

Pass It On®...

Reach for the Stars... *No Matter How Long it Takes.*

Wally Funk became the oldest person to visit space. She's 82 years young!

Better late than never. Probably the last thing Wally Funk wants to hear. She just flew into space at age 82 after completing her spaceflight training in the 1960s.

Age doesn't seem to discriminate when it comes to dreams. Bill Hatfield was the oldest person to sail around the world single-handedly at age 81. Yuichiro Miura is the oldest person to summit Mount Everest. He did it at age 80. And Leroy "Satchel" Paige played his last major league baseball game at age 59.

Wally Funk and 12 other women, known as the Mercury 13, went through astronaut training together in the 1960s. Wally had plenty of experience in the air by then. She left high school at age 16 and entered college to get her pilot's license. She became a professional aviator at age 20 after being named the Top Pilot two years in a row at Oklahoma State University. In addition to her lengthy aviation career, she also raced airplanes, often winning.

Still, airplanes weren't enough for Wally, so she walked through the doors at NASA and volunteered for the "Women in Space" program. Her application to become an astronaut was denied three times.

Working in aviation kept her close to her dream, and she flew, a lot, logging over 18,000 hours. At 81, she was still flying every Saturday as a flight instructor.

And then the call came. On a long shot, Wally had bid for a seat on Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin. "No one has waited longer," Bezos said via Instagram.

When Wally got the news, she only said one word: "Finally!"

While many dreams never do come true, pursuing them is almost as rewarding as achieving them;

sometimes, a dream is worth the work and the wait. Wheels up, Wally!

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