



332d AEW

RED TAILS ROUND UP

Jan 2022



A 332d Air Expeditionary Wing HC-130J Combat King II aircraft on the flight line in Southwest Asia Jan. 20, 2022. The 332d Air Expeditionary Wing generates, executes, and sustains combat airpower in support of the AFCENT and CENTCOM Commanders. To meet and sustain this mission profile, the HC-130J, the Air Force’s only dedicated fixed-wing personnel recovery platform, is used because it can receive in-flight refuel as well as provide helicopter air-to-air refueling to further the longevity of combat search and rescue, humanitarian aid, and disaster relief efforts world-wide. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Kelly Goonan)

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passes away at 102 years



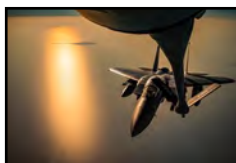
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Afghan withdrawal — **Red Tail** Airmen Recognized



332d AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING — Three Red Tail Airmen were awarded medals for their actions in Operation Allies Refuge during a special recognition ceremony in Southwest Asia, Jan. 7, 2022.

At President Biden’s direction, the United States launched the operation to support relocation flights for Afghan nationals and their families eligible for U.S. Special Immigrant Visas. In August 2021, 332d Air Expeditionary Wing Airmen were tasked to forward-deploy to Afghanistan during the final days of American military withdrawal from the country to aid the operations efforts.

“None of us could have known that in a matter of weeks, the largest non-combatant evacuation operation in United States history would take place as 124,334 humans were delivered to freedom,” said Col. Brian T. Stahl, 332d Expeditionary Operations Group commander, who presided over the ceremony. “We controlled the busiest and most dangerous piece of sky in the world and it was our own mighty Red Tails Strike Eagles who were the last manned aircraft out of Afghanistan, because a few dozen of our wing stepped forward in spite of the acute danger.”

Recognized for meritorious service with a Bronze Star medal, Capt. Adam J. Solomon, 332d Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron airfield manager.

“This medal is bestowed specifically for meritorious achievement in the performance of military operations against an armed enemy,” said Stahl. “Thank you for your actions and leadership.”

Capt. Solomon supervised a four-man team in safeguarding the airfield arrival and departure corridors, coordinated joint force communications for thousands of multinational personnel, and increased outbound evacuation flights exponentially, all within 24-hours, by managing the use of a new sequencing tool. His redesign of procedures was hailed as a Defense Department benchmark and briefed to the President of the United States along with multiple partner nation heads of state. Solomon headed diplomatic and strategic activities during the first airfield operations meeting with the Taliban’s Minister of Aviation and defused tensions between multiple countries’ representatives as they responded to the complex attack from Islamic State members.

Two Senior Airmen were awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal with a Combat Device. Col. Stahl explained this device delineates those service members performing meritoriously under the most difficult combat conditions.



Senior Airmen Dakota C. Bartz and Andrew J. Kimrey, 332d Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron air traffic controllers for radar approach, performed their duties in hostile conditions and at significant personal risk, Stahl said.

Immediately after reaching Kabul, both SrA Kimrey and Bartz risked their lives repeatedly to strengthen airfield operations. They joined a U.S. Marine Corps security team in a physical blockade where they used their bodies to prevent the active taxiway from being swarmed and oversaw operations to ensure continuing airlift capabilities while exposed to indirect fire and ground attacks.

SrA Bartz drove nighttime air operations, leveraging radio operations to ensure airfield security and negating the inoperable radar to prevent mid-air collisions.

SrA Kimrey managed daytime operations, creating a graphic to avert mid-air collisions and guiding an Afghan General Officer and his staff through the evacuation efforts.

The actions these Airmen took directly supported the largest airlift the United States military has conducted in 72 years enabling the operation to preserve 3,511 flights and evacuate 124,394 personnel without operable radar and resulting in zero aircraft incidents.

Under threat of sniper fire, these Airmen also established a security zone during hostile attack and were able to secure the safety of 1,504 refugees.

The selfless actions of Capt. Solomon, SrA Bartz and SrA Kimrey demonstrate the continued legacy of the 332d's Tuskegee heritage of great strength and bravery in times of uncertainty.

“As Red Tails, we are together for a brief moment in time, placed in each other’s lives to accomplish something bigger than any individual or unit, and all for the betterment of our nation,” said Stahl. “We will not squander this opportunity.”



Brig. Gen. Charles McGee, decorated Tuskegee Airman, passed away at 102

Brig. Gen. Charles McGee, one of the last surviving Tuskegee Airmen, passed away Jan. 17, 2022 at the age of 102.

McGee was a retired fighter pilot and one of the last living members of the Tuskegee Airmen, an all-African-American military pilot group who fought during World War II as part of the 332d Fighter Group.

"We are honored to remember and celebrate the life of one of our very own Red Tail legends, Brig. Gen. Charles McGee, who passed away last night at the age of 102," Brig. Gen. Christopher Sage, 332d AEW commander said. "Brig. Gen. McGee became one of America's first Black fighter pilots as part of the Tuskegee Airmen and was assigned to the 332d Fighter Group. The Tuskegee Airmen pioneered the evolution

of Black aviators and helped pave the way to desegregate the military after World War II ended. As current Red Tails, we carry on the legacy the Tuskegee Airmen set forth. Keep setting the Red Tail Standard in defense of our nation!"

McGee was a career officer in the United States Air Force for more than 30 years and flew a three-war total of 409 combat missions in WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, one of the highest combat totals and longest active-duty careers by any Air Force fighter pilot in history.

For his service, he received the Distinguished Flying Cross and Bronze Star Medal, among other military honors. In 2007, as a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, McGee received the Congressional Gold Medal. In 2011, he was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame and on Feb. 4, 2020, was promoted from colonel to brigadier general.



◀ At Ramitelli airfield in Italy, Col. McGee stands in front of the P-51C he named "Kitten" for his wife. At his side is Nathaniel Wilson the Mustang's crew chief.



Airmen Helping Airmen

Rising 4's Airman's Attic Gives Back

332d AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING — In a hurry to pack or to maximize luggage space, 332d Air Expeditionary Wing Airmen may find themselves wondering what to do with usable, new or used, uniform items, clothes, electronics, and more. In comes the "Airman's Attic."

The Attic, operated by volunteer Red Tail Airmen of all ranks and specialties, is available to use for everyone at the 332d AEW regardless of rank. The Attic takes usable uniforms, boots, civilian attire, personal care items, and more in the hope of putting those items into the hands of Airmen in need.

"When people leave for home, they'll often donate things like converters, lamps, TV's, mirrors and other items," said Senior Airman Richard Nelson, 332d Air Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron defender and one of the Rising 4 Airman's Attic leaders. "Along with used items, we'll often get brand new boots, uniforms, running shoes, toiletries, and other stuff. I've seen skateboards, rolling bags, and brand new backpacks come through here."

Uniforms, to include physical training uniforms, are organized according to size and neatly arranged on shelves and hangars. Boots are paired in rows on shelves with clear labels indicating size. The Attic also has a significant stock of brand new toiletries, books, DVDs, and other items.



Nelson went on to explain how this re-use and recycle type of system is beneficial for everyone because it not only helps Airmen and the Air Force save money but it also reduces the carbon footprint of the 332d AEW by reducing waste. For example, if an Airman finds a tear in their uniform, runs out of shampoo or needs a mirror, they can come to the Attic to help bridge the gap of mail delivery times or when the Base Exchange is awaiting restock of items.

"We rely heavily on the availability of our volunteers to keep the Attic open and organized, Nelson said. "It's Airmen helping Airmen."

One of the many occasions of Airmen helping Airmen came around 5:30 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 17, when Airman's Attic volunteers were notified of inbound personnel in need of civilian clothing and other basic supplies to sustain them until their luggage could be delivered. As soon as the message came through,

several volunteers immediately stepped up to wash and dry clothing and put together personal hygiene kits for them Nelson explained.

"Brig. Gen. Sage and I have been continually impressed by the sustained dedication of the Airman's Attic initiative," 332d Command Chief Sean Milligan said. "It's a great example of Raising the Red Tail Standard."

There are donation bins next to the Airman's Attic as well as several bins located throughout the Life Support Area that Attic volunteers periodically check to restock the Attic each month.



SNCO leaves his mark with Legacy Project



332d AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING — Leaving a legacy behind is something many aspire to do and sometimes an opportunity will come along that becomes part of a larger picture of historical significance.

Senior Master Sgt. Fernando Buitrago, 332d Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron senior enlisted leader, had the opportunity to leave his mark while expressing the heritage and culture of the Tuskegee Airmen and the 332d Air Expeditionary Wing culture in two separate acrylic paintings on plywood.

“It was an honor to get to do these pieces because it needed to express the legacy of the wing correctly, to impress on the users of the space, the Red Tail Center of Excellence and what it means to be a Red Tail,” he said.

The Legacy Project has historical significance to the wing with each of its paintings. The first, titled “Legacy of Excellence,” depicts the establishment of the 332d AEW legacy by the Tuskegee Airmen and the second, “Chasing Excellence,” merges the 332d AEW ethos with the past.

Buitrago shared his inspiration that helped guide him through the process.

The Past: The Legacy of the 332d AEW was established by the Tuskegee Airmen challenged with extreme adversity. Resolute to overcome beyond all odds, the Airmen of the 332d held strong their belief that unyielding excellence in the Profession of Arms would lead them to victory on both fronts! This would ultimately be our future “Legacy of Excellence!”

The Future: The ethos of the 332d AEW is driven by the legacy of our past. The Tuskegee Airmen; whether a pilot, crew chief or logistician, knew to overcome adversity they needed to achieve resolute excellence. Looking ahead at modern warfare, we must not be overcome by our challenges but instead choose to “Chase Excellence!”



As an active 332d AEW Top 3 member, Buitrago heard about the project concept and volunteered to spearhead the effort.

“It means a lot to me to know that in some small way I am helping inspire young Airmen and NCO’s [non-commissioned officers] to take on the banner of excellence and continue our Profession of Arms for years to come,” said Buitrago about his motivation to work on this project.

Using his background in large-scale murals and a degree in art, Buitrago created concept drawings he shared with 332d AEW Command Chief, Chief Master Sgt. Sean Milligan. Together they worked to develop a conceptual



piece that would showcase the history of the Tuskegee Airmen and the accelerating changes of the current 332d AEW with imagery from the past and present.



“The overall intent is to ensure that Airmen who pass through this wing will have a connection to our history, purpose and accomplishments knowing they have added to this legacy of excellence,” said Buitrago

Once complete and placed in the RTCE, the paintings were unveiled to the 332d AEW Commander, Brig. Gen. Christopher Sage and the command chief on Jan. 25, 2022.

Sage remarked on how well the paintings showcase the assets of the 332d AEW and how the P-51 reflected in the pilot’s visor ties our past to our present.

“I love the reflection; it is not just the reflection of the canopy seal, but the P-51,” said Sage. “It’s about legacy and now it is about your legacy as well.”

Explaining how each Red Tail leaves a little of themselves behind while assigned to the 332d AEW, Chief Milligan remarked that Buitrago left a lasting impression with this project.

The Legacy Project brings the past and future together to showcase the proud heritage carried forward by the members of the 332d.



January's Warriors of the Week

Warrior of the Week is a competitive recognition program that highlights significant contributions made by individual Airmen who raise the Red Tails standard and enhance the mission and capabilities of the 332d Air Expeditionary Wing.

"I strive each and every day to leave a lasting legacy that the brave Airmen of the 332d set back in 1942 through dedication to the mission, treating others with the utmost respect and leading my teammates to the best of my ability."



1st Expeditionary Rescue Group

Tech. Sgt. Christopher Drummond, 801st Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron HH-60 flight line expediter. "I strive each and every day to leave a lasting legacy that the brave men of the 332d set back in 1942: through dedication to the mission, treating others with the utmost respect, and leading my teammates to the best of my ability," said Drummond. The mission for 1 ERQG/801st EMXS, is to provide specialized combat search and rescue capabilities for the AOR through the use of HH-60G helicopters and C-130Js.

332d Expeditionary Mission Group



SrA. Anthony Rivera, 332d Logistics Readiness Squadron ground transportation operator. "The legacy of the Red Tails is that of excellence, so I strive to maintain this standard in all facets of my job," he said. The 332d ELRS provides premier combat sustainment operations to AFCENT's primary combat wing in order to deter and defeat regional aggressors.

"This Airman is the avatar of 'Service Before Self' and 'Excellence in All We Do.' He's the first one to raise his hand and volunteer when something needs to be done," Maj. Vincent McLean, 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron commander, said of his Airman during a special recognition ceremony on Jan. 13, 2022 in Southwest Asia.

"He's the quiet professional and always ready to step up and help."





"I love the Red Tail heritage and how awesome the Tuskegee Airmen were. As a MOC controller, I get a behind-the-scenes look at how we're maintaining that flying legacy across the fleet. The Red Tails were constantly called upon specifically for their airpower and I strive every day to live up to that Red Tail standard. It's up to each of us to continue to honor the legacy and heritage of the 332nd in all that we do."

332d Expeditionary Maintenance Group ▲

Tech. Sgt. Matthew House, Senior Maintenance Operations Center controller. "I love the Red Tail heritage and how awesome the Tuskegee Airmen were. As a MOC controller, I get a behind-the-scenes look at how we're maintaining that flying legacy across the fleet. The Red Tails were constantly called upon specifically for their airpower and I strive every day to live up that Red Tail standard. It's up to each of us to continue to honor the legacy and heritage of the 332d in all that we do."

▼ Joint-international exercise Desert Falcon

UVDA AIR FORCE BASE, Israel -- The Desert Falcon joint international exercise concluded this past week. The exercise was held at Uvda Air Force Base in cooperation with Ninth Air Force (Air Forces Central). The exercise included the Israeli Air Force's 122d, 119th, and 115th Squadrons, and U.S. Air Force's 55th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron. During the exercise, Israeli and American aircrews flew wing-to-wing and trained for various aerial scenarios and strikes. The exercise marked a significant step for the strategic cooperation and operational readiness for the IAF and the USAF. (Article/photos courtesy of the Israeli Air Force).





332d Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron Munitions Flight

Chief Master Sgt. Sean M. Milligan, 332d Air Expeditionary Wing command chief, visited the 332d Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron Munitions Flight and shadowed the ammo Airmen during a routine AIM-9X Missile 60-day inspection in Southwest Asia Jan. 15, 2022. These immersion visits give him a better understanding of the unique skillsets every Airman brings to the 332d AEW Red Tail team.



Command Chief immerses with Ammo, LRS Airmen



332d Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron

Chief Master Sgt. Sean M. Milligan, 332d Air Expeditionary Wing command chief, visited with the 332d Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron where he shadowed the Airmen during his immersion visit in Southwest Asia Jan. 15, 2022. Chief Milligan's immersion visits give him a better understanding of the unique skillsets every Airman brings to the 332d AEW Red Tail team.





December's Monthly Award Winners

Airman – SrA Madison Hedges, 332d EMXG

NCO – TSgt Jorge Claudio Santos, 332d EOG

SNCO – SMSgt Susan Erdrich, 332d EMXG

CGO – Capt Charles Apt, 332d EMSG

FGO – Maj Drew Clasen, 332d EOG

Team – Weather Flight, 332d EOG

Congratulations to each winner and team for their outstanding accomplishments and support to the mission. Your actions and commitment exemplify the highest standards of excellence.



Sustaining combat airpower, CSAR

The HC-130J Combat King II aircraft, the result of the HC/MC-130 recapitalization program, has the ability to receive inflight refueling as well as the capability of providing fuel to other aircraft. The Combat King II is the only Air Force dedicated fixed-wing personnel recovery platform; its mission comprises of personal recovery in both combat and peacetime environments, helicopter air-to-air refueling, airdrop, humanitarian aid and disaster relief.

