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Tuskegee Airmen Hawk's Cry II

October 2019

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Official Newsletter of the<u>DETROIT CHAPTER</u> of *TUSKEGEE AIRMEN INCORPORATED*



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CENTRAL REGION

Marv K. Abrams—TAI Central Region President

Befriend and
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<u>Detroit Chapter Tuskegee Airmen</u>

Tuskegee Airmen Hawk's

Detroit RedTail

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Detroit Chapter website
TA National Museum website
National Organization
TA National Historic Site

Detroit RedTail

Pollow
Us

DetroitChapterTAInc
HawksCryll
DetroitRedTail

ON THE COVER: The U.S. Air Force officially designated the service's new jet trainer the "T-7A Red Hawk." The name celebrates the pilots of the 332nd Fighter Group of World War II.



THE PRESIDENTS' PAGE

THE NEXT TWO CHAPTER MEETINGS

Thursday, 12 September 2019 & 10 October 2019 Meeting @ 1900 hours (7:00 p.m.)

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

At the Friends-Detroit City Airport // Youth in Aviation Bldg [FoDCA / YAB] 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

Good day all,

I wish all of you the best. There are so many things going on that we should be thankful for, just the fact that you are alive and able to read.

We are receiving many requests for presentations etc..., many for our DOTA'S. Presently, there are only two DOTA's that are still giving of their time to bring our LEGACY to our public. Having said that we must guard their time and we ourselves spend as much time as possible with them. Why? Glad you asked, if not you then WHO?

We need to make sure we know The Real Legacy of our Airmen. In order to do that we need to spend time with them. Listen, Listen and Listen some more. Some would have you believe that that is not necessary, but I say to you "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer" Ps. 19:14. Where do we get our strength. God has given us some Gems that can share the most important experience in their lives and ours as Tuskegee Airmen.

We are beginning the last quarter of this year, have you shared the Tuskegee Experience with anyone? Have you recruited a new member? Have you spoken to anyone or group about what The Tuskegee Airmen mean to us and this place we call home? I guess I'm asking what have you done in the name of our organization? Remember it is not about me, but about a LEGACY that is bigger than all of us.

I wish you all well. Reach, Restore and Remember!!! We are not an accident!

TO GOD BE THE GLORY.

Miguel Thornton

President

Detroit Chapter Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.



2019 Young Eagles Rallies

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

⇒ October 13, 2019





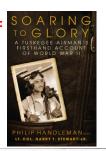
SAVE THE DATE

Our Voices: Our Stories The Tuskegee Airmen (2019) Film Free Outdoor Screening!

"Our Voices: Our Stories – The Tuskegee Airmen" is a new documentary that focuses on the stellar military careers of Tuskegee Airmen Lt. Col. Alexander Jefferson and Lt. Col. Harry T. Stewart Jr. – two riveting first-person accounts of what life was like as combat pilots in the 332nd Fighter Group during WWI. "Our Voices: Our Stories" is a new documentary series by Ford Fund, highlighting the inspirational stories of African Americans who have accomplished things no one thought possible – achievements that shaped our country's history or are laying a foundation for its future. Part of Cinema Circus at FREC. Bring your chairs and blankets! Free popcorn and bottled water for all attendees. Monday, November 11 2019 at 5:00pm at FREC Eastside in Ann Arbor, Michigan. https://www.michtheater.org/show/our-voices-our-stories-the-tuskegee-airmen-2019/

SOARING TO GLORY: A TUSKEGEE AIRMAN'S FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT OF WORLD WAR II IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT AMAZON AND

WALMART



Mark October 10th on your calendar

Council President Brenda Jones presents the Third Annual Detroit Infinite Scholars Fair! This event will ensure that high school students in Detroit and surrounding area are provided an opportunity of receiving free onsite scholarship funds and acceptance letters from over 40 colleges and universities. Last year we had over \$11 Million Offered in Scholarships! Please share this information with all high school students, teachers and parents.

High School Seniors

Bring 15-20 packets of the following: high school transcript, ACT/SAT test scores, recommendation letters, an essay titled "Why I Want To Attend College", along with a resume.***

MEN WHO DARE, INC.

A non-profit scholarship and mentoring organization

 60^{th} Annual Scholarship BLACK & WHITE BALL

Saturday, November 9, 2019 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm Dinner Served Promptly at 7:00pm



Keynote Presenter
Carolyn Clifford
Emmy Award Winning
TV Anchor
Changel 7 WYY TV





Music By: NOTORIOUS featuring Leslie Nelson & "DJ" Miguel

Contact Information: The Men Who Dare, Inc. 613 Abbott Street • Detroit, MI. 48226 • (313) 967-5562 Email: Menwhodareinc@gmail.com • Website: www.menwhodare.org Your Help Would Be Very Much Appreciated:

Burton Lowe 1685 Sheffield Dr. Ypsilanti, Mich. (734) 483-3343(H) (734) 476-1301(C)

E-Mail: burtlowe@aol.com

Check out the website: www.menwhodare.org



LOCAL HAPPE

Tuskegee Airman discusses service and discrimination in new book

https://www.michiganradio.org/post/stateside-uaw-scandal-and-strike-districtdetroit-s-unfulfilled-promises-distracted-drivers



Stateside's interview with Lt. Col. Harry Stewart. Ninety-four-year-old Lt. Colonel Harry T. Stewart, Jr. of Bloomfield Hills is one of just 11 living members of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen, an all-black military unit that flew combat missions during World War II. His life is the subject of a book co-written by aviation writer Philip Handleman called Soaring to Glory: A Tuskegee Airman's Firsthand Account of World War II. Stewart ioined Stateside to talk about his experience training to become a pilot in Alabama during Jim Crow, his time serving with The Red Tails in Italy, and where life took him after returning home from war.



Please join us for The Victory Gala



The Michigan WWII Legacy Memorial's Annual Fundraiser

Saturday, October 12, 2019 GM Heritage Center 6400 Center Drive Sterling Heights, 48312

VIP: Registration: \$175 Save! Table for 10: \$1575 WWII Vets and

Original Rosie the Riveters: \$75

VIP Doors Open at 5:30 PM additional time in the GM Heritage Center

General Admission: \$125 Save! Table for 10: \$1125 WWII Vets and Original Rosie the Riveters: \$50

> **General Admission** Doors Open at 6:30 PM

REGISTER



The Victory Gala includes:

- · Access to the GM Heritage Center's 81,000 square feet of historical automotive displays, including 167 vintage and concept vehicles
- Strolling dinner catered by Two Unique Catering
- Live and silent auctions
 The Victory Awards.

The Heritage Center is not open to the public. This is your chance to view classic and concept cars, bid on some great auction items, and honor our Victory Award winners as we raise money for The Michigan WWII Legacy



Be sure to invite friends and family Help us spread the word!

Keep up-to-date with the latest news:

www.michiganww2memorial.org

Follow us on Facebook:





Looking forward to seeing you at The Victory Gala!







2019 Veteran STAND DOWN

October 16&17, 2019 (9:00 am – 5:00 pm) *October 17, 2019 Female Veteran Emphasis (Veteran Registration ends at 1:00pm) Volunteer Registration – 7:30 am

Michigan Light Guard Armory
4400 E. 8 Mile Rd.
Detroit, Michigan 48234
Stand Down Set-up: October 14, 2019 (9:00am – 5:00pm)
Volunteers and Vendors/Support agencies
can register at
www.4vets.org

Contacts:

Southeastern Michigan Veteran Stand Down

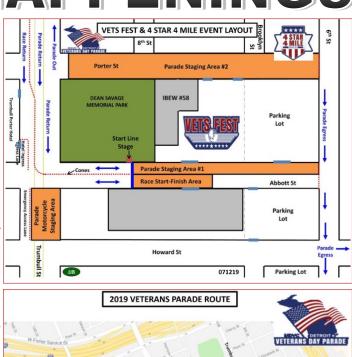
Evan Wilcher, President 313 506-9047 Natalie Hayes, Detroit VA POC (313) 576-1580 Beth Baker, Trustee 313 576-1000 Ext 65110



Pencil in the date, 11/10/19 Detroit Veterans Day Parade

We will be staging at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) just east of Trumbull, between Abbott and Porter Streets. This is just south of Michigan Avenue, former location of Tiger Stadium. It's the Corktown area. We will do a circuitous route, west on Michigan Avenue, turning at the old Michigan Central Train Station (being renovated by Ford Motor Company) and head back east on Michigan to the IBEW staging area. No need for shuttles to get back to your vehicles. There is plenty of parking, and the IBEW Hall will be available for use in case of inclement weather. In honor of the 100th Anniversary of the American Legion, State Commander Barry Wood will be the Grand Marshal. In honor of the 244th Anniversary of the United States Marine Corps, MDVC member/ United States Marine Corps Veteran "Big Al" Opra will be recognized as a "Veteran of Honor". Additionally, the late Judge Damon Keith will be recognized as a "Veteran of Distinction". Go our website www.detroitveteransdayparade.org and get registered, as soon as possibly convenient. We will get the wbsite updated with maps as soon as possibly convenient. Feel free to contact me, e-mail, or phone at (248) 569-0824

John "Willy" Williams
JL ETR2 OE Division
USS Newport News CA148 1959-1962
American Legion Post # 253 Royal Oak MI
Disabled American Veterans
Metropolitan Detroit Veterans Coalition





2019 VETERANS PARADE ROUTE TURN BY TURN

-Start on north side of Abbott, at Dean Savage Memorial Park, heading west.

-Turn north on Trumbull.

-Turn West on Michigan Ave.

-Turn south on 16th St.

-Turn northeast on Vernor St.

-Turn north on S. Vernor St.

-Turn east on Michigan Ave.

-Turn south on Trumbull.

-Turn east on Abbott to Finish Line.

The Air Force Names Its New Jet After the Tuskegee Airmen

The T-7A Red Hawk commemorates the achievements of the African American fighter pilots in World War II.

By Kyle Mizokami

Sep 19, 2019

https://www.popularmechanics.com/military/aviation/a29108820/air-force-jet-tuskegee-airmen/

The U.S. Air Force officially designated the service's new jet trainer the "T-7A Red Hawk." The name celebrates the pilots of the 332nd Fighter Group of World War II. Manned by African American pilots in a segregated U.S. military, the 332nd flew fighter planes with a distinctive red painted tail for identification purposes. The jet is also named in honor of the Curtiss P-40 Warhawk fighter, flown by the African American 99th Fighter Squadron. The jet will replace the T-38 Talon in Air Force service. The T-7A was named at a special event held at the Air, Space and Cyber conference. Acting Secretary of the Air Force Matthew Donovan told the audience that the trainer, set to enter service in 2023, will better train future fighter pilots for flying fifth-generation fighters such as the F-22 and F-35 then the 1960s era T-38 Talon it replaces. The T-



The Acting Secretary of the Air Force along with Colonel Charles McGee, of the 302nd Fighter Squadron. U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. D. MYLES CULLEN

the F-22 and F-35 than the 1960s-era T-38 Talon it replaces. The T-7A will fly with red painted tails. "The T-7A will be the staple of a new generation of aircraft," Donovan said. "The Red Hawk offers advanced capabilities for training tomorrow's pilots on data links, simulated radar, smart weapons, defensive management systems, as well as synthetic training capabilities." The jet commemorates the famous "Tuskegee Airmen," African American men who in 1940 came from across the country to participate in aircrew, maintainer, and air traffic control training at Tuskegee Army Airfield, Alabama. At the time, the U.S. military was a segregated organization, and Tuskegee graduates went on to form four all-black fighter squadrons: the 99th, 100th, 301st, and 302nd fighter squadrons under the 332nd Fighter Group. The Tuskegee Airmen painted the tails of their fighters red for identification purposes, earning them the nickname "Red Tails." The T-7A also commemorates the P-40 Warhawk, one of the most famous fighter planes of World War II. The P-40 was flown not only by the 99th Fighter Squadron, but also by the All Volunteer Group, or "Flying Tigers" of World War II. More than 13,000 P-40s were built with planes serving in almost all of the Allied air forces in the early years of the war, including the Soviet Air Force, Royal Canadian Air Force, and Royal Air Force. The P-40 was obsolete by 1943, eventually replaced by newer fighters such as the P-51 Mustang. Joining the acting secretary on stage for the naming event was Colonel Charles McGee, one of the original members of the Tuskegee Airmen. McGee flew more than 400 combat missions in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, earning him two Legions of Merit, three Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Bronze Star, and 25 Air Medals. McGee is a member of the National Aviation Hall of Fame.



Delaware State pays homage to Tuskegee Airmen with new planes

ByMark EichmannSeptember 23, 2019

https://whyy.org/articles/delaware-state-pays-homage-to-tuskegee-airmen-with-new-planes/

Student pilots at Delaware State University will soon be training on 10 new Vulcanair V1 airplanes and a new twin-engine Piper thanks to \$3.4 million in funding from the General Assembly. The new planes are a big upgrade from the 1975 Piper Warrior planes the program has been flying. "This airplane is lighter and so, therefore, with the horsepower-to-weight ratio, I'm faster, I'm cruising at a higher speed, which is good, because as a pilot, you've got to think ahead of the aircraft," said aviation director Lt. Col. Michael Hales. The new planes, which cost \$261,000 each, have 180-horsepower engines compared to 161-horsepower engines in the Pipers. The V1s also have the latest instruments with digital screens instead of analog gauges. "We're excited about that, those kind of technological advances that we've just never had access to, but now we do because we have new airplanes," Hales said. The improved cockpit technology will help keep graduates up to speed on how to operate the commercial planes regional and national airlines are flying today — though learning on older planes doesn't appear to have hurt job prospects for DSU grads. The school says 100% of students who graduate from the professional pilot program have found work in their field. DSU Board of Trustees chair Devona Williams said alumni are working at every

airline in the country in some capacity. "They are true ambassadors, demonstrating to the world that Delaware State University is the place that provides well-trained and prepared pilots and aviation management staff to fulfill the needs of the workforce," she said. Airlines are very eager to hire students out of the program, Hales said. "It's almost like a sucking sound because the airlines come in and they are like, 'Who's ready? Who can go? We want to talk to your students." He said that demand for DSU students is due to the quality of their education, but also evidence of the shortage of trained commercial pilots that airlines are facing. That shortage is growing, in part, because airlines have an aging workforce, especially considering that commercial pilots have to retire at age 65. Hales hopes DSU students can continue to fill those jobs as the school adds even more planes and expanded facilities in the coming years. In addition



Since 1987, Delaware State University aviation students have been learning on older planes like this 1975 Piper

to the 11 planes it's getting this year, he said the school has pledged to buy another new plane every year through 2028. "Now that we've increased our footprint here on this Delaware Airpark, we need a hangar, we need maintenance facilities that are able to handle the number of aircraft, the increased number of aircraft that we have," Hales said. "We've always kind of thought small; now we need to expand in that area as well." Delaware State University's aviation program started in 1939 as one of six historically black colleges and universities added to the government-sponsored Civilian Pilot Training Program. Civil rights leaders fought to get training at historically black colleges after those schools were initially left out of the training program. Eventually, some of those DSU student pilots became the first black military flyers after training at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Norman Thomas, one of those original Tuskegee Airmen, was at the Delaware Airpark in Cheswold as school officials christened a new plane. He said getting state money for brand-new planes was unheard of when he was training. "When we were in school in the '40s, we were just given tokens of everything, and now here we are giving out 11 planes. That's quite a feat," he said. Thomas, who graduated from DSU in 1950, is a part of the Philadelphia chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen. Every year for the past decade, the group has selected a DSU student pilot to receive a \$3,500 scholarship. After World War II, the aviation program at DSU languished before getting rebooted in 1987. Since the program restarted, all the school's planes have been painted with red tails, which have become a symbol of the Tuskegee Airmen and the planes they flew in World War II.

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2019 Detroit Chapter Scholarship Dinner Cruise

SEE ALL IMAGES















Leslie Edwards Jr., local Tuskegee Airman, dead at age 95

Leslie Edwards Jr., the oldest living Tuskegee Airman in the Cincinnati area, died Monday at the Cincinnati VA Medical Center in Corryville. He was 95.

The EnquirerPublished 9:20 a.m. ET Sept. 26, 2019 | Updated 9:20 a.m. ET Sept. 26, 2019

Born in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1924, Edwards moved to Cincinnati's West End, where his father died when Leslie was 5. They'd left the South to avoid violence against African Americans. He dropped out of Harriet Beecher Stowe School before the 10th grade. He had to go to work to support his mother and two sisters. He was drafted in 1943, shortly after marrying Anna Mae Edwards. Edwards – like other African Americans in the military at the time – was made to feel more like an unwelcome guest. "They never wanted blacks in combat in World War II," he told former Enquirer reporter Mark Curnutte in a 2017 interview, looking from beneath the bill of a red Tuskegee Airmen baseball cap. "Why? The military did not want blacks to

get honored as military personnel who were effective in combat. They wanted us to be effective as a labor force in World War II. In spite of what they didn't want, blacks have proven over and over again that were effective in combat." The 355 black fighter pilots began deploying in waves in 1943 to North Africa, Sicily

and Italy. They distinguished themselves and were featured in the 2012 George Lucas film "Red Tails." Fewer than 12 are still alive. Their dive-bombing and strafing missions were largely successful. And the Tuskegee fighters lost only a few heavy bombers in their care, an impressive combat record that led President Harry Truman to desegregate the U.S. military by executive order in July 1948. There were many others, not just fighter pilots, Edwards said in his public appearances. Among them bombardiers, mechanics, instructors, navigators, crew chiefs, nurses, cooks. The term "documented original Tuskegee Airmen" applies to vetted Army Air Corps personnel who trained or were stationed at the racially segregated Tuskegee Army Airfield in Alabama from 1941 through '49. An aircraft mechanic stationed stateside during the war, Edwards is one of 16,000 documented original Tuskegee Airmen, of whom fewer than 1,400 are alive, according to Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., a historic preservation organ-



ization based in Tuskegee, Alabama. These black World War II veterans served a country that only reluctantly accepted their service and most often treated them with contempt and hostility. Their numbers dwindling, and all now more than 90 years of age, Tuskegee Airmen have remained loyal to their post-war oath: "Preserving the Legacy. Motivating Youth." Edwards was promoted several times, ultimately to flight chief of Flight A in the 617th Bomb Squadron. He was responsible for the flight readiness of B-25 medium bombers. The 617th was one of four that made up the 477th Bombardment Group. His unit had prepared to go overseas when the Japanese surrendered in August 1945. Edwards earned an honorable discharge in 1946. He left with the rank of staff sergeant, two ranks below master sergeant, the position commonly held then only by white flight chiefs. Once he returned from the service, he worked at the now demolished Kahn's meat-packing plant in Camp Washington for 20 years and as a government meat inspector for 25 years. For years after leaving the service and after retirement, Edwards continued to tell the Tuskegee story, his role in it and translating its lessons into a new century for another generation. In 2017, at age 93, he spoke to 40 students, almost all African-Americans and almost all from impoverished backgrounds, at Aiken High School in College Hill. "He was spry and articulate and, in a way, chastised them for not taking advantage of the opportunities his generation and others had earned for them," Aiken Principal Lisa Votaw told Curnutte. Daniel Williamson, a math and engineering technology teacher in Aiken's New Tech program, invited Edwards and two other African-American veterans to the school. "These men were not given the opportunity to fly but stood up for their rights," Williamson said of the Tuskegee Airmen. "Here he was from Cincinnati, having faced the negatives they face, and he overcame. He broke through. A door opened up for future generations because these men persevered." Edwards, who lived in Springfield Township, increased his speaking schedule as a Tuskegee veteran after the 2016 death of his wife of 72 years, Anna Mae. He had been her primary caregiver for many years because of her health issues. Daughter Imogene Bowers, of Delhi Township, accompanied her father in 2007 to the U.S Capitol, where the Congressional Gold Medal was awarded collectively to the Tuskegee Airmen. She also took him to both of Barack Obama's presidential inaugurations. "What they did as Tuskegee Airmen means more to him now," Bowers said in 2017. "Daddy can see the results of what they did." In addition to Bowers, Edwards is survived by daughters Diana Henry, Luqman Abdu Rahman and Jacqueline Parrott; and 19 grandchildren.

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



Please communicate all newsletter inclusions to: Eric Palmer HawksCrvII@Gmail.com

<u>MEMBERSHIP CORNER</u> **Bill Welborne** 313-204-2477

welborne313@gmail.com

k Us Out on Socia



Chapter Websites Detroit Chapter website TA National Museum website



DetroitChapterTAInc HawksCryll

SUBSCRIBE to Our YouTube Channels **DetroitRedTail**





Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors

2009 Edition

Phone Numbers Bereavement Counseling1-202-461-6530	
Education	1-888-442-4551
Headstones and Markers	1-800-697-6947
Health Care	
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.....<u>www.va.gov</u> Education Benefits......www.gibill.va.gov Health Care Eligibility.....www.va.gov/healtheligibility Burial and Memorial Benefits.....www.cem.va.gov Recordswww.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel VA Benefit Payment Rates.....<u>www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/rates</u> VA Formswww.va.gov/vaforms Mental Health.....www.mentalhealth.va.gov Federal Jobs.....www.usajobs.opm.gov Veterans Preference.....www.opm.gov/veterans/index.asp Employment Assistance.....www.vetsuccess.gov

Veterans Employment and Training.....www.dol.gov/vets **Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program**

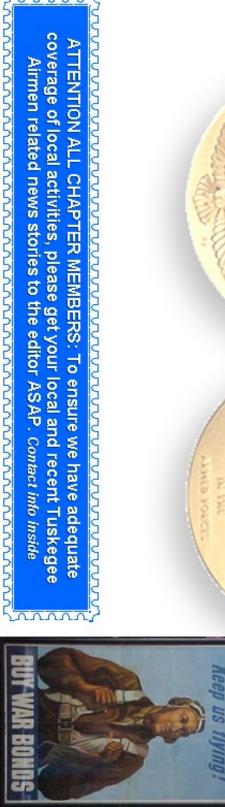
Life Insurance. <u>www.insurance.va.gov</u>
Department of Defense. <u>www.defenselink.mil</u>





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





coverage of local activities, please get your local and recent Tuskegee ATTENTION ALL CHAPTER MEMBERS: To ensure we have adequate

Airmen related news stories to the editor ASAP. Contact into inside