

SOURCE OF THE SPRING

- HOME
- ABOUT
- ADVERTISE
- CONTEST
- EVENTS
- SHOP
- SUBSCRIBE
- SUPPORT

TUSKEGEE AIRMAN CHARLES MCGEE BRINGS STORIES, ADVICE TO SILVER SPRING

Posted by Sean McGoey | Feb 19, 2020 | Nonprofits, People | 0



49 Shares

- Facebook
- Twitter
- reddit
- Gmail
- Yahoo Mail

\$49 WEEKEND SPECIAL
NOW AT LOCAVIN
 5 PM - CLOSE - SATURDAY & SUNDAY
 2 ENTREES • APPETIZER OR DESSERT • SELECTION OF WINE



8519 FENTON STREET • DOWNTOWN SILVER SPRING, MD

COMPASS



Specializing in Sales, Rentals and Property Management

Gordon Young Jr.
 Licensed in MD, DC & VA
 410-707-7122
 gordon.young@compass.com



The last two months have been a whirlwind for retired Army Brig. Gen. Charles E. McGee of Bethesda, who turned 100 in December, participated in the coin toss at Super Bowl LIV in Miami, received an official promotion to general and was honored by President Donald Trump—along with his great-grandson Iain Lanphier—during the State of the Union address.

His tour continued last Wednesday, when the Silver Spring Town Center Inc. and Silver Spring Village brought McGee, the oldest living Tuskegee Airman, to the Silver Spring Civic Building for their monthly Senior Programs Aimed at Rekindling Lifetime Engagement series.

Nearly 200 people were in attendance—“double the size of our largest ever SPARKLE,” according to Lisa Martin, SSTCI’s executive director.

Timothy Tutt, the senior minister at Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ in Bethesda, facilitated a wide-ranging conversation that touched on everything from the formation of the iconic group of African American military pilots to the importance of getting a good education.

“When I took my first flight in that PT-17, I was hooked,” said McGee, who flew more than 400 combat missions in his 30 years of service. “The only way I can put it, to be able to get in a plane, go up and loop, roll, and spin, and come back and put your feet on the ground, I was hooked.”

McGee, who was born in Cleveland, Ohio, just over a year after the end of World War I, spoke of the discrimination that aspiring black pilots faced: a 1925 study by the Army War College that deemed African Americans “mentally inferior to the white man,” being asked to retake qualification tests, even the building of a separate airfield near Tuskegee Institute in eastern Alabama.

“That may have been picked, they said for nice weather,” McGee said, “but I’m sure you could read something else into it as well.”

FEET HU
The Doctor
Silver
Do
8630 Fe
(ne)
(301) 5
Washi
K Street/F
1775 K S
(at)
(202)
Jennifer Gerre

**WINTER
CASK
CLASSIC**
DENIZENS BREW
SAT. FEB 29
12 - 5 PM
TICKETS

**THE W
COMMUNITY**
SUNDAY SERVICE
9:30 AM 11:
THEWELLSILVERSPRI
8900 COLEVILLE RO
SILVER SPRING, M

get r
**SW
CL
CRA
SL**
a bigger, better pl
is in t
ELLSWORTH
PLACE
ope

Once he was accepted into the training program at Tuskegee, McGee moved to Alabama with his new wife, Frances, whose presence, he said, allowed him to focus solely on his training—unlike other trainees, who spent leisure time in Montgomery, Ala., and Atlanta looking to meet women.

FOOT PAIN? The Doctor Is In.

Jennifer Gerres, DPM - Podiatrist - Foot & Ankle Specialist



"We decided to get married...on a Saturday," McGee said. "Monday morning's mail said [to] report...Looking back, I think that [her being there] helped me."

Even after their training was completed, the 332nd Fighter Group faced issues, with white commanders pushing to have them patrol Liberia—not an area of conflict—before ultimately latching on as one of the squadrons helping escort American bombers in Europe.

There, they gained their famous "Red Tails" nickname by painting red markings on their tails as identification for the bombers they were escorting.

After the moderated discussion, Tutt opened the floor for audience questions.

McGee advised the young people in the room to remember the "four Ps": perceive ("Dream your dreams, find your talents"), prepare ("Get a good education...learn to read, write and speak well"), perform ("Let excellence be your goal in everything that you do") and persevere ("Don't let negative circumstances be an excuse for not achieving").

The line of the afternoon, though, came in response to a question about the importance of research and expanding human understanding.

"We human beings are one small-ass speck in the mighty grand universe," McGee said. "We need to keep that in mind."

Timothy Tutt (left) interviewed Brig. Gen. Charles McGee (Ret.). Photo by Sean McGoey

Author Recent Posts

**COMEDY
A SECOND
LANGUAGE**

IMMIGRANT AND FIRST
GENERATION COMEDIA

MARCH 14 • 8

SILVER SPRING BLACK BO

TICKETS: **IMPROBABLECO**

**LOTUS POINT
Wellness**

An extraordinary place for transformation.
Holistic & Integrative Counseling and Wellness For

Counseling | Nutrition | Acupuncture

WE TREAT:

Anxiety • Depression • Stress Man
Mood Disorders • ADHD/ADD •
Bereavement • Relationship Issues •
Social Skills • Emotion Dysregulation
Childhood Developmental Issues • Nutr
LGBTQ Related Issues • Physical &

SILVER SPRING | BETHESDA | COL
301-960-1198
www.LotusPointWellness.c

Need a Change

GOBre
Real

Buyers. Sellers. Con

ADVERTISE HERE
SOURCE OF THE SP



Sean McGoey

Contributor at [Source of the Spring](#)



Sean McGoey is a Master's Journalism student at the University of Maryland. He lives in Silver Spring and writes about local government, arts and entertainment, and sports.

Subscribe To Our Newsletters

Join our mailing list to receive the latest news and upcoming events!

We keep your data private and share your data only with third parties that make this service possible. [Read our Privacy Policy.](#)

FIRST

LAST

EMAIL

SUBSCRIBE

SHARE:



RATE:



< Previous

Next >

[The Eleanor to Open Silver Spring Location on Monday](#)

[Strosnidars Silver Spring Store Sold to Local Hardware Group](#)

