



**Red Tail Project – Commemorative Air Force**  
"America's Flying Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen"  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Rare P-51C Mustang Returns to Fleming Field After Five-Year Restoration; Will Be Featured At Charity Open House**

On Wednesday, August 5, 2009 the Minnesota Wing of the Commemorative Air Force will welcome one of its most popular airplanes, a red-tailed P-51C Mustang, back to the hangar after a five year absence. The short, informal ceremony, featuring a fly-over by the airplane before landing, will take place at 2:30 p.m. at the Wing's headquarters - Hanger #3 Fleming Field, 310 Airport Road, South St. Paul, MN 55075.

The Red Tail Project, an all-volunteer non-profit organization associated with the Minnesota Wing, just completed a \$1 million restoration of the Mustang, named *Tuskegee Airmen*. The Mustang had been restored once before and toured the air show circuit for three years starting in July 2001. Its pilots and crew took every opportunity to tell audiences across the country the story of the Tuskegee Airmen, the first black fighter pilots to serve in the U.S. Army Air Corps during WWII.

The Tuskegee Airmen painted the tails of their fighters red and as they proved their skill and courage in the skies over Italy and German, bomber pilots began requesting the "red tail angels." The Airmen flew hundreds of missions and earned hundreds of metals and designations, including the Congressional Gold Metal in 2007 in honor of their war service to the United States.

The Red Tail Project's Mustang crashed due to catastrophic mechanical failure at the Red Wing Air Show in May 2004, killing the Project's leader, Don Hinz, and destroying the airplane. The members of Red Tail Project never doubted that the plane would one day fly again so it was trucked up to Tri-State Aviation in Wahpeton, ND, and fundraising began. A group of stalwart volunteers worked closely with the staff of Tri-State to rebuild the Mustang so it could continue to serve as a tool to create interest in the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Now that the restoration is complete, the Red Tail Project will focus on the development of an educational traveling exhibit. This "museum on wheels" with the theme of "Rise Above", will have interactive displays that tell the story of the Tuskegee Airmen and their role in WWII and the desegregation of the U.S. armed services.

The Mustang will be one of several aircraft featured at the Minnesota Wing's **free** charity open house and fly-in on Saturday, August 8, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The "Wings For Hope" event will benefit six charitable organizations, including Halo R.E.A.C.H. A Child. They will also be collecting non-perishable food items for local food shelves like Second Harvest Heartland. Guests will have the opportunity to get up close to exciting airplanes like the B-25 *Miss Mitchell*, an AT-6 Texan, a BT-13 and others. In addition, history rides will be available in the B-25 Mitchell. The event promises to be fun and educational for the entire family.

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