

## ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 57

For all former members of the 307th Bomb Wing at Lincoln AFB, Nebraska

March 2009

## President's Column History Is Almost Here!

I'm not talking about the political and social sea changes represented by the election of our new President; that history is still to be written. Nor about those who proclaim that the current economic turbulence shaking most of the world spells the end of free market capitalism. As Mark Twain famously said, the reports of that demise are greatly exaggerated.

No, I'm referring to a history less cosmic, but still dear to the hearts of the members of our Association: the definitive *History of the 307th Bomb Wing*, during the Lincoln years. Some of you may not know that Mike Hill, the son of Sedge "Red" Hill, has been conducting the most thorough and exhaustive research that I've ever seen into the heart and soul of the 307th BW and its people, triumphs and tragedies.

He has produced a manuscript rich with facts, figures, and personal recollections. He has also captured the emotional highs (like winning the 1959 SAC Bomb Comp and setting a never-broken record for on-time takeoffs) and lows (like the string of B-47 and KC-97 accidents that claimed so many of our comrades' lives and the trauma of failing an ORI) that dominated our lives. He has brought into vivid perspective the months of fear and dangerous uncertainty that gripped the world during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Most important of all, he has shone a spotlight on the Herculean efforts of the flight

crews, maintenance specialists and other support troops as they battled the Nebraska weather, manpower shortages, insufficient spare parts and endless pressure to keep the planes flying and the deterrent force constantly ready.

Mike Gingrich and I have been assisting with the editing of this document and have been impressed by the depth and detail of Mike Hill's research. The final manuscript is nearly complete and ready to be submitted to the publisher. One major task still ahead is to add photographs to the manuscript, but we're hoping to have our history completed and published well in advance of our next reunion. It is a lucid and eloquent tribute to the men of the 307th and their families who set a new standard for courage and professionalism in the face of adversity.

There's another Hill who also deserves a major "Attaboy." Last summer, I told you that Earl Hill had volunteered at the Branson business meeting to chair a committee to identify and recruit people who can help ensure continuity of operations as we old dinosaurs "age out." (He hasn't met with a tidal wave of response, but many thanks to those who have stepped up and offered to help.)

Not one to wait for others to do the work, Earl responded to Mike Gingrich's request for assistance with the persistent and baffling problem of e-mails. He dove into the innards of our website and has unspooled and analyzed

years of problem areas. Kudos to Earl for his tenacity and skill in an area that needed work! Anyone else out there willing to pick up a shovel and help? Give Earl a shout by phone at 503-543-0251 or e-mail him at [eehill@centurytel.net](mailto:eehill@centurytel.net).

Pete Todd

### Donations

We wish to acknowledge the generosity of those who have recently made donations to the Association's General Fund.

Geraldine Anderson

Louis R Durham

Karol Franzysheh

Perry C Meixsel

David H Shaver

### Newsletter Schedule

The 307th Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association Newsletter is published for the benefit of all former members of the 307th Bomb Wing of Lincoln AFB, Nebraska. It is expected to be published three times a year in March, July, and November.

Contributions for publication in the newsletter are encouraged, and are essential for the success of this newsletter.



## 307th Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association

### Officers of the Association:

**President:** Pete Todd, 1250 Big Valley Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80919-1015. Phone 719-531-5874.  
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**Vice President/Newsletter:** Mike Gingrich, 2527 Greenlefe Drive, Beavercreek, OH 45431. Phone 937-426-5675.  
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Email: LarryJanB@gmail.com.

**Treasurer:** Tony Minnick, 5920 Robin Court, Lincoln, NE 68516. Phone 402-423-6848. Email: tonym@inetnebr.com

### Association Founders:

Billy Williams, 5546 Enterprise Drive, Lincoln, NE 68521. Phone 402-438-6061.  
Email: jeannbill@windstream.net

Betty C Pelletier, deceased 29 November 2004.

**The Association is strongly reliant upon key members who have volunteered their time and effort to keep the wheels running smoothly. They are:**

**Membership:** Jan Boggess, 4304 Ridgecrest Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Phone 719-548-8024.  
Email: LarryJanB@gmail.com.

**Membership:** Bev Minnick, 5920 Robin Court, Lincoln, NE 68516. Phone 402-423-6848. Email: tonym@inetnebr.com

**Co-Historian:** Mike Hill, 1405 8th St SW, Minot, ND 58701. Phone 701-838-9288.  
Email: mikendaf@ndak.net.

**Co-Historian:** Robert Loffredo, 6004 SW 2nd St, Des Moines, IA 50315. Phone 515-285-3445. Email: implanenuts@mchsi.com

### Dayton 2010 Reunion Co-Chairmen:

Roger "Bud" Flanik, 3207 Zephyr Dr, Dayton OH 45414. Phone 937-277-8285. Email: airbud@aol.com.  
Mike Gingrich, 2527 Greenlefe Dr, Beavercreek OH 45431. Phone 937-426-5675. Email: mikegingri@cs.com.

The Association is a non-profit Veterans Organization. All contributions to the organization are gratefully received, but presently are not deductible under IRS Code. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are elected by majority vote of all members at each business meeting.

*Dayton 2010*



*Cradle of  
Aviation*

*12th Stand Up  
June 14- 19, 2010*

## Dayton 2010 Reunion A Reminder From Bud Flanik

By the time most of you read this, almost a full year will have passed since our last reunion in Branson. That means that we're only a year away from the next reunion, to be held in Dayton, Ohio.

Brent and Anne Horn's hosting efforts at Branson leave us a very high hill to scale if we hope to top their effort. Mike and I have been working dili-

gently to put together another memorable event for all of you. So far, we believe that we've come up with a schedule of events that includes old familiar favorites and adds in some new activities. These will be discussed in following issues as they mature. Now, we do need to discuss an issue that has a major bearing on the 2010 Dayton Reunion.

In the last newsletter the Association included a Dayton Reunion Interest Survey. It is NOT a commitment to attend the reunion, but it does provide your planners with some rough numbers of possible attendees. We need these numbers to better plan activities and to establish a baseline on the cost per person. We asked for your response, either positive or negative, so we could come up with the most realistic figures possible. To date, the response has been significantly underwhelming. I understand that there were many other things taking up your time: Thanksgiving, Christmas, elections, and rampant cost increases in many areas.

But we honestly do need your immediate attention in completing the survey. Please help us in our efforts to put together the best possible pricing package we can. The more people attending, the better the individual costs. To date, we have received replies indicating less than 100 people planning to travel to a Dayton reunion.

Now all of us know that is not a true figure. We can project numbers based on prior reunions. But we also know that age is taking a toll on our group as many of us have now passed that "Age 60" mark. (I'm trying my best to be kind and gentle in this most dangerous area of discussion.)

We love seeing all of the old familiar faces from the past reunions, yet I know there is a vast majority of former 307th folk who have never been to one of our reunions for one reason or another. You are the good people we especially want to reach with this plea. If you've never been to a reunion, you don't know what you're missing.

Like most other things in life, time has that wonderful ability to make us forget the bad things and remember the good ones. We relive many memories long forgotten. Someone brings up one event and the first thing you know, there are five other people sitting around suddenly recalling similar memories. It's a time of renewal and remembrance. Of good times, good people and a time frame we'll never forget. We take that wonderful step back in time and for a few short days, we're all transported back to a different era.

The Association needs your help in taking a few moments to complete the Interest Survey.

Let's put it a different way. Mike and I need your input. We need to know whether we should charter 4 buses, 5, or even 6. We need projected numbers so we can plan on whether we need to reserve a single deck on a riverboat for our evening dinner cruise, or whether we need to reserve the complete riverboat. There are numerous other items that are directly impacted by the numbers in attendance. Obviously, we get price breaks as we reach certain minimum attendance numbers. The more people we have,

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the less it costs per person. It's that simple.

So, please help us out by **turning to page 11 of this newsletter** and completing the survey. We need your input. Please send your response to either Mike or me in any fashion you can. We accept e-mail, "snail mail" and/or phone calls. We need the info ASAP. Your prompt reply is for planning purposes only and it is not a binding commitment on your part. Time is reaching a critical point.

Please reply to either of us, using info below.

Mike Gingrich	Bud Flanik
2527 Greenlefe Dr.	3207 Zephyr Dr.
Beavercreek, Ohio 45431	Dayton, Ohio 45414
937-426-5675	937-277-8285
Mikegingri@cs.com	Airbud@aol.com

Since our November issue, not much has happened in the way of Dayton planning activities, with the Holiday break and all. Right now, we are still in the info gathering mode. About the time of the next newsletter in July we expect to be entering into contracts with the hotel, the AF Museum, the riverboat company, buses, and the like and should have much more to bend your "ears" with. Then in November we should pretty much have the expected rackup and schedule for you, with final info and a set of registration materials to follow in the March 2010 newsletter

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## Recalling 4 who fell from the sky

By CARA PESEK /Lincoln Journal Star  
Sunday, Oct 19, 2008 - 12:07:10 am CDT

Two brothers left Chicago in a pickup truck Wednesday morning.

In the back of the truck was a small stone monument with the names of four men killed in a plane crash in 1956. One of the names was that of the brothers' uncle, their mother's brother, Anthony C. Marcanti. Marcanti was 29 when he died. The brothers, Ray and John Mazzola, were little boys, 6 and 10, respectively.

The brothers don't remember very much about their uncle. But they remember that he brought them little presents when he came to visit. They remember how sharp he looked. "I sure remember the



**L to R: John Mazolla, Jack Johnson, and Ray Mazolla prepare to set the memorial marker.**

uniform, how nice it was, to see somebody in uniform," said Ray Mazzola. And they remember how sad their whole family was when they found out the B-47 on which their uncle was the navigator had crashed after taking off from Lincoln Air Base.

Jack Johnson remembers that day well. He was 17 then, a student at the high school in Ceresco. He remembers the force of the plane crash. He and his classmates felt the school building rock.

Arriving home after school that day, he found hundreds of people - reporters, investigators, curious townspeople. The plane had crashed on his family's land southeast of Ceresco. Debris was scattered everywhere. Air Force investigators checked the land for probably six weeks, Johnson guesses.

He remembers that some Air Force guards, young men not much older than he was then, were stationed on his parents' land to make sure no one took any debris. "We really enjoyed the Air Force kids, and we visited with them a lot," Johnson said.

Time passed. The wreckage was cleared, the investigation finished. Years went by. Then last summer, Johnson got out some of his pictures from the crash site and displayed them in Ceresco during a community history day.

Not long afterwards, he got a phone call from Ray Mazzola. Perhaps 15 years ago, Mazzola said, he was talking to his mother about her brother's death, asking her questions, trying to better understand something he was too young to understand at the time.

But there were a lot of things she didn't know. So he wrote to the Air Force, and asked for a copy of the accident report. When it came, he learned exactly where the crash had taken place. He searched property records in hopes of finding someone from near the crash site who remembered what happened. And he found Johnson, who now lives on his parents' old place. Eventually, Mazzola got around to calling him.

Thursday morning, John and Ray Mazzola and Johnson placed the marker the brothers brought from Chicago in a field where most of the wreckage was found.

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"It's been 50 years, and no one from the family has ever been out there," Ray Mazzola said. They figured it was time. They placed the marker on Thursday and returned to Chicago.



Johnson had never seen the names of the victims before he met the Mazzola brothers and helped them place the stone. But he's glad to know those names, and to take care of the stone, so that other people might learn the names, too.

"I think family, heritage and history are very important," he said. "It kind of fit my personality, I guess."

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*The following is from 307<sup>th</sup> BW historical records.*

"Friday morning, April 6th, Capt James W Sullivan and his crew, 2Lt Lawrence A Schmidt (CP) and Lt Anthony C Marcanti (Nav) reported for a routine profile flight. The flight plan called for a nav leg, air refueling and a bomb run. A1C James J Berry was the Crew Chief on 53-4209. He was going along that morning to get his time in for flight pay.

Preflight was routine that morning. The crew climbed aboard and went

through the checklist for engine start as they had done so many times before. Engine start, taxi, and runup were normal. The weather was cool and overcast with a 4,000-foot ceiling.

At 1123 hours, 4209 lifted off Runway 35 and began climbing to the north. Those who watched the takeoff saw a routine departure of the newly arrived B-47. Several on the ground watched the B-47 until it faded from sight of the naked eye.

At 1130 hours, Ceresco, Nebraska, was rocked by an explosive concussion. Three miles south and a mile east, near Highway 77, Oscar Spader was in his farmyard doing some morning chores. He had watched a lot of the B-47s fly over near his farm. Like many times before, he glanced skyward to see his tax dollars at work. He later recalled, "The plane was about 1,500 to 2,000 feet in the air, just below a layer of clouds. I saw the plane explode and it came apart in the air."

Pieces of the B-47 rained down on several farms. Wreckage was strewn along a mile and a quarter path. Most of the wreckage impacted just south of the Martin Johnson farm at the base of a small hill. Flaming debris caused several fires to erupt.

The concussion of the exploding B-47 was also felt at the base. On the flight line, several airmen saw the fireball as it fell to earth. Word spread across the flight line then spilled out onto the base. It was evident that "we had lost one."

Crash and fire trucks from the base raced towards Ceresco and joined the local fire department to contain the fuel-fed fires. Several units from the City of Lincoln also responded to help fight the growing conflagration. There was some difficulty in getting close to

several of the fires due to the terrain and the country roads surrounding the crash site.

It didn't take long for sightseers to show up and clog Highway 77 and surrounding country roads. A Lancaster County Sheriff's Officer believed there might have been as many as 2,000 cars turned away from the crash site area. Before the site could be secured, some of the more ghoulish sightseers had picked up pieces of the B-47 to take home as souvenirs.

The investigation team began sifting through the wreckage almost before it was cool. Back at the base, all of the records dealing with 4209 were being brought together for the investigation. Interviews were conducted with anyone who had actually witnessed the explosion and crash. When the onsite investigation was completed, cleanup of the site began with the wreckage being transported back to the base.

Several of the witnesses stated that 4209 had turned back towards the base. This was confirmed at the crash site. There had been no radio contact from 4209 giving any indication they were having any problems or that they were returning to the base.

The #6 engine was found some distance from the main impact area. It appeared the rear engine mount might have failed. The investigation board was not able to discover the exact cause of the accident. The board believed the engine might have had problems causing the crew to turn back towards the base. They theorized the engine mount failed, causing the engine to rotate upward, depart the aircraft and strike the horizontal stabilizer. Fuel from the broken lines may have ignited causing the explosion.

This was the first fatal flying accident at Lincoln since the base reopened. Memorial services were held for the crew at the Base Chapel.

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### **Tales of Alert, Part II By Dave Bowersock**

**KIEV:** Our crew was scheduled for target study and flight planning, prior to going on Reflex to RAF Greenham Common, England. When Gene arrived, he asked Neal and me where Kiev was. We checked it out on our maps and learned that Kiev was a

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city in the Ukraine, about 470 miles south west of Moscow, with a population of over three million. It was a major industrial, transportation and military complex. Gene told us that he had dreamed that a war started and our target was Kiev. His dream ended with no conclusion to the mission, only that he remembered Kiev and going through our bomb run procedures. Our targets for this Reflex weren't near this area so we laughed about it and went on with our flight planning for England.

Our first week of alert at Greenham Common was routine. Prior to starting the second week we were told that we would be changing our flight plan and target, to cover for a B-47 out of Dyess AFB, TX that was delayed getting to England. We were then given the new "package" and, you guessed it, the target was Kiev. I felt like we were in a twilight zone with some inexplicable force writing the script. We had only one exercise that week and I was fully convinced we were on our way to war. Well, of course it didn't happen, we finished that otherwise uneventful week and never did see Kiev as a target again. I suppose it was just one of those weird things that sometimes happens during our lives.

#### **A FROSTY LANDING:**

We had completed all phases of our B-47 training mission and were descending for a night landing at Lincoln AFB. In the descent, we lost the defrost system for the windshield (front glass of the cockpit). The situation was serious. The command post discussed a plan to launch an emergency tanker for us, but Gene calculated that we didn't have enough fuel to rendezvous with it. The command post cleared us to land.

It was a dark night and even though the sides of the canopy were clear I had no forward visibility. It was as black as the inside of an ink bottle but thank God for strobe lights. (A row of intense flashing lights extending out from and indicating the center of the runway). They were just visible thru the frost and helped to

keep us lined up until over the runway. From that point on, I could see the runway lights only from the side and that was all the reference I had as to how high we were from the ground.

Gene and Neal both remarked that on a clear, no wind day I could land hard enough to break concrete but that night my landing was as smooth as glass.

**A TERRIBLE TERRIBLE NIGHT:** One winter night in 1962, we were returning to Lincoln AFB, Nebraska after a nine hour training flight when we, and several others, were diverted to McConnell AFB, Kansas because of a winter storm in Nebraska.

We landed at McConnell early enough for me to call an old friend, George Jabara, who insisted that I spend the night with them. The next morning I called the base and was told that our return to Lincoln was delayed because it was still weathered in. Not long after that my crew called to tell me that I needed to return to base because all the B-47s diverted to McConnell were to fly another mission that night.

I need to point out here that SAC was operating under a very competitive system of points given for every phase of a training mission. This so called motivational game pitted crews, squadrons, wings and even divisions against each other. Promotions and careers were very much influenced by this competitive score keeping. Thus, Lincoln was still socked in, so we were ordered out to fly the scheduled missions they couldn't fly from Lincoln.

We flight planned and did our target study all that day with a takeoff time that night. As the takeoff time approached, a light freezing drizzle began. The deicing trucks sprayed all of our planes with their liquid deicing solution. During our preflight we discovered some areas that perhaps the truck missed and were icing over again. As our start engines time was passing by, we were still waiting for the deicing truck,

with fatigue and stress taking their toll. The weather conditions were deteriorating as we pulled out to taxi. We were scheduled for the first take off but Paul Pudwill had had no delay in starting so they switched our take off times, making him first.

As we watched Paul's plane takeoff and disappear into the night, we waited for the tower's instructions to take the runway. After a lengthy delay the tower ordered all aircraft back to their parking spots on the ramp. We were eventually informed by the tower that the first aircraft off had just crashed.

We parked the aircraft, sat in stunned dark silence and I think each of us cried. I took my helmet off. Angry and frustrated I threw it down, intending for it to land on the walk way. Unfortunately it went thru the hatch and fell about twenty feet to the concrete ramp.

Subsequently the accident review board determined that the port hole for the Q-springs (which gives the pilot resistance and artificial feel of the controls) had frozen over and Paul had inadvertently pulled the airplane up into a stall shortly after take off.

The Division Commander, General Lew Lyle, tried to fix the blame on the flight crews for violating the crew rest regulations. It didn't stick and he ultimately lost his command and his career.

I still think that the point system that was intended to be motivational was too often punitive in nature. The job and responsibility were stressful enough without the addition of a competitive system between crews and units that had such dire consequences.

#### **Comments on this tragedy by Neal Amtmann, the crew navigator with Bowersock**

I believe the reason we couldn't taxi was because the weapon bay doors were frozen and could not be closed. Additionally, I didn't think we were sure that it was Paul Pudwill's crew that had taken off. We all returned to base ops and watched as crewmembers, filed

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in with grey faces. It was a slow, painful head count. Soon we learned that two had survived, but again no names. Finally the copilot, Frank Medrick, and navigator, Harry Jones, staggered in and confirmed that Paul was gone. He had stayed with the aircraft to avoid a farmhouse but ended up ejecting too low for his chute to open. Additionally, both surviving crewmembers had ejection malfunctions. The co-pilot only went part way up the ejection rail when it broke off and he tumbled free. The navigator's D ring did not flip up so he had to unbuckle to reach it, rebuckle and then eject. He also had a burn mark on the front of his jacket, which indicated a leak in the seatbelt release hose. Fortunately it still worked.

Navigator Harry Jones writes: Jim Kent AC, Flip Lathum CP, and Clay Arundel Nav, were the number one A/C to take off that night. They took off just minutes before we did. I remember Clay saying afterwards that it was a rather sporting take off, with very poor vis due to ice on the windshield.

Copilot Frank Medrick comments: The date of the accident was January 13, 1963. Paul got the nose down below the horizon; however, the aircraft continued in a stall up to 250+ KIAS when we bailed out. Frank Fish was the Command Post controller on duty that night. He told me we were ordered off the ground because someone in the CP refused to believe we could have freezing rain in Wichita at 22 degrees F.

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### Aircraft are designed by geniuses to be operated by idiots!

**John Sinclair, 307 ARS, 1954-56**

I first heard that old aviation axiom from Boeing rep in 1954 after I tried to remove the front door on one of their tankers with a fire ax! Got to be an interesting story behind that, right? Well, I was an instructor boom operator and my aircraft commander, engineer and I were flying a training mission with a student crew at Lincoln AFB, Nebraska. The last guy in is re-

sponsible to close and lock the door, right? In this case it was the student radio operator and he cranked it up, rotated the locking lever then shoved it up against (but not behind), the locking pin.

Everything went OK till we started to pressurize, then POW, the door blew out, snapped the cable, swung down underneath the fuselage and the (now open) closing handle stabbed into the skin. The boss told me to go down there and check things out. I reported there was no way to get it back up and I wasn't sure it wouldn't contact the runway on landing.

I said, "I'll try chopping it off, if you like". I got a "Sure, go ahead", so I tied a cargo strap to my parachute harness and approached the door with trepidation. I was looking right at the spinning number 2 prop and thinking, "Why the hell did you suggest this? If I do chop this puppy off, it'll go right into that spinning prop!" I got them to shut down no. 2 and started whaling away. I got about a foot deep in the aluminum structure beside the aft hinge when it became apparent the hinge was made of steel and no telling how far I would have to chop to get around the end of it. We gave up on the main door removal project and requested the runway be foamed. My pilot set her down easy and the door cleared the runway by a couple of inches.

Two days later, my presence was requested at the field maintenance hangar for consultation with a factory representative. He listened patiently, then said, "Aircraft are designed by geniuses to be operated by idiots", turned and walked away.



### The Last Flight

The verse on the SAC Chapel Memorial Window says it best...

**John B "Jack" Carey**, San Antonio TX, 14 December 2004.

**Betty Forgas**, Orlando FL, 20 January 2009.

**Ruth H Gallien**, Logansport LA, December 2007.

**Billy I Gilliland**, ARS, Ft Collins CO, September 2008.

**Joan Ness**, Brewster NY, 14 March 2008.

**Shelly Ostgaard**, Lincoln NE, 13 January 2009.

**Clarence D Padgett**, OMS, Moore OK, 23 November 2008

**Keith B Steele**, FMS, Grand Island NE, 4 January 2009.

**Frederick D Ulm**, FMS, ARS, E Hampton CT, 18 December 2006.

**Thomas C Vanevenhoven**, ARS, Yuba City CA, 25 April 2008.

*I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here I am; send me. Isaiah6:8*

<b>Treasurer's Report</b>			
<b>307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association</b>			
Ending Balance from last report October 20, 2008:			\$8,398.85
	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Deposits</u>	
<b>General Fund Balance</b>			<b>\$8398.85</b>
Expenses:			
Postal	391.20		
Printing	622.08		
Admin/Equip/Supplies	<u>130.52</u>		
	<b>- 1143.80</b>		<b>-1143.80</b>
			<b>7255.05</b>
Income:			
Donations	350.00		
Interest on account	<u>6.46</u>		
	<b>356.46</b>		<b>+ 356.46</b>
<b>Ending Balance February 17, 2009</b>			<b>7611.51</b>
<b>Tony Minnick, Treasurer</b>			

## Around the Wing

As we gain more maturity, we find ourselves afflicted by things or problems we never foresaw when we were mere adolescents. Tony, Pete and I frequently hear from members who tell of their health or problems and events within their families. Sometimes the news is joyful, other times, sad and tragic. Unfortunately, the frequency of bad health or sad news is increasing. The issue becomes where to draw the line in passing on information to the general readership so as not to intrude on privacy. In most instances our thought is that when a member informs us of difficulties, we ought to pass that on to the readership in general terms, without details, so that friends may be aware and get in touch.

**Dick Goodson** recently wrote to send info about his kids and grandson who had been or are serving in the Air Force. It seems Dick has been pulled through the knothole after attending our reunion in Branson. He checked into the hospital for a catheter and stent and encountered severe medication and allergy reactions, which took seven hospital stays and scares to resolve. You can contact Dick at 554 Shades Bridge Rd, Greenfield TN 38230, ph 731-235-1199, or pawpawgoodson@aol.com.

**Frank Kisner** called in late summer to thank us for the Branson reunion book we sent. He mentioned he had hopes his vision problem would permit him to go hunting out west this fall with his son Frank Jr. Hook up with Frank at fdk534@aol.com.

**Dell Carey**, of San Antonio, wrote to Tony to straighten out an address glitch in her mailed newsletter. Husband Jack Carey passed on in December 2004, and Dell kindly enclosed a memoriam written for Jack. Jack started in the AF in 1940 as a mechanic, and had an illustrious aeronautical career and subsequent success as a businessman. Jack's signature slogan was EMAT - - Every Man's A Tiger.

**Gerry Anderson's** husband Glenn, who had been with OMS, HQS and the 370<sup>th</sup>, passed on November a year ago. Gerry says she and her son read the newsletter together and they got a healthy chuckle out of "The Ghost Story" in Dave Bowersock's "Tales of Alert".

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The sender of the following email is known to us only by his email address, jkeech39@aol.com:

I was really taken back to read about the B47 crash at Lakenheath - 1956. **Tsgt John Ulrich** was one of the airmen that died in that crash. I just wanted to write a little bit about the immediate family that John (left behind) through his sacrifice to our country.

He left a wife, Selma, and a son, Charlie. They remained in Lincoln approximately 7 years after the accident before Selma moved back to her home area -Baltimore MD. Charlie was enrolled in a boy's military academy and Selma gave all to support her Charlie".

Selma's life was truly affected by John's death. She went so far as to search the crash site for the wedding ring John wore - but it was never found.

Charlie grew up with emotional issues. Selma tried everything to give Charlie everything, but I think it all led to his continued drug use and poor health. Selma tried so hard to give Charlie everything possible only to lose him to his struggle with cancer some years ago. Selma remained devoted to John Ulrich until her death in 2008. Many times I would see her in a distant stare with tears welling in her eyes.. She never forgot John Ulrich (and) the circumstances that changed her life forever.

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**307th Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association**  
 LINCOLN AIR FORCE BASE, NEBRASKA 1954-1965

[www.307bwassoc.org](http://www.307bwassoc.org)

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I doubt there is any use for this type of history but it does tell the rest of the story for TSGT John Ulrich - in Aircraft 53-4230 that was lost July, 1956.

*Pete Todd's response to JKeach39. This type of account captures the human side of the cold statistics surrounding the "casualties" of our business. We'll never know what kind of life John and Selma and their son might have had if this tragedy hasn't occurred, but I'm glad you were there to record the depth of her love, courage and devotion.*

From **Lois Meixsel**. After reading about Dave Bowersock's 'Alert crew duty' in the current newsletter I am adding this small story - when you have two little boys, ages 2 and 3, whose daddy is pulling Alert and you gather them up, take them to the base "to see daddy" and just as you get them out of the car at the Alert barracks - the klaxon sounds - try explaining "no, we aren't going to see daddy" - Once was more than enough.

From **R T Boykin**. My nephew, Dan Boykin Jr., attended the Branson standup with me, saw the old banner and volunteered to have a new one made and give it to our association. The graphic artist that reworked all the files and designed and printed the banner was Brent Allen (Brent did all the work). The banner was a gift from my brother Dan Boykin Sr's company, Advantage Signs, Inc (of Ft Worth, TX).

The banner made by Advantage signs is a true work of art and was a gift worth about \$2000. It measures 3 x 10 feet, and will be displayed at our next reunion. An image of the banner appears at the bottom of page 7.. The Association has expressed our gratitude to the Boykins and Mr Allen for their generosity and thoughtfulness.

Prompted by the Military Offspring notes in the November Newsletter, **Tom Pauza** wrote in to tell of his granddaughter, of whom he is justifiably proud. Capt Sarah Helms graduated USAFA in 2004 with a BS in Aero Engineering. In 2006 she was awarded a MS in Aero Engineering from AFIT. This was followed by an assignment with the AF Research Lab which led to a tour in IRAQ where she was instrumental in the development of a highly classified command control intel system. She was scheduled to start test pilot school at Edward in January 2009. Her father, Tim Pauza, is also a USAFA grad as is her husband Nick, who is a F-16 pilot. Accomplishments run deep in the Pauza family!

Our old friend and new editorial and administrative assistant in training, **Earl Hill**, has found and sent the web URLs below which deal with different aspects of LAFB's history. The first two below have a Masonic connection of some sort.

<http://www.minerland.net/lincoln2.htm>, covers base history.  
<http://www.minerland.net/lincoln1.htm>, covers ANG history.  
<http://www.techbastard.com/afb/ne/lincoln.php>, LAFB history.  
[http://www.techbastard.com/missile/atlas/lincoln\\_afb.php](http://www.techbastard.com/missile/atlas/lincoln_afb.php), Atlas history at LAFB/  
<http://www.techbastard.com/missile/nike/locationsne.php>, Nike history at LAFB.

\*\*\*\*\*

The photo of a B-47 aerial refueling at the top of page 7 was recently sent by **Neil Cosentino**. Because of its unusual perspective it is perhaps the most beautiful as well as unusual photo of its type. Elsewhere in this issue is an article by Neil describing one of his F-4 missions in SEA, which was previously published in the *Daedalus Flyer Magazine*, and is reprinted here with Neil's permission.

You golfers will also be interested in the nearby article describing **Woody Fail's** recent endeavors.

Others who have been in contact recently are: Ken Wikle, Ken Fisher, Don Campbell, Dave McCracken, Steve Peery, Bob Ketchum, Bill Rogers, Charlie Dabbs, Ken Howell, and Tony Cain.

### Bad Email Addresses, as of November 2008

*The email addresses for the folks listed below are all non-current. All have had one or more emails returned as non-deliverable. If you wish to remain in touch with the association and its members, please send us your current address. And... don't forget to reregister with your current address on the website in order to get a password.*

Tim Arnold, Richard Aube, Sandy Babos, Dick Baran, Roland Behnke, John Bindas, Vern Cole, Bob Corti, Dallas Crosby, Charlie Dabbs, Harold Duffer, Robert Eels, Howard Friedman, Robert Hart, John Herder, Betty Hickman, Jim Jacobs, Robert Jorgensen, Jimmie Kurtz, James Lathrop, George Lewis, Don Linnell, Marilyn McKenzie, Don Nichols, Marv Nystrom, John Ogren, Robert Patterson, Hugh Reid, Harold Ross, Marion Robinson, Clay Robson, James Ringer, John Shuminski, Merrill Sinclair, Keith Steele, Al Stewart, Paul Trudeau, Norm Weinlein.

### Military Offspring Update

Last summer we asked you to tell us of sons and daughters who are or were serving our nation in the military. Since then, we've become aware of grandchildren and other family members also serving. They will also be included in our recognition. Published initially in the November issue, it has been added to by our members, and deserves to be updated here.

Neal Amtmann

Lt Col Wendy Wasik, USAF - pilot

Russell & Mary Bowling

Rebecca Bowling, Lt Col USAFR Ret  
 grandson-USAFA, name unknown

Dallas & Julie Crosby

David "Bing" Crosby, Cmdr USN - pilot

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(Continued from page 8)

Donal Finn

Christopher E Rainey, USAF, grandson

Roger & Jan Flanik

Barry Flanik, USNR Ret

Billy J and G'Nell Gilstrap

Billy J Gilstrap Jr, Col USAF, pilot

Dick & Barbara Goodson

Robert D Goodson, former USAF, Desert Storm

Wife, Diane Goodson, former USAF, Desert Storm

Grandson, David R Goodson, USAF

Jack & Toni Hager

Son and daughter both National Guard careerists

Frank & Dee Kisner

MGen Frank Kisner, USAF -pilot

Col Janet Augustine, USAF

Vince & Harriet Kovacich

Captain Kevin J Kovacich, USN - pilot

Commander Deborah Kovacich, USNR Ret - nav

Al & Mary Kulikowski

Steven J Kulikowski, Lt Cmdr USN, REO Aviator

Glenn & Dottie Lally

Capt Patrick Lally, USAFR Ret – pilot

Billy & LaRee Lyons

Mitch Lyons, Col USAF Ret, pilot

Dick & Marilyn McKenzie

Richard McKenzie, Lt Col USAF Ret, pilot

Jake & Billie Mealka

Maj Janet Mealka, USAF

Perry C & Lois Meixsel

Perry D Meixsel, USAF Ret

Richard B Meixsel, USMC, now history professor

Shelly A Meixsel, USN

Perry R Meixsel, grandson, USAF

David I McShane, grandson, USAF

Peter Myatt

Major Michael Myatt, USAF Ret

Robert Keith & Rose Nystrom

Lt Col Nystrom, USAF. First name unknown.

Tom & Anita Pauza

Tim Pauza, USAF

Sarah Helms, granddaughter, Capt USAF, started test pilot school January 2009

Paul & Shirley Pudwill

Dominic Gorie, Commander USN - pilot, astronaut

Harold E & Juanita Pennington

SMSGT Sharon K Worley, USAF Ret

Dick & Mary Storr

Richard Dale Storr, Lt Col USAF-pilot-Desert Storm POW

David Storr, USMC

Douglas Storr, USAF

Pete Todd

MSgt Joseph M Todd, USAF

PFC Kelsey White, USMC (grand daughter)

#### Some Reasons Why Pilots Prefer Airplanes Over Women from Bill Novetzke...

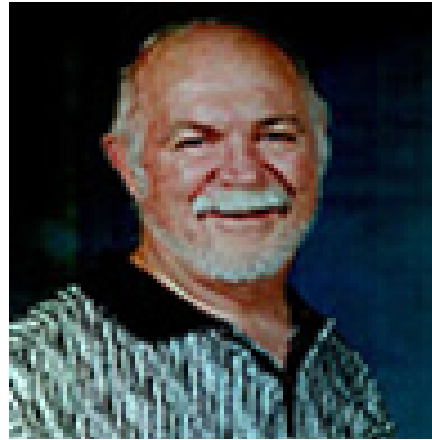
Airplanes don't object to a pre-flight inspection.

Airplanes come with a manual to explain their operation.

Airplanes have strict weight and balance limitations.

Airplanes don't come with in-laws.

## Woody Fail, a Golfer's Golfer



*What follows below is a tribute to Woody Fail as it appeared in a publication of the Texas Golf Association. Woody, a cohort from the 371st Bomb Squadron, was an irreplaceable helper at the 1996 reunion in Dayton, and repeated his performance at Ft Worth in 2002. Even though his schedule and obligations as a golf rules official preclude him from attend-*

*ing the forthcoming reunion, he has volunteered to help with admin support to the Dayton 2010 reunion remotely via computer and modem.*

Woodrow Fail (or Woody as nearly everyone at the Texas Golf Association knows him) has had an interesting journey with the game of golf, one that eventually led him to become one of the most valued volunteers that the TGA has the pleasure to work with. The long, strange trip began in Tripoli, Libya of all places. He first picked up a club while serving in the U.S. Air Force, playing with his buddies on a course with sand greens no less. Although he seems to recall that his score was higher than the 110 degree temperature that day, it did nothing to dampen his budding enthusiasm for the game.



**Woody Rendering a Decision**

Like a lot of people who grew up during that era, the first golfer that caught Woody's eye was Arnold Palmer, who became a role model of sorts. And after reading all about his newfound hero and trying to emulate his game, Woody was hooked. His love of golf is near boundless, going so far as renting a plane with friends, flying to the great state of Wisconsin and playing Black Wolf Run, which he says "cleaned his clock."

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## The DFC

By Major Neil Cosentino, USAF Ret, Flight Lead.

For the Alabama-born Fail, life has been one series of adventures after another. After attending college in California, he enlisted in the Air Force and served his country for 36 years, attaining the rank of Colonel before retiring. He traveled all over the world during his time in the military, and spent many hours in the cockpit flying bombers and heavy lift transports.

Even though he is a battle-tested pilot, Woody modestly describes himself as a nervous wreck, although he doesn't shy away from making the occasionally tough ruling on the golf course. As a Rules Committee member of the TGA based in Conroe, Woody has traveled too many miles and volunteered too many days to count over the past few years. He says his biggest sense of accomplishment is simply being able to give back to the game he loves as a volunteer and a rules official.

The sand greens of Libya are a far cry from the superb playing conditions of The Village Golf Course of Panorama Village where Woody is a member. But he still gets the same joy out of playing and says patience is the best lesson the game has taught him. Obviously he has picked up some other pointers along the way, having a hole-in-one to his credit and capturing his club championship flight division on two occasions.

Woody acknowledges a debt of gratitude to TGA Director John Semander, of Houston. According to Woody, it was John who encouraged him to become a rules official. Together the two have worked side-by-side at numerous events over the years and have established a close friendship. Woody admires the work of volunteers like John, and feels privileged to work with such great people. With his wealth of knowledge and unfailing dedication, Woody Fail has become a staple at our championships but, more importantly, a friend to everyone here at the TGA

**Another Reason Why Pilots Prefer Airplanes Over Women**  
from Novetzke...

Airplanes don't mind if you look at other airplanes.



Neil was in the 372<sup>nd</sup> BS at LAFB, and currently resides in Florida

It was a pleasant surprise. The year was 1978. I was reviewing my military records to write a resume prior to retiring from the Air Force. The resume was for a consulting job working for TRW with the Imperial Iranian Air Force in Shiraz, Iran. I was a regular officer who was asked to retire early because they needed me to help develop the Iranian tactical air force. They said that I was a good fit for their team. It was at the MacDill AFB, at that records review session that I discovered the

award. It was a total surprise, I did not recall being awarded that DFC, the Distinguished Flying Cross for a combat mission in Vietnam in the summer of 1972.

It was a strange feeling. As I read the citation; my mind raced was trying to get ahead of the words, trying to find and fill in details. There were many missions to think through, so what was this one? And what made it so special? Slowly the details came together, but much is still missing.

I still do not know who submitted the paperwork, who was with me that day, who were those in the flight and who was the forward air controller [FAC]. As my mind started the interesting process of recall, the images started to connect with memories of the excitement of the mission. The following is what I do remember.

I was the flight leader - the target was about 75 miles northwest of Saigon, in South Vietnam. It was during my third air combat tour and my first in the Phantom F4E of the 4th Tactical Fighter Squadron out of Udorn AB, Thailand. The war was in its last year. We were flying routine "double bangers"; two missions every day with refueling to and from the target area.

The second mission followed a quick turn at Bien Hoa for bombs, fuel and ice-cold milk and fresh vanilla cup cakes, our only lunch. We would deliver the second load of bombs, hit the tanker and return to base in Thailand. We were usually back in time for dinner at the O'Club, a few beers, some "Rolling Down the River" from the juke box, then to bed for another early go and another "double" the next day and the next day ...

Those quick turnaround ground crews were really good. We would be refueled and rearmed, uploading twelve 500 pound bombs-snake and nape or daisy cutters, 750 pound slicks or 1,000 Pound GP bombs the loads were always different. This afternoon was different because thunderstorms arrived earlier and meaner than ever. The refueling and rearming had to stop because of the intense cloud-to-ground lightning. The longer we waited, the darker it got and that was a problem. Thunderstorms were moving off the gulf toward the mountains to the west and getting darker, higher and meaner than I had ever seen before. I was hoping it would rain at our location to cool things off, but all we got was intense lightning. The revetments and ramp stayed hot and the air felt like a hot wet blanket.

The quick turn crew gave us a ten minute call. It was time to suit up, putting on the now cold but still sweaty g-suits, harnesses, gun belt and survival vests. But there was time for one more-one last glass of ice cold milk and one of the soft delicious vanilla cup cakes before heading out the door and into a wall of intense heat, humidity and continuous sweat. The "quick check" ground crews held up the fuse safety pins they had just removed. I saluted them-the only way I could thank them for the hot, hard work they did day after day. They were great troops, the best in the world.

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I lined up on my side of the runway looked over at my wingman and took one last look over my shoulder at the almost jet black storm clouds in the direction we were headed. I pushed the engines to 100 percent, got a nod from my wingman, then released brakes and went over the stops into full afterburner. I made a wide turn for him to slide into position then turned north to the heading for a rendezvous with our FAC.

We were heading directly into that black wall of weather - there was no turning back. We would pick our way through and with some luck find the FAC and the target drop our bombs and be on our way. Luck was with us at first. We made early radio contact with the FAC, who briefed us before we arrived overhead. He told us clearly what he wanted us to do and what he intended to do. Good radios and a good briefing can make a big difference. He too, wanted to get the job done and get home before he would have to fight the thunderstorms. They were still building, expanding, towering in height and intensity; and closed

in behind just as we started to orbit over the FAC.

The target was now dark - it was afternoon, but seemed like night. We orbited, flying tight circles inside the small eye of a black hurricane, with sheer vertical walls all around us and lightning from every direction.

Every second counted now. My backup plan was to turn back to the east and try to go through or over the thunderstorms, jettison the bombs in the Gulf of Tonkin and land back at Bien Hoa.

The FAC was sharp, and he knew that the storms had all of us boxed in. Their thickness and intensity completely blocked the light of the setting sun. We were now on a night mission during the daytime.

We circled overhead as the FAC told us what he was doing as he maneuvered for his pass. This was critical information and helped me plan when, where, and how I would time my pass; there would only be time for one pass.

The lightning in the Clouds was so intense that it could have been blinding had we been nearer the close ones. The hole was closing fast, forcing us to fly a tighter and tighter orbit. I had to slowly increase the bank angle and needed 90 degrees in full afterburner to stay out of the clouds. The lightning was really wild - spectacular cloud-to-cloud and clouds-to-ground lightening. The flashes were almost like being in the middle of a strobe filled go-go bar,

But in a hairy way that lightning was helpful. The flashes helped me see the ground and stay clear of the clouds as we circled for the third and last time. I told my wingman to take spacing. Just one lightning strike on the nose of a five hundred pound bomb and it would be all over. In an instant we would have been part of the fireworks.

We were heavy, being on target just after takeoff-with full fuel and three tons of bombs. The only thing left was to increase bank and use afterburner to stay in the air, but not too much or I would lose a wingman. The FAC then

(Continued on page 12)

## Dayton Reunion Interest Survey

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in attending the Dayton reunion? (X Mark your response) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Number in your party \_\_\_\_\_

What would be your mode of travel? Air \_\_\_\_\_ Car \_\_\_\_\_

Any special or dietary needs? Please explain \_\_\_\_\_

(For the following, place an X if you are interested:

Optional side trip to Hawthorn Hill Wright Family Mansion \_\_\_\_\_

IMAX theater at AF Museum \_\_\_\_\_

Presidential/Research Aircraft Gallery at AF Museum \_\_\_\_\_

Museum Restoration Hangar/Shop tour if it can be arranged \_\_\_\_\_

Live combo for dancing after reunion banquet \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate your preferred beverages? Soft drink \_\_\_\_\_, wine \_\_\_\_\_, beer \_\_\_\_\_, bourbon \_\_\_\_\_, scotch \_\_\_\_\_, vodka \_\_\_\_\_, rum \_\_\_\_\_, gin \_\_\_\_\_, other \_\_\_\_\_.

Comments or Suggestions?: \_\_\_\_\_

Clip and mail to Mike Gingrich, 2527 Greenlefe Dr, Beavercreek, Ohio 45431,  
Or email your response to Mike at [mikegingri@cs.com](mailto:mikegingri@cs.com)

(Continued from page 11)

called in his target marking pass - just in time, since I was pulling more g's than I wanted to.

I rolled over to look almost straight down to spot the FAC's one red light on the top of his aircraft. My wingman took spacing as I started a roll back to wings level, to climb and roll in. The afterburners would also help him keep me in sight as I rolled up, over-the-top, and down onto that black vertical tunnel.

It was "show time," and my wingman had the best view - he could see it all in flashes in black and white and the yellow and red of my afterburners. He would follow me for one pass do everything I did. I released back pressure to unload for a split second, rolled wings level, then pulled hard - straight up then rolled over, inverted, rolling out into the dive angle I needed.

All the time keeping an eye on the red light atop the FAC's aircraft. I had to plan my roll in and pass based on his timing and instructions. I was

more relaxed as we arched up over and down into that black hole.

I asked the FAC to clear to the east since we would make one pass and pull up to the west. It was all like a circus aerial trapeze act. Timing was everything! The timing worked perfectly and if my wingman took enough spacing he could see where my bombs hit and adjust his own to hit where my bombs went off.

I saw the flash of the FAC's rocket and that was where I needed to aim. There was just enough time and space to make a last second adjustment. We were dive bombing in a black hole, with flashes of lightning from all directions. I pickled and pulled up after bomb release and went into full afterburner, climbed almost straight up toward the blue sky.

My wingman called that he had me in sight. I don't remember if we got BDA from the FAC. We were too late for our go home tanker and had to land and remain over night [RON] at Ubon. We had a few beers that night,

made a few remarks about how hairy the mission was and that was it.

Did we deserve a DFC for that mission? I guess so, in the eyes of the person who filled out the paperwork. I want to say thanks to whoever wrote it. There were other combat missions, the ones where the enemy tried very hard to shoot me down. Those were far more dangerous, and I remember one over the Red River Valley that maybe was more deserving of a DFC.

But things have a way of balancing out. I am still proud of my DFC and of those who were with me. I hope they also got one for the same mission - my thanks to all of them.

This story is dedicated to those pilots, aircrew members, Jim and all who are still missing-in-action. They are unknown to many, but I am sure many deserve the DFC more than me.

And to all those airmen who quick-turned us all those times, they made it all happen.



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