



Presented by



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dennis Buden, Tournament Director  
(860) 558-0514  
[dennis@goldenkielbasa.org](mailto:dennis@goldenkielbasa.org)

### **Tuskegee Airman Connie Nappier, Jr., to be Honored at Fifth Annual Golden Kielbasa Veterans Open**

*New Britain Resident was Member of Famed World War II Bomb Squadron*

**New Britain, Conn., August 12, 2013** – New Britain resident Connie Nappier, Jr., who served as a bombardier/flight navigator with the famed World War II African-American bomber group known as the Tuskegee Airmen, will be the guest of honor at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Golden Kielbasa Veterans Open charity golf event on Friday, September 27.

The event, presented by Farmington Bank and hosted by the Disabled American Veterans, Hardware City Chapter 8 (DAV), is Central Connecticut's largest and most renowned veterans charity golf tournament. In addition to the DAV, beneficiaries will include House of Heroes Connecticut and Friends of Fisher House Connecticut. Additional major sponsors include AT&T Connecticut, Stanley Black & Decker, the Hospital of Central Connecticut, Okay Industries and the Tomasso Group.

Upwards of 140 golfers are expected to tee it up at Stanley Golf Course with a post-golf barbeque dinner – including ceremonies honoring Mr. Nappier and all Central Connecticut veterans – to take place at the Polish Falcons Nest #88 Pavilion and Picnic Grounds on Farmington Avenue in New Britain. To register, visit [www.goldenkielbasa.org](http://www.goldenkielbasa.org) or call (860) 558-0514.

Nappier enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces after graduating from Hartford's Weaver High School in 1943. His dream was to be part of what was then called the "Tuskegee Experiment," a program the Air Corps had set up to train African-American fighter pilots. He completed training at both Tuskegee Airfield (Alabama) and Midland, Texas as a bombardier navigator.

Nappier was a flight officer with the segregated 477<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, which was sent to Freeman Field in Indiana. It was at Freeman Field where Nappier and 100 fellow officers from the 477<sup>th</sup> were unjustly arrested for disobeying Jim Crow laws of the day, and sent to a stockade in Kentucky. The injustice was corrected when President Truman ordered Nappier and others released.

"All of us had taken an oath and all of us were true Americans," says Nappier. "We were willing to give our lives for our country."

-more-

Nappier to be Honored  
2-of-2

Despite facing enormous obstacles and being subjected to severe racial discrimination, the Tuskegee Airmen served with honor and distinction. They are credited with having flown more than 1,300 combat missions, nearly 200 bomber escort missions, and having destroyed or damaged more than 400 enemy aircraft. While the 477<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group itself never saw combat, it was in the midst of preparing for an invasion of Japan when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, hastening the war's conclusion.

Nappier and his fellow Tuskegee Airmen were honored with Congressional Gold Medals in 2007, the nation's highest civilian honor. The story of the Tuskegee Airmen was immortalized by Hollywood in the 2012 film, Red Tails. Nappier himself often speaks with youth groups about his experiences and service to our country, and the Connecticut Chapter of the Black Pilots of America is named in his honor. Following the war, Nappier used the G.I. Bill to complete his education, graduating from Trinity College and enjoying a successful career as an architect. He has lived in New Britain since his retirement more than 20 years ago.

For more information on the Golden Kielbasa Veterans Open, please contact Tournament Director Dennis Buden at [dennis@goldenkielbasa.org](mailto:dennis@goldenkielbasa.org) or 860-558-0514, or visit [www.goldenkielbasa.org](http://www.goldenkielbasa.org).