ranks to become an artillery supervisor. Over his career, Tymony conducted missions in Italy, Guam, Vietnam, Libya and the Philippines. He was a friend and roommate of Tuskegee Airman and Olympic gold medalist Mal Whitfield. A gifted pianist, Tymony was often requested by famed Gen. Benjamin O.

Davis Jr. and his wife to play during special events. He was also present on the Freeman Army Airfield in Indiana in 1945 when African-American officers attempted to integrate an all-white officer's club. Tymony was a double amputee, as a result of diabetes that stemmed from his exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. He lived in a care facility in Elk Grove at the time of his passing. It was there that the Tuskegee Airmen Heritage Chapter of Greater Sacramento presented him with a Congressional Gold Medal on Nov. 12, Veterans Day, marking his status as a DOTA, having served during World War II. The medal is the same as those presented by President George W. Bush in 2007. According to the Tuskegee Airmen Heritage Chapter, "anyone — man or woman, military or civilian, Black or white — who served at Tuskegee Army Air Field or in any of the programs stemming from the 'Tuskegee Experience' between the years 1941 and 1949 is considered to be a documented original Tuskegee Airman (DOTA)." Members of the chapter crowded into Tymony's small room to shower him with additional accolades and gifts. He is survived by: his daughter, Christine Rice; sons, Howard Tymony Jr. and Gene Murry Sr.; and other relatives and friends. Services were held Dec. 17 at Morgan Jones Funeral Home, 4200 Broadway, Sacramento, Calif. — The Sacramento Observer



## Family honors memory of WWII Tuskegee airman who made SA home

### Maj. James Johnson Kelly died at 90

By Deven Clarke - News Reporter Updated: 10:27 PM, December 31, 2018

<https://www.ksat.com/news/military/local-family-remembers-late-wwii-tuskegee-air-pilot>

SAN ANTONIO - A World War II Tuskegee airman who has called San Antonio home for decades has died at 90 years old. Now, **Maj. James Kelly's** family wants to make sure everyone in the Alamo City knows about his contributions and the legacy he leaves behind.

He raised me, and I never ever wanted for nothing. He gave me everything I wanted, and my siblings," said Eva Jones, who welled up with tears when talking about Kelly, a man she's known as dad ever since he married her mother decades ago when Jones was 9 years old. "If I needed help with anything, had questions with anything that's bothering me, he was there," Jones said. The Tuskegee Airmen were mostly African-American. In World War II, they broke through barriers, flying and maintaining aircraft during combat. It was a role local landscape architect Everett Fly, who studies historic preservation, said was pertinent to the outcome of the war. "It's really important for young people to know that and know that people ahead of them laid the groundwork for them to be able to achieve and go forward today," Fly said Though Kelly was born in High Point, North Carolina, years after the war, his family said, he made San Antonio home, becoming a history professor at Our Lady of the Lake University and a city commissioner. Kelly's legacy continues to live on. "He gave advice to kids in the neighborhood, tell them how to succeed, but most importantly, tell them — he'd say, 'If you don't do anything, go into the military,'" Jones said Kelly's family is preparing for his funeral. He will be buried at Fort Sam Houston Cemetery on Jan. 10 with honors.





## John 'Jack' Lyle, one of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen, dies at 98

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/john-jack-lyle-legendary-tuskegee-airmen-dies-98/>

ByMaureen O'Donnell @suntimesobits 01/07/2019, 10:25am

Just three days before he'd planned to visit Jackson Park Harbor one final time, **Jack Lyle**, one of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen, died Saturday at his South Side home. Even though he was going to have to get there via ambulance and stretcher, he was determined to see Lake Michigan because he loved to sail as much as he loved to fly. Mr. Lyle, who had prostate cancer, was 98, according to his wife Eunice. His remains were cremated and she hopes to scatter some of the ashes in the lake he loved. *Tuskegee Airman Jack Lyle named his plane Natalie for his first wife.* He'd intended to enjoy the harbor Tuesday from his favorite shaded bench, said Janet Hansen, commodore of the Jackson Park Yacht Club. "He wanted to sit on his bench one last time and go and view the lake from the point." Hospice workers "asked Jack what would be his one wish before he passed, and he said he wanted to go to Jackson Harbor and look at the lake," his wife said. In 2007, President George W. Bush and Congress bestowed the Congressional Gold Medal on Mr. Lyle and the other Tuskegee Airmen. The members of the nation's first black fighter squadron won acclaim for their aerial prowess and bravery, despite a military that segregated them, and southern "Whites Only" entrances that permitted German prisoners of war—but blocked African-Americans. Mr. Lyle, who named his plane "Natalie" for his first wife, once shot down a German Messerschmitt, according to an honorary resolution by the Chicago City Council. "We flew 500 feet above the bombers to keep enemy fighters from hitting our guys," he



recalled in a 2012 interview with Jet magazine. "... I loved flying, being up in the clouds, the scenery. I flew 26 combat missions, from southern Italy to Austria and southern Germany, over the Austrian Alps." "I was shot at several times as part of a formation. I watched bombers being torn apart, but they were performing the mission they signed up to do," Mr. Lyle told Jet. "And when I had to shoot the guy who was shooting at the planes I was protecting, I did not feel bad because that was my assignment." He had no fear," his wife said. "None at all." A graduate of Englewood High School, he was engaged and inspired by his mother, the singer Ernestine Lyle, who performed in a quartet and with the American Negro Light Opera Association. She enrolled him in piano and violin lessons, according to his wife. "His mom bought him a 50-volume set of the Harvard Classics," she said. "He was very well-read." After the war, he served as a police officer with the Chicago Park District and founded a tree-trimming company. "I was in the tree business for 30 years because I liked being out in the open — having the time to think," he said in the Jet interview. "Later, I took up sailing because it was the same idea of being free and on your own." *Jack Lyle taught many other sailors how to navigate at Jackson Park Harbor.* "He was an amazing sailor," Hansen said. "He could sail his boat in any weather." Mr. Lyle piloted a sailboat his wife christened the "Night Watch." He guided other Jackson Park mariners on what to do in emergencies, like loss of power. "He taught a lot of people how to sail so the wind was always their motor," Hansen said. "You have to understand the wind to be a pilot, whether it's in the air or a sailboat." The Auburn Gresham resident drove a Chevy truck and rode a motorcycle. And he enjoyed books on sailing and by the philosopher Noam Chomsky. Mr. Lyle also dabbled in inventions, including the "Exerball," an exercise ball rigged to the waist. "Some of them were hilarious, like loincloths for men," his wife said. They named the prototype the "Jonfre." He also created leopard-print men's underwear he called "Tuckems." Mr. Lyle excelled at chess, trained in jiu-jitsu and was an expert marksman, she said. "He was my hero. . . . He taught me how to protect myself with martial arts, how to shoot a bow and arrow, how to shoot a gun." "It was a ride with him, a wild ride," said Eunice, his fourth wife. She used to say, "I'm No. 4, there'll be no more." Married 37 years, they met when his tree-trimming equipment broke one of her lanterns. She insisted he pay for it. Her children Cynthia Kincey, Kathy Holliday and John Jackson also survive him. In 2017, Argus Brewery in Pullman rolled out a beer in his honor, "Tuskegee Airmen Pursuit." "He was a personal hero," said Chad King, a U.S. Army veteran and member of the Jackson Park Yacht Club. "I just miss the fact I wasn't able to give him a final hand salute. That was my intention Tuesday." "The airmen made a contribution to our country," Mr. Lyle told Jet. "And even though there was a lot of racism then, a lot of other people think so, too. Once, I went to a bar in full uniform and some white guys started approaching me. I was watching them. Then, they broke into smiles and started thanking me, saying, 'You're one of those people that protected our guys.'





# 100-year-old Tuskegee Airman Wilfred DeFour found dead in Harlem home

By ELLEN MOYNIHAN and THOMAS TRACY | NEW YORK DAILY  
NEWS | DEC 08, 2018 | 12:10 PM

<https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/ny-metro-tuskegee-airman-dead-20181208-story.html>

**Wilfred DeFour**, a member of the Tuskegee Airmen — an all-black squadron of World War II pilots that inspired African-Americans across the country — died in his Harlem home Saturday. He was 100. DeFour's home health aide found the centenarian in the bathroom of his Fifth Ave. home at the Riverton Square apartments just before 9 a.m., cops said. The airman's wife died in 2005, neighbors said. The couple had a son and a daughter, but the son had died several years ago. "You would never know he was 100," neighbor Joanne Wells said. "He had a little cane but he walked. He had all his faculties. His mind was as sharp as a whip." Neighbor Naomi Crawford, 92, moved into the Riverton Square apartments in the 1940s, at around the same time DeFour and his wife did, she remembered. The war hero was modest and never spoke about his time with the Tuskegee Airmen, she said. "He received two plaques on Friday from the senior center." Crawford said. "One for turning 100."

DeFour was an aircraft technician for the famed squad, which got its name from the group's training facility in Tuskegee, Ala. During World War II, the pilots ran missions over North Africa, Sicily, and Italy. DeFour painted the tails of the aircraft from which the squadron drew its "Red Tails" nickname. Just last month, DeFour was honored as a post office on Macombs Place in Harlem was renamed the Tuskegee Airmen Post Office Building. DeFour worked as a postal employee for more than 30 years after his military service. "We didn't know we were making history at the time," DeFour, said during the renaming ceremony. "We were just doing our job." Rep. Adriano Espaillat, whose congressional bill paved the way to change the post office's name, called DeFour "a Harlem legend" on Saturday. "The impact he had on our community, around the nation, and the world will forever be cherished and remembered," Espaillat said on Twitter. An autopsy has been slated to determine how he died, although it's believed he died of natural causes, police said. Counting all pilots and support staff — from the mechanics to the cooks — roughly 20,000 men were part of what is considered the "Tuskegee experience." As of 2015, some 600 were still alive, according to the Tuskegee Airmen National History Museum in Detroit.



Red Tails



LIKE  
Our  
Page



FRIEND  
Our  
Site



Subscribe  
to our  
Channel



Follow  
Us

## SPONSORED BY

The **Detroit Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen Inc**  
[www.DetroitChapterTAInc.org](http://www.DetroitChapterTAInc.org)

**The Hawk's Cry II**  
*The Official Newsletter of*  
The **Detroit Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen Inc**  
[Get My Hawk's Cry II](#)

## SEEKING SPONSORS

### 2019 Season of Out Reach

- 23 February 2019 – [TANM Dinner Salute](#) (Detroit, MI)
- 1-3 March 2019 – [67th Annual Detroit Autorama](#) (Detroit, MI)
- 17-20 April 2019 – [55 Years of Mustang Event](#) (Concord, NC)
- 21 April 2019 – [Tail of the Dragon Drive](#) (Robbinsville, NC)
- 11 May 2019 – [MUZIEKPARADE](#) (Holland, MI)
- 19 May 2019 – [12th Annual Mid-Michigan Custom Car Show 2019](#) (Owosso, MI)
- 26 May 2019 – [St Clair Shores Memorial Day Parade](#) (St Clair Shores, MI)
- 27 May 2019 – [National Memorial Day Parade](#) (Washington, DC)
- 20 July 2019 – [Mackinaw City Mustang Stampede](#) (Mackinaw City, MI)
- 27 July 2019 – [Main Street Memories](#) (Port Huron, MI)
- 3-7 & 10-11 August 2019 – [RedTails' Civil Rights Tour](#) (Memphis, TN, Birmingham, AL & Atlanta, GA)
- 8-9 August 2019 – [Tuskegee Airmen National Convention](#) (Orlando, FL)
- 17 August 2019 – [MOCSEM's Mustang Alley West](#) (Ferndale, MI)

OUR 2019 SEASON IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER.

HELP US START IT IN THE BLACK

...by going to our website and making a  
monetary donation

**[www.DetroitRedTail.org](http://www.DetroitRedTail.org)**

**Detroit RedTail, Inc** is an IRS determined tax exempt charitable organization whose mission is to participate in the American car culture and venture to car shows, car cruises and parades to propagate the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen.

**Detroit RedTail, Inc** is...

*Rolling the **Tuskegee Airmen** into the **American Car Culture***

*Keep RedTail Rolling*



[www.DetroitRedTail.org](http://www.DetroitRedTail.org)

*The Hawk's Cry II*

# EDITOR'S CORNER

## Original Tuskegee Airmen Signed Certificates of Appreciation NEW—NEW—NEW

Select Image to download from Google Drive site



Please communicate all  
newsletter inclusions to:

**Eric Palmer**

at

[HawksCryII@Gmail.com](mailto:HawksCryII@Gmail.com)

## **MEMBERSHIP CORNER**

**Bill Welborne**  
**313-204-2477**

[welborne313@gmail.com](mailto:welborne313@gmail.com)

## Check Us Out on Social Media



*Befriend and  
Like Us*

[Detroit Chapter Tuskegee](#)  
[Tuskegee Airmen Hawk's](#)  
[Detroit RedTail](#)

[LIKE Our NEW Chapter Facebook page](#)

Chapter Websites

[Detroit Chapter website](#)  
[TA National Museum website](#)

[SUBSCRIBE to Our YouTube Channels](#)

Select Text

**Hawks Cry II**  
**Detroit RedTail**



*Follow  
Us*

[DetroitChapterTAInc](#)  
[HawksCryII](#)  
[DetroitRedTail](#)



# Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors

2009 Edition

## Phone Numbers

Bereavement Counseling.....	1-202-461-6530
Education.....	1-888-442-4551
Headstones and Markers.....	1-800-697-6947
Health Care.....	1-877-222-8387
Homeless veterans.....	1-877-222-8387
Home Loans.....	1-877-827-3702
Life Insurance.....	1-800-669-8477
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.....	1-800-273-8255
Pension Management Center.....	1-877-294-6380
Special Health Issues.....	1-800-749-8387

**Telecommunication Device  
for the Deaf (TDD) 1-800-829-4833  
VA Benefits 1-800-827-1000**

## Web Sites

VA Home Page.....	<a href="http://www.va.gov">www.va.gov</a>
Education Benefits.....	<a href="http://www.gibill.va.gov">www.gibill.va.gov</a>
Health Care Eligibility.....	<a href="http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility">www.va.gov/healtheligibility</a>
Burial and Memorial Benefits.....	<a href="http://www.cem.va.gov">www.cem.va.gov</a>
Returning Service Members.....	<a href="http://www.oefoif.va.gov">www.oefoif.va.gov</a>
Home Loan Guaranty .....	<a href="http://www.homeloans.va.gov">www.homeloans.va.gov</a>
Records .....	<a href="http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel">www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel</a>
VA Benefit Payment Rates.....	<a href="http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/rates">www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/rates</a>
VA Forms.....	<a href="http://www.va.gov/vaforms">www.va.gov/vaforms</a>
Mental Health.....	<a href="http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov">www.mentalhealth.va.gov</a>
Federal Jobs.....	<a href="http://www.usajobs.opm.gov">www.usajobs.opm.gov</a>
Veterans Preference.....	<a href="http://www.opm.gov/veterans/index.asp">www.opm.gov/veterans/index.asp</a>
Employment Assistance.....	<a href="http://www.vetsuccess.gov">www.vetsuccess.gov</a>
Veterans Employment and Training.....	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/vets">www.dol.gov/vets</a>

## Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program

Life Insurance.....	<a href="http://www.insurance.va.gov">www.insurance.va.gov</a>
Department of Defense.....	<a href="http://www.defenselink.mil">www.defenselink.mil</a>



**Tuskegee Army Airmen, 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 Airmen related news stories to the editor ASAP. *Contact info inside*

