

Tuskegee Airmen Inc.

Winter 2007



From The President

Dear Members,

We are concluding a very successful year for the East Coast Chapter. Several significant achievements were accomplished throughout the year that allowed the Chapter to perform its mission. Thanks to you all for your dedication and commitment to the organization.

We made significant progress improving the efficiency in the operation of the Chapter by passing an updated version of our Constitution and Bylaws. The committee, headed by Robin Alexander, did an outstanding job providing us with documents that will allow the Chapter to progress forward. You will receive your copy of the documents soon. I would like to remind everyone that this is a living document that will continue to need improvements and changes over time. So review it carefully.

Mrs. Joy Branham-Pryde and her committee again did a superb job preparing for our annual Autumn Gala. Unfortunately, due to the student protests on the Gallaudet campus, we had to cancel the event. Many of you converted your ticket purchases into contributions to the Chapter's Education Assistance Fund, and I greatly appreciate your support. I hope conditions will improve next year so we can continue to have this most important event.

Our Youth in Aviation Program continues to attract youth. Not only are they learning how to fly airplanes, but they are also gaining experience in maintaining airplanes, thanks to Mr. Jerome Hodge. We must sustain this program by attracting qualified and motivated students and maintaining our financial commitment.

As we start the new year, I ask all members to rededicate themselves to participate in Chapter activities. In order for our programs to grow, the talents of all members are needed for us to succeed. Let the Officers of the organization know of your interests and get involved.

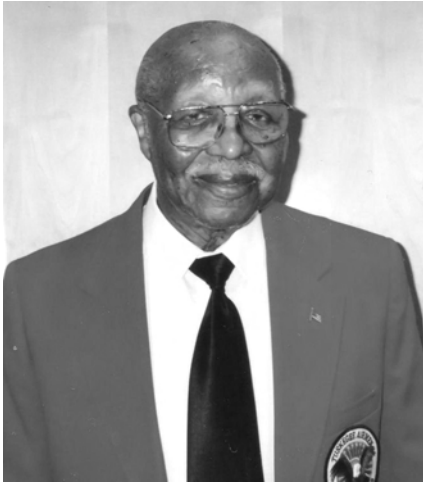
Finally, TAI National is making significant progress in turning the organization around. The Executive Board is working with Booz Allen Hamilton to develop a Strategic Plan. A resolution is being drafted to change the Constitution and Bylaws to allow for more efficient operation of the organization. The recent convention was a business and financial success. Even with these successes, your help is needed now more than ever, especially financially. The first way you can assist is to pay your annual dues in a timely manner. Second, each member is asked to pay an assessment of \$20.00 to help cover the expense of an audit that is needed to determine the financial status of the National organization. This is of utmost importance to help the organization determine where it is before it can move forward. Your cooperation would be greatly appreciated.

As we enter 2007, I would like to wish everyone joy, good health, and a prosperous new year.

Very respectfully,
CD Smith
Colonel, USAF (Ret)
President, ECCTAI

"Enriched By Our Past – Prepared For Our Future"

SPOTLIGHT ON CHARLES FLOWERS AN ORIGINAL TUSKEGEE AIRMAN



Charles H. Flowers, II was born in Wadesboro, NC, in 1918. After graduating from high school at the age of 15, he entered NC A&T College on a two year scholarship. He left school after 2 ½ years to earn money for additional schooling. While working in Baltimore, MD, the Executive Order was signed to train young Negro pilots for the US Army Air Corps. Flowers signed up in April 1941 and reported to Tuskegee, AL in September 1941 to begin training as a Cadet. He was the first in his class of ten to solo in the Primary Phase of training and was selected as Cadet Captain, the highest ranking cadet on base. In May 1942, he was reassigned to duties of Primary Flight Instructor.

Flowers left Tuskegee in January 1946 and enrolled at NC Central University, taking an active role in student government and completing his degree in Business Administration.

With flying still in his mind, he started a flying school in Charlotte, NC in 1947, training returning veterans to fly under the GI Bill of Rights. He continued this work until the Veterans Administration began requiring all trainees to show proof of employment once they completed the training. This, of course, was almost impossible since no airlines were hiring African American pilots at this time. Flowers then moved to North Carolina in 1950, where he managed an ABC outlet store, a very respectable position at that time, he says. After eight years, with no prospects for upward mobility, he began seeking other interests. It was then that he teamed with a family member to purchase a drugstore.

In 1963, he moved to the Washington, DC area and was employed as an Electronic Technician at the Goddard Space Center. He retired from Computer Sciences Corporation as manager of Employee Relations in 1989.

In 2000, the Prince George's County School Board voted unanimously to name a new high school in his honor. The Charles Herbert Flowers High School was dedicated in Springdale, MD, with many Tuskegee Airmen and other dignitaries in attendance. In February 2006, Charles H. Flower, II received an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Public Service from the University of Tuskegee.

Dr. Flowers, or Herb, as he is more commonly known to his friends, continues to stay active in community services, mentoring young males through his church, working with the ECCTAI Youth in Aviation Program and the Speakers' Bureau.

The **Henry A. Wise, Jr. High School**, named after longtime ECCTAI member and Original Tuskegee Airmen, was dedicated on October 13, 2006. The new high school is located in Prince George's County, MD.

SPOTLIGHT ON NOEL F. PARRISH AN ORIGINAL TUSKEGEE AIRMAN



The East Coast Chapter was given a personal insight into the life of Brigadier General Noel Parrish by Dr. Florence Parrish-St. John, who spoke at the October 14, 2006 ECCTAI General Membership meeting.

Gen. Parrish, from Lexington, KY, was a writer and a musician in his youth. He graduated from Rice Institute in Texas. However, after his graduation in 1928, he was unable to find employment. He noticed an Army recruiting poster one day and entered the Army as a private in the 11th Cavalry in 1930.

He was first trained as an enlisted pilot in the Army Air Corps, successfully graduating as an attack pilot with the 1932 flying class at Randolph Army Air Field. After a year on active duty, he enlisted in the Air Corps Technical School and later joined the 1st Air Transport Squadron. In 1935, he received his commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Regular Army and became Assistant Operations Officer with the 13th Attack Squadron, later becoming

a primary flying instructor. He was on duty at the Chicago School of Aeronautics, then transferred to Tuskegee Institute, AL. He became Director of Training at the Tuskegee Army Flying School, then Commanding Officer in December 1942.

Gen. Parrish's Air Force career continued to become Deputy Secretary of the Air Staff and Special Assistant to the Vice Chief of Staff, Air Deputy to the NATO College, and later Deputy Director Military Assistance Division with the US European Command. He retired from the Air Force in 1964. Gen. Parrish loved flying and wrote about flying under the name, Frank Lambert.

Dr. Parrish-St. John was asked many questions from the group. *How did Gen. Parrish avoid prejudice, being brought up in the south?* She answered that he looked at his men as Americans and becoming successful pilots. He had complete faith in the Tuskegee Airman project and had volunteer flight instructors who supported him in their desire to teach flying skills. The race of their students was of no consequence to them. He worked diligently to alleviate the harsh practice of segregation within the Army Air Corps.

How did he get the Tuskegee pilots deployed? He went to the War Department headquarters with a plan and convinced the decision makers to integrate on the premise that the military was needlessly running two Air Forces.

Gen. Parrish was rated as a command pilot and received the Legion of Merit and the Air Medal. The Parrish papers are on file in the Library of Congress, and Gen. Parrish is honored at the Lexington, KY Hall of Fame.

The updated TAI National website is operating. www.tuskegeeairmen.org.

2006 Autumn Gala

Our planned Autumn Gala fundraiser for the ECCTAI Scholarship Fund was not held this year due to the student protest and the closing of Gallaudet University, where the Gala was to take place. Although the cancellation was a disappointment to the Chapter, many members donated their checks to the Scholarship Fund, and we appreciate their generous support. **The fundraiser is now scheduled for Sunday, May 27, 2007.** Invitations will be mailed.

Since we could not recognize **George Smith, Sam Bass, and Joy Branham-Pryde** for their diligent and continuous service to the Chapter at the affair, President C.D. Smith recognized their many contributions at a General Membership meeting.

Master Sergeant (Ret.) Sam Bass has his footprints in chairing and actively participating in many ECCTAI ventures over the years: the annual picnics, holiday parties, membership committee, Speakers' Bureau, Education Assistance Fundraiser Committee, funerals and burial honors. For the past few years, he has taken the lead in organizing ECCTAI's booth at the Joint Services Open House at Andrews AFB, a function that generates thousands of dollars to promote the educational awareness of the Tuskegee Airmen legacy.

Joy Branham-Pryde has been working diligently with the Chapter for the past ten years. She served on the 1998 ECCTAI Convention Planning Committee, editing our Convention Journal, the Amenities Committee, and the Scholarship Selection Committee. However, for the past five (5) years, she has diligently chaired the Autumn Gala committee, working in all facets to make it the success it has been, growing in attendance each year and generating thousands of dollars for our ECCTAI scholarships.

Major (Ret.) George Smith has served the ECCTAI for more than 20 years. He is our contact with the DC Air National Guard for the annual Aviation Career Day at Andrews AFB. The event attracts more than 1,000 students each year, providing them the opportunity to meet and talk with members of the military, airline industry, scientific, government and educational communities. George has handled the myriad of details necessary to successfully perpetuate this event. He has also served diligently on the Convention Planning and Membership committees, and as a member of the Board of Directors.

The Chapter thanks these three members for their selfless efforts and many contributions.

ECCTAI Youth in Aviation Program (YIAP)

The 2006 Level One phase of the YIAP has concluded, and graduation was held on Saturday, January 13, 2007, at the College Park Air Museum prior to the 12 o'clock General Membership meeting. The students studied the Basics of Aviation, Flight History, Maintenance and personally experienced a flight.

This is an ECCTAI Community Action Program. If you would like to join the committee, or if you know of a young person interested in the program, please contact Nelson Evans at 301.XXX.XXXX or Yvonne McGee at 240.XXX.XXXX. Students must be at least 15 years old and attending high school with a C grade average.

ECCTAI Scrapbook

ECCTAI Picnic - July 2006:



Lots of Good Eating



The Picnic Committee: Dennis McDuffie, Paulette Tilghman, Berton Commadore, Chef



Rosemary Crockett and cousins



Oliver Carter and C.D. Smith

Picnic pictures by William Holton

General Membership Meeting:



ECCTAI members Elmer Jones, Preston Davis, Ivan Ware and Woodrow Crockett have a conversation at a general meeting.

Application for Membership

When sponsoring a perspective member, it is imperative that you obtain the ECCTAI Membership Application (Form 4) for the individual. The Membership Data (Form 2) will not be used for the purpose of applying for membership. The Form 2 will be completed only after the individual has been approved for membership. Membership Application (Form 4) can be obtained by contacting LTC Charles Thompson, 301-XXX-XXXX, or email charlesthompson520@yahoo.com.

The sponsoring member should make sure that the application is complete and signed by the applicant. Also, the sponsor must enter his/her name in the appropriate space.

Dues For 2007: Dues for year 2007 are now due.

ECCTAI and NAACP



Greater Carlisle PA NAACP Freedom Dinner was held on November 11, 2006. Pictured: ECCTAI members Bill Peterson and Bob Owens with Guest Speaker – Specialist James J. Cole, PA ANG, a recent returnee from Iraq.



ECCTAI sponsored a booth at the NAACP Convention in Washington, DC. Standing: Ferman Travers, C. D. Smith, Bill Peterson. Seated: James Pryde, William Broadwater.

ECCTAI Constitution Update

The Constitution was adopted by the membership at the 2006 November General Membership meeting. It is a living document, updated periodically with changes that will be voted upon. POC is Parliamentarian Robin Alexander, robinalexander@yahoo.com.

James Pryde Honored

Longtime member, and Original Tuskegee Airman, James W. Pryde, was inducted into the National Security Agency's Hall of Honor on 11 December, 2006, for his efforts in serving as an advocate for African-Americans and promoting a diverse workforce within NSA. Before retiring in 1980, Mr. Pryde served as the Assistant Deputy Director of Administration. He is actively involved on the ECCTAI Board of Directors.

ECC Scholarship: The deadline for the ECC scholarship application submission is February 10, 2007. The application can be found on the website, www.ecctai.com.

Armed Forces Air Show: Want to have some fun? The Chapter will be cooking and selling hot dogs again at the annual Armed Forces Air Show, on May 18, 19, and 20, 2007. It's a fundraiser, and we have a great time working the booth. Sam Bass will chair the event again. If you are interested in helping, please contact Sam at 301.XXX.XXXX.

ECCTAI Annual Golf Tournament: There will be a golf tournament this year, but no date has been set. POC is William Broadwater, 301.XXX.XXXX.

Cora "Tess" Spooner Honored with the Parrish Medal



The Brigadier General Noel F. Parrish Award is the highest honor bestowed by Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. Annually, it is awarded to a regular member who has performed outstanding acts that enhanced equal access to knowledge, skills, and opportunities. While typically recognizing an individual for outstanding service and performance at the chapter level, this year's recipient was singularly distinctive at the broadest

organizational level. East Coast Chapter's own Cora Marie "Tess" Spooner -- through her strong leadership and tenacity -- charted a successful course to return TAI to full functionality. Overcoming extreme financial and management challenges, Tess restored solvency at the national office.

The recently completed Strategic Five-Year Action Plan and revision of by-laws were visionary and signal contributions. The Youth-in-Aviation, Educational Assistance Scholarships, and mentoring programs were reinvigorated. Moreover, Tess, with her phenomenal capacity to engender support, shepherded the successful pursuit of the Congressional Gold Medal. All these endeavors assure that TAI will advance our organization's commitment to enhance equal access to knowledge, skills and opportunities. Let's embrace and celebrate the exceptionally deserving recipient of the 2006 Brigadier General Noel F. Parrish Award, Cora Marie "Tess" Spooner.

Guest Speaker Series

1st VP Byron Morris has originated a Guest Speaker Series at our monthly General Membership meetings where notable individuals join our members to discuss topics of interest. The series began with presentations about their Tuskegee experiences from Original Tuskegee Airmen, Ira O'Neal and William Broadwater. An informative talk by prominent historian and longtime TAI member, Dr. Alan Gropman followed, and in October, Dr. Florence Parrish-St. John gave an insightful presentation on the Tuskegee Airmen's first commander, Brig.Gen.

Noel Parrish. We closed out the year in November, when former Montgomery County, MD Chief of Police, Clarence Edwards, spoke to the group about the influence of crime, and the concern for youth at risk as it relates to drug use.

The presentations have generated energetic and thought provoking discussions among the membership. If you have suggestions on future speakers, please contact Byron at jbm63@comcast.net.



Happy New Year





ECCTAI LONELY EAGLES

Mary E. Davis
Kenneth Levell
Adrian St. John

Romeo R. Robinson

Romeo Robinson was an Original Tuskegee Airmen who passed away on November 19, 2006. He was born in Bronson, SC and moved, with his family, to Washington, DC. It was here that he began working at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. He joined the Army and was sent to Tuskegee, AL. An eye injury prevented him from becoming a pilot, however, he became a highly qualified airplane mechanic and inspector.

After the war, he returned to Washington and attended school to become a trained machinist. He actively volunteered in many organizations and was a faithful and active member of the East Coast Chapter, TAI.

Joseph M. Shamwell

Joseph M. Shamwell, a recent ECCTAI member, passed away on October 17, 2006. Born in Washington, DC, he moved to Memphis, TN, to pursue a songwriting career. He served his country fighting in the Vietnam War, and after his military service, he began a radio career. As a songwriter, several of his songs were recorded by major artists.

He returned to Washington to become the Research Director for Howard University's WHUR radio station, then joined ABC Radio as Director of Marketing Research. He was one of the most respected individuals in the area's radio industry.

2006-2007 Officers

C.D. Smith	President
J. Byron Morris	1 st Vice President
Col. Taro K. Jones	2nd Vice-President
Walter Jackson, III	Treasurer
Paulette Tilghman	Recording Secretary
Robin Alexander	Parliamentarian
Oliver C. Carter	Past President
William Wilson	Business Manager
Roslyn Robinson	Financial Secretary

Directors

William Broadwater
James Pryde
Charles Thompson
Ferman Travers

Newsletter

Editors: Patricia Lightfoot
Roslyn Marchbanks-Robinson
Contributing Editor: Oliver C. Carter

Telephone Tree: Members, are you receiving Chapter information through email or by way of the Telephone Tree? The Telephone Tree sends informational messages to members who live in the Washington, DC area. If you would like to receive messages via email, that can be arranged, also. Send telephone numbers and updated email addresses to ros@ecctai.com.

ECCTAI e-news is sent to all members whose email addresses we have on file. The e-mail messages are sent as a **blind cc** for security reasons.

East Coast Chapter
Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.
PO Box 62404
Washington DC 20029-2404

**#7721 IS OUR COMBINED
FEDERAL CAMPAIGN NUMBER.**
If you are eligible to participate,
please consider designating the
ECCTAI as a recipient of your
donation.

WE ARE ON THE WEB
WWW.ECCTAI.COM

ECCTAI 2007 Meeting Dates

Board of Directors - 1st Wednesday of each month at 1900 hrs at the Bolling Officers' Club.
February 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6 July TBA, no meeting in August, September 5.

General Membership - GM meeting is the second Saturday of the month, 1200 hours at the College Park Air Museum. January 13, February 10, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, no meeting in August, September 8.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING LOCATION

The General Membership Meetings are held at the College Park Aviation Museum/Airport, 1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive College Park, Maryland 20740. Meeting dates and directions to College Park are posted on www.ecctai.com. If the General Membership Meeting location is changed, all ECCTAI members will be notified.

This newsletter can be accessed at www.ecctai.com, click on the newsletter icon.

The **2007 TAI National Convention** will be held from August 21-25, at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center in Grapevine, TX, in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Registration information will be mailed after January 15, 2007. It's a convention you don't want to miss!