

## ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 64

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

NOVEMBER 2011

### President's Column Inherent Flexibility of Air- power

Notice anything different about this edition of our newsletter? Check it out. Style? Spacing? Quality? Probably not, although it was produced and edited by Earl Hill! Who? Well, most of you know him as the guy in the back of the room asking insightful questions and making glittering suggestions. What you may not know is that he was one of the few people to step up and volunteer when I asked for back-up on some of our critical functions.

Working with Mike Gingrich in the intervening months, Earl proved to be a fortuitous choice. He is completely computer literate and quickly grasped the subtleties of the publishing software we use for the newsletter. Mike and I have declared him Assistant Editor because of his invaluable assistance while Mike was dealing with some debilitating health problems. (Lot of that going around!) Thanks, Earl, for volunteering and for producing such great work.

Check pages 3 and 10 for all the "skinny" on Reunion activities and reservation instructions. Billy Williams and his able crew have laid out all the necessary details on the schedule of events and the "hows and wherefores" of making reservation by Internet, telephone or carrier pigeon. If five days aren't enough for you, note that the reunion rate will be honored for three days before and after the Stand-Up. It's not too early to lock in your hotel room and give Billy a good head count. The next newsletter in February will contain

registration information. And then, suddenly, it will be May!

Many of you will remember that, last July, I surfaced the idea that we might consider a merger with the B-47 Stratojet Association and asked for your advice. If the absence of response were to be interpreted as a plebiscite, then I would have to conclude that the idea was dead in the water. But I'll assume that the concept is so revolutionary that you're still mulling it over.

While doing so, I'd also like you to think seriously about what, if any, relationship we should pursue with the latest incarnation of the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing. There are many practical and historical arguments in favor of a very close relationship, while the purists might argue that "good fences make good neighbors" and we ought to keep our distance. (For the record, to my knowledge nobody in the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing has even thought about this question.) Please give it some thought and let me have the benefit of your opinion.

Wendy and I wish you and yours a joyous holiday season and a new year full of happiness and good health.

Pete Todd

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### Year 2035 Headlines from TR Taylor

Ozone created by electric cars now killing millions in the seventh largest country in the world, California.

White minorities still trying to have English

recognized as nation's third language.

Spotted owl plague threatens northwestern US crops and livestock.

Baby conceived naturally.... Scientists stumped.

Castro finally dies at age 112; Cuban cigars can now be imported legally, but President Chelsea Clinton has banned all smoking.

George Z. Bush says he will run for president in 2036.

Postal service raises price of first class stamp to \$17.89 and reduces mail delivery to Wednesday only.

35 year study: diet and exercise is the key to weight loss.

Massachusetts executes last remaining conservative.

Supreme Court rules imprisonment of criminals violates their civil rights.

Microsoft announces it has perfected its newest version of windows so it crashes before installation is completed.

New federal law requires that all nail clippers, screwdrivers, fly swatters, and rolled up newspapers must be registered by January 2036.

Congress authorizes direct deposit of illegal political contributions to campaign accounts.

Capital hill intern indicted for refusing to have sex with congressman.

Celebrating Christmas now officially a felony as it offends too many people.

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

#### Officers of the Association:

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**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: bwilliams17@neb.rr.com

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.  
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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.

## UNBROKEN - Redux

by  
**Flip Latham**  
S-22  
371st Bom Ron

I first heard about this book when my wife had it assigned as part of her local book club program. The author of Unbroken is Laura Hillenbrand, who also wrote the best seller Seabiscuit a couple of years ago.

I already knew some of the story through a link that's been on the 307<sup>th</sup> web site for some time. Louis Zamperini, a former University of Southern California track star and member of the U.S. 1936 Berlin Olympics team, had also hoped to compete in the 1940 Olympics in Tokyo. But because of the outbreak of World War II in Asia and Europe the Tokyo games were cancelled. Eight months after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor Zamperini joined the Army Air Corps and soon became a B-24 bombardier assigned to the 372nd Bomb Squadron, part of the 307th Bomb Group Long Rangers in the Pacific.

Janet Maslin, in her review of Unbroken for the Sunday New York Times says, "On May 27, 1943, Mr. Zamperini's plane, named 'The Green Hornet,' went down in the Pacific. 'The B-24's nose and left wing hitting first at high speed, stabbed into the ocean and blew apart,' Ms. Hillenbrand writes, following it up with a visceral description of the young man being plunged into total darkness underwater. He and two buddies ended up afloat on rafts, and their sustained survival at sea is eventful enough to make a book in its own right. But, says the Times, there is also a certain sameness to their experiences after a while. And there's a limit to how many times Ms. Hillenbrand can present a man-socks-shark-in-the-nose anecdote before it begins to get old. Mr. Zamperini did, however, manage to catch lice from a bird and to kill one shark with a pair of pliers."

"When they thought things could not possible get worse, things did. There were now just two survivors

of the B-24 crash, and both became Japanese prisoners of war. From the moment of capture, 'Unbroken' devotes itself to the terrible humiliations heaped upon such prisoners, from being punched in the face repeatedly to having to clean a pigsty by hand. In ways that underscore the cinematic potential of this story, and would actually seem less theatrical on the screen than they do here, our hero has many ugly encounters with the frothing, drooling, sexually sadistic Japanese officer who has singled him out for special torment."

Almost as harrowing were Louis Zamperini's readjustment experiences in civilian life after the war. The Times says, "The ideal way to read Unbroken" would be with absolutely no knowledge of how Mr. Zamperini's life unfolded. Ms. Hillenbrand has written her book so breathlessly, and with such tight focus, that she makes it difficult to guess what will happen to him from one moment to the next, let alone how long he was able to survive under extreme duress. But blinders are for horses, not for readers of 'Unbroken.' So we must acknowledge the good news that Mr. Zamperini is now a snappy 94, and better able to promote this book than its author (who is often sidelined by her chronic fatigue syndrome). The words 'Survival,' 'Resilience' and 'Redemption' are part of the book's subtitle. And Mr. Zamperini, strongly influenced by Billy Graham more than 50 years ago, has been treating his story as an inspirational tale ever since. Postwar, he could not find himself, until with Graham's aid, he was able to confront and forgive his captors and himself. The Times says of Zamperini, "Hollywood has had its eye on him for so long that the young Tony Curtis was once scheduled to play the starring role on screen." (*Ed Note: Until he entered World War II, it was predicted that Zamperini would be the first runner to achieve the 4 minute mile. Adrift in a life raft in the Pacific he endured for 47 days, longer than anyone before or after, until he was picked up by the Japanese.*)

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## Cliff Hanna...In Memoriam

*The Blue Book says we've got to go out, but it doesn't say a damn thing about having to come back...*

Way back in 1959, Lt Clifford E Hanna was the copilot on 371<sup>st</sup> Bomb Squadron crew R-42, along with AC, **Captain John H Allen** and **Navigator, Harry Jones**. Cliff, an extremely affable and competent individual could often be seen at the Aero Club. Like many B-47 copilots at the time, Cliff was not satisfied with the role of the copilot; he would rather do a different type of flying. His opportunity came when his Air Force commitment expired.

He then joined the United States Coast Guard and became USCG Aviator #1061. In 1967 Cliff was assigned to USCG Air Station St Petersburg, flying U-2G Albatross amphibian search and rescue aircraft (Air Force types...think SA-16). On the evening of 5 March 1967, Lt Hanna and a crew of five were launched into dense fog in Albatross # 1240, which happened to be the first Albatross delivered by Grumman to the CG in 1951.

The mission was to come to the aid of the Flying Fish, a 40 foot yacht reported to be disabled and sinking. About 9 PM Cliff succeeded in locating the yacht despite the fog and successfully dropped a de-watering pump to the yacht. The position at the time was some 22 miles east of Appalachicola and 20 miles SSE of Dog Island Light. A few minutes after the drop, the yacht crew heard a loud noise and saw an orange glow about 2 miles SE of their position. The Albatross never returned to station.

For thirteen days, the area was combed by the Coast Guard and Navy, and the bodies of Cliff and two others were recovered, but no aircraft wreckage was ever found. But, there was evidence that Cliff had survived for a while after the crash.

In July of 2006, divers belonging to the Association of Underwater Explorers located a crash site in 60 feet of water near Carrabelle, and the wreckage was later confirmed to be that of Albatross

# 1240. On 29 May 2007, a Memorial Ceremony was held at USCG Air Station Clearwater for the lost crew of Albatross #1240. The ceremony was presided over by Rear Admiral David W Kunkle, and was attended by Congressman Bill Young and other officials. A permanent monument is to be erected at Clearwater in remembrance of the crew, who gave their lives so that others might live. The ceremony was attended by our **Hank Grogan**, who remembered Cliff well from Lincoln days. Hank met one old grizzled Chief Petty Officer who remembered the aircrew, otherwise there was no one there with memory going back that far.

In 2009, the Air Station began restoration of an Albatross to commemorate the event of March 1967. A candidate for restoration was found in a private collection located in Texas. Investigation determined that it actually belonged to the National Museum of the Air Force. Custody was transferred to the Air Station and restoration began.

In May 2011, the Albatross was placed on display and a dedication ceremony was held with more than 300 guests in attendance. Among the special guests were members of Clifford Hanna's immediate family; widow **Linda Hanna Stephenson** and daughters **Anne Hanna Keller** and **Tamara Hanna January**.

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Memorial plaque dedicated to the crew of Albatross # 1240



Restored U-2G Albatross

Treasurer's Report 307 <sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association Ending Balance from last report June 15, 2011: \$9193.03			
	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Deposits</u>	
<b>General Fund Balance</b>			<b>\$9,193.03</b>
Expenses:			
Postal	213.65		
Printing	608.05		
Admin/Equip/Supplies	17.96		
Website	<u>53.70</u>		
	<b>893.36</b>		<b><u>-893.36</u></b>
			<b>8299.67</b>
Income:			
Donations		415.00	
Interest on account		<u>6.20</u>	
		<b>421.20</b>	<b><u>+421.20</u></b>
<b>Ending Balance October 15, 2011</b>			<b>\$8720.87</b>
<b>Tony Minnick, Treasurer</b>			





## Welcome Back to Lincoln in 2012 May 1<sup>st</sup> to May 5<sup>th</sup>

The Reunion will kick off Tuesday evening, May 1<sup>st</sup>, in the Hospitality Room with a pizza party: complimentary Runza's and Valentino's Pizza to remind everyone of the "good ole days" when these establishments were about the only places to go other than Taste Inn.

Wednesday the 2nd will be the bus trip to the Horseshoe Casino in Council Bluffs, Iowa, leaving the hotel at a time to be determined. Those going to the Casino will receive free money and a free lunch buffet. We have to stay at the Casino from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. in order to receive the freebies. We've found that it takes us at least 2 hours to have lunch when we go. Why rush when there is such a wide variety of food selections? The fresh grilled shrimp is one of our favorites.

Thursday the 3rd we begin the day's events with a tour of the University of Nebraska Athletic Facilities, Lincoln Veterans Memorial Gardens and on to the Strategic Aerospace Museum. Prior to leaving the Veterans Gardens, each person will receive a sack lunch and beverage. Those not planning to travel to the Museum will be dropped off at the Hotel.

Friday the 4th will be a "Free Day" for everyone. Should there be those without transportation, we will try to make arrangements to transport you in and around Lincoln. We want everyone

who hasn't been back to Lincoln since they transferred out to see the growth of the University and the city. Those who have not been back for quite some time will be disappointed if they should take a drive out to the area of Lincoln AFB. There is very little remaining where the 307th Bomb Wing was located. The Nebraska Air National Guard still uses the old runway. Duncan Aviation has purchased several buildings to use for maintenance. Several planning to attend would like to see the State Capitol, so Friday will be a good time for that. This trip will not be included in the paid events, but an "on your own" tour, the same for any trips to the International Quilt Museum.

Saturday morning, May 5<sup>th</sup>, will be the Business Meeting (business issues, election of officers, and voting on the site for the 2014 Reunion). Squadron photos will be taken after the Business Meeting. The afternoon will be free time. That evening Couple's Photos will be taken during cocktail hour in the Banquet Room. The banquet will follow with entertainment from the Lincoln Continentals, and a guest speaker (TBD). The next Newsletter in March 2012 will provide further information regarding events, times, and prices. Most importantly it will contain the form for you to fill out and return indicating your intent to attend and participate in the events. As I stated before, I hope to keep all fees to a

minimum because I would like to see a HUGE turnout of 307th members, families and guests.

As this article goes to print I'm very happy to report we have over 40 folks planning to attend from the ARS.

As I've said before, "Let's make this a GREAT REUNION!" I'm looking forward to receiving another 50-100 replies with the intent on attending. Maybe I should call this a HOMECOMING instead of Reunion since LAFB is the place most of us grew up and went from being a "kid" to an adult. Here's hoping to see each of you next year in Lincoln.

Page 10 of this issue contains detailed info on our hotel and instructions on how to request your room reservation by telephone or internet. If you wish to make your reservation by mail, you can clip and fill out the form on page 11 of this newsletter.

Billy D Williams, Chairman  
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### Donations

We wish to acknowledge the generosity of those who have recently made donations to the Associations General Fund:

Robert J Delaney  
Gene Lee  
John J Pino  
James R Sine  
Richard D Valen  
Leslie M Walrath  
Phillip R Walters  
John L Ward

### Air Force Trivia

1 November 1954: USAF retires last B-29 "Superfortress" from service.

24 November 1944 Thanksgiving Day: 88 B-29s make first heavy bomb strike at Tokyo.

### 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.

## Around the Wing

From Nancy Hesler Ryder  
("Pappy's" Daughter)

**Glen Hesler & pup:** The next best thing to being a young pup, is to enjoy one.

We went to Amarillo to visit our kids in August and came home with 2 chocolate labs. If you know labs, you know they are absolute Tasmanian devils. Piranhas with legs. It's ridiculous. Dad had said to me, sometime in July, that before he died, he planned to buy a puppy. (Of course, he can't buy anything, but in his mind, he planned it.) So we took the pups to visit him. The one in the picture is named Fern. That happens to be Dad's mother's name. And little Fern, the terror of east Tennessee, got right in his lap and didn't move a muscle for an hour, as we wheeled them around the nursing home, showing off his puppy. He took huge pleasure in explaining she's named after his mother. The 2nd visit, I told him he could hold her as long as he wanted and he could just tell me when he got tired. Again, she licked his face a little and then settled right down. After about a half hour, he said, "I guess you'd better go now." No negative conversation, no sadness, a very pleasant visit. The other pup just rested at his feet and also didn't move.

The REST of the story is that they've pretty much destroyed our house. Parts of the walls are missing. Several pieces of furniture have an entirely different look about 3 inches up from the floor. And there are half-chewed pieces of rawhide all over the house. Also shoe leather.

But we're enjoying them, believe it or not, and will take them every week to see Dad, as long as he enjoys having them.

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Page 3 last issue had a photo of unidentified Crew S-76 guys mission planning. Left to right they were OE Short, Nav; Willy Lawson, CP; Hale Dodge, AC.

### Brilliant Insults

'I feel so miserable without you; it's almost like having you here.' Stephen Bishop

(Continued on page 6)



**Glenn Hesler and friend**

### In memoriam - Jack Haley

Co-pilot Crew S-45, 372d BS.

By

**Bruce Bradfield**

When Yale Davis, our co-pilot on S-45 received orders to Viet Nam, Abe Kardong and I were given the nod to select any replacement in the wing (S-45 was the alternate Bomb Comp crew that year). Jack loved to tell the story that the 4 hour grilling he received by two young "spot majors" was the toughest of his life.

Jack was a wonderful pilot, who as Abe used to say "Actually understood and knew the B-47 electrical, fuel and hydraulic systems". He used to complain that he spent more time as an assistant navigator than as a co-pilot. The only drawback in having Jack as a crew member was his insistence on attending Mass every day - which meant that Abe and I spent every alert AM in a car while Jack prayed.

When I went to get a degree, Abe applied and got an assignment to B-58s. Jack got his well-deserved own crew. All Irish, Haley, Daley and Riley. The first time they arrived on Reflex at Moron AB Spain, with everyone watching, the Green Irish Flag was extended from the navigator's celestial port. While at

Lincoln, Jack bought one, then two, then three small inexpensive houses for rental to UN students. When he returned from Viet Nam he up graded to a small apartment building. He started to finance these apartment purchases from investors. While at the Presidential Flight, he was selected as Chief Pilot, running the Stand-Board. He once turned down the position of Pilot on Air Force One, saying he felt that he had a better job. Jack was the consummate IP. From as early as pilot training he always wanted to be a T-33 instructor. When he became eligible to retire, he was asked to stay, but he already had a burgeoning business on the outside with a secretary and an assistant. People were fighting to invest in his business. He was always proud to say that no investor ever lost money with him. Jack and I remained in contact. In the past two years, he and Marj flew their plane out to visit. We spoke on the telephone just weeks before his death about his upcoming aortic valve replacement (I had the same operation in Jan 2010).

Jack was one of the finest men I have ever known. He was also very proud that the agreements he got when he beat the railway workers' union and saved his railroad were still in effect.

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**Ken Tarwater** checks in with an update about a former ARS flight engineer.

Recently when I was searching for info on **Jimmie Shaffer**, I called **John Bradley**, he was the FE on Captain **Murray Jetts** crew which was one of the KC-97 flight crews that took part in the 1959 SAC Bomb Comp. This was a very important conversation mainly because he informed me he was the last living FE from the Lincoln days. First of all some may not remember him as John but as "Roundo". The person that hung that nickname on him was another FE by the name of **Jim O'Conner**. He sadly told me of Jim O'Conner's recent death. John told me the first time he met Jim O'Conner he said 'come on Roundo lets go'. John told me that name stuck all through his AF career. And he had an awesome career, he was an FE his entire stay in the AF, which included many different aircraft and many combat missions over Vietnam. He earned many combat medals and awards and deserves our praise for serving our Country so gallantly and I told him so. I am so proud of him and proud to have known him personally while at Lincoln. He was one of those guys that although he was a part of a flight crew he loved mixing with the ground crews and he was never a stranger. He has been retired from the AF for more than 40 years and admits that the AF is probably getting tired of paying him. But I doubt that, I think he earned every bit of it. John is now 82 years young and has shrunk some since his days in the AF, he admits that no one can call him Roundo anymore because he weighs in now at 145. We laugh together at some of the stories he told me that happened along the way. I truly hope that he makes the Lincoln reunion this next year and passes some of these stories on. He told me he will if his wife is able to go. Right now she is having some health issues. John is in good health and remembers his life in the AF very well. He told me he lost track of Jimmy Shaffer after he had retired from the AF but would look into it. He does not have a computer and didn't know about the Cold War Cornhuskers book. He was very interested in getting

it. I hope sometime in one of the newsletters you write of Flight Engineer SGT **John 'Roundo' Bradley** because he was one of the great ones out of many that served in the 307<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Squadron.

#### **Ken, with news of ARS passing's.**

Although this last flight took place many years ago, I just found out about it. **Timmons Jones** passed away in 1986 at Lincoln. He was the Coleman tug driver for the ARS the years that I knew him. He was a very tall, large gentle black man, well known for his love of fried chicken and fishing. Once when hauling a truck load of frozen food for the commissary from Omaha to Lincoln he passed one of his favorite fishing lakes and decided to fish awhile. You guessed it, the food thawed and was spoiled, and boy was he in hot water for awhile over that. **Sam Sloan**, 17 Nov 1933 to 9 Oct 1982, was living in Florida at the time of his passing. Sam was a true SAC Warrior. He was a big part of the many records that were set during his time at Lincoln AFB for the 307<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Squadron. I was very lucky to be his Assistant Crew Chief of KC-97 #52-2804. We were together when we went to the 1959 SAC Bombing, Nav, Air Refueling Competition and brought home the Fairchild Trophy. We were together when 804 took off on time for the 307<sup>th</sup> ARS's 1000<sup>th</sup> on time sortie (See Cold War Cornhuskers). He was and outstanding Crew Chief, father and friend. The saddest day of my memory of Sam was the day that I personally kicked 804 out to their new station at Selfridge AFB in June of 1960, never to see Sam or 804 again. I left the AF in July of 1960 but never forgot what Sam Sloan and others like him had taught me, during my careers in General Aviation and for TWA. I know there are friends of Sam out there that could tell me of his career after Lincoln, I would love to hear their stories. Rest in peace Sam, your friend, Ken Tarwater

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#### **And before there was an ARS:**

Have read with interest the articles in the July 2011 newsletter about arriving at Lincoln AFB, and trying to find the 307<sup>th</sup> ARS headquarters. I got there in July, 1954. Was not in a B-29 unit on Okinawa or anyplace near there. Had just completed a fun-filled year as a navigator in an Air Rescue Sq. in Iceland. SA-16's. Like the rest of the troops arriving about that time, we all waited till we were told where to go and what to do. I remember having breakfast on the 2nd. floor of a barracks. But things worked out. I remember most of the names that **Art Craft** and **Clay Robson** mentioned. Several of the other navigators from that time were "**Si**" **Otto**, and **Bob Purcell**. And, Clay, didn't you have a little 2-wheel put-put scooter? When we were told we were going to Goose Bay, I asked **L/C Thurlow** if I could stay in Lincoln because I had just come from way up North, and it's cold up there, and I really don't want to go back, Sir! Somehow, he didn't see it my way. I was discharged in December of '55, at Lincoln.

**John Herder**  
Georgetown, TX

*(Continued from page 5)*

'He is a self-made man and worships his creator.' John Bright

'I've just learned about his illness. Let's hope it's nothing trivial.' Irvin S. Cobb

'He is not only dull himself, he is the cause of dullness in others.' Samuel Johnson

'He is simply a shiver looking for a spine to run up.' Paul Keating

'There's nothing wrong with you that reincarnation won't cure.' Jack E. Leonard

'They never open their mouths without subtracting from the sum of human knowledge.' Thomas Brackett Reed

'Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go.'  
Oscar Wilde

*(Continued on page 9)*

## Extending the Range

### A personal story about Air Refueling

By Ivan L. McKinney, Lt Col USAF  
(Ret.), former Navigator, 307<sup>th</sup> ARS

The ability to refuel in the air is one of the greatest aviation developments of all time, in my opinion. Air refueling extends the range and the duration of bomber and fighter aircraft for contingency or wartime missions, and it provides a time-extending safety valve for wartime or peacetime emergencies. Many aircraft with landing gear or other technical problems have been saved by a tap of fuel, and many returning aircraft have been saved in peacetime and in wartime by an airborne tanker, allowing the receiving aircraft to hold for better weather or to make a safe diversion base. Having a tanker airborne that you could hit after takeoff allowed many a fighter, fighter-bomber or bomber aircraft to safely takeoff with less fuel and more ordinance that would otherwise be the case. This was especially valuable during the Vietnam War.

I spent almost my whole 27-year career either taking care of or flying aerial tankers. When I came into the Air Force in 1949 and became trained, first as a control tower operator and later as a ground controlled approach (GCA) operator, the first KB-29's were just being used, and they were rapidly followed by the KB-50's. Both of these aircraft were converted bombers, used by the Air Force as tankers before the aircraft designed for tanker duty came out. At first, the "hard boom" that was "flyable" through the manipulation of "ruddevators" was classified, and they didn't want anyone taking pictures of it. But in 1951, during a big bomber/tanker movement to Europe, I was a GCA operator at Ernest Harmon AFB, Newfoundland, and I was determined to get a picture of the tanker's refueling device. Our GCA standby shack was out in the middle of the airfield, and we used a weapons carrier to cross the runway back and forth to the shack, looking for a light from the control tower each time. But there was also a dirt road that went around the end of the runway to the shack, and I positioned my 1948 Studebaker alongside the runway, on the dirt road, at about the point where I thought liftoff would occur. I

shot a beautiful color picture of a KB-29, just as she lifted off!

After getting a commission via OCS, I became a navigator and was assigned to the first of the 41 "real" aerial tankers, the KC-97, for my first airborne duties. The Strategic Air Command (SAC) owned all heavy bombers and all aerial tankers in those days, and like so many others, I became "Sacumcized," and for the rest of my career I never got out of SAC.

The nation's defense posture rather rapidly became one of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), with the adversary being the USSR and with nuclear weapons as the weapons of choice. SAC was at first entrusted with the safekeeping, management and use of America's nuclear arsenal. Super-safe and secure procedures for handling these weapons were developed and used by all SAC ground and aircrews, while in the same time frame we had to deploy on contingency missions in several places around the globe, and we had to develop a continually-increased posture of readiness. In those days, the surest way to lose an Air Force career was to compromise SAC's "2-man policy" in the handling of nuclear weapons, or to compromise the "2-officer policy" as an aircrew member in the handling of "Top Secret, Extra-Sensitive Information" launch and execution documents. Crew members called these "tickets."

But back to refueling. Gradually, SAC went first to a 33% alert posture in its bomber force, meaning that 1/3 of its B-52's, B-47's and B-58's were on ground alert all the time - ready night or day, 366 days a year, for an instant response to an alert horn, ending in a heavyweight takeoff in 15 minutes or less. Since almost all of the bombers, with the exception of a very few B-52's, had to have at least one airborne refueling enroute to the target, this meant that the "mated" tankers also had to be on similar ground alert. But the difference was that the tankers had to pull their alert as far north as possible, so that the bombers could get their fuel at the last possible time before streaking towards the target. SAC's first tanker, the KC-97, pulled its alert at what we used to call "the garden spots

of the north" - Namao AB, Cold Lake, Churchill, Frobisher Bay, Ernest Harmon AFB and Goose AB in Canada, Sondrestrom and Thule in Greenland, Eielson AFB, Alaska and the Azores Islands.

Later on, as tense conditions increased between the US and the USSR, SAC went to a 50% alert posture, meaning of course that 1/2 of its bomber and tanker fleet was on ground alert. Proficiency flying had to be wedged into the equation for both bomber and tanker crews somehow. And we had other commitments - the tankers had to fly enough refueling missions to not only satisfy the training and proficiency requirements for the bomber force; they had to also train and keep current all of the Tactical Air Command (TAC) fighters and fighter-bombers. Then there were periodic flare-ups like Cuba and Lebanon, when SAC would be ordered to "generate the force." On these occasions, SAC would bring up to ground alert status every bomber and tanker in its inventory. Each bomber had pre-assigned targets which the crew had studied in detail and at great length, and each tanker and bomber "pair" had a pre-assigned rendezvous point where air refueling was to begin. Bomber onloads of fuel were pre-computed, and during a "real" launch, the tanker was obligated to offload all his fuel except just enough to clear the refueling track if the bomber requested it.

Ground alert aircraft were thought by some to be vulnerable to enemy missile attack, so SAC implemented an airborne alert concept - B-52's already airborne in combat configuration, guns loaded and nuclear weapons in the bay. We of the tanker force had to jump up and refuel these bombers on a constant basis, to keep them not only in the air, but at all times with enough fuel in their tanks for them to receive a "go code" and make their targets. It was thought that airborne alert would provide the absolute guarantee that this nation could destroy its adversary, 366 days a year, without fail.

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And the USSR leaders knew and believed that. Since the bombers on airborne alert had to fly anyway, SAC gave them missions to watch important assets by radar and by visual means - assets which our country depended on for early warning of an adversarial attack, etc. For instance, we "watched" the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) radar emplacement at Thule, Greenland, for over 20 years without missing a minute. The bomber on station watched it, and if something happened to him to cause an early abort, the tanker took his place. How we tanker guys would cheer when the bomber got his fuel and headed north from the refueling! We KC-135 crew members hated the thought of flying almost to the pole, then doing figure-eights for hours while waiting for SAC's test messages, called "Frosty Window" messages. These had to be decoded in seconds and the correct response given. Woe to a crew that didn't meet the time limit, or worse, responded in error! The crew departed as soon as they landed for a personal "career enhancement discussion" by the 3-star general at Numbered Air Force (2<sup>nd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>).

And then Vietnam heated up. The propeller-driven KC-97 was gone from the inventory by now, replaced by the sleek jet KC-135. Just in time, too, because unlike WWII or Korea, the Air Force flew its total fighter and bomber force across the ocean to the action areas. Although the value of air refueling was academically proven with SAC's bombers, we had never gone to war and had not proven its value in day-to-day realistic terms. We had not "flown it." But as we began building up our fighter forces in Vietnam and its environs, new procedures had to be developed to safely escort and refuel large numbers of fighters across the world's widest ocean. SAC owned all the KC-135 tankers, and so SAC became the "tanker manager" responsible for ensuring that TAC's fighters would arrive in the forward area safely and ready for combat. "Tanker Task Forces" of various sizes would be formed up for the task. Fighters from the single engine F-100 all the way up to the big twin-engine F-4, and bomb-

ers from the big F-105 (Thud) to the B-66 were escorted across the wide Pacific to Vietnam.

The fighters brief at George, we brief at March, with telephonic contact between the briefing rooms for questions or discussion. As Task Force Navigator, I have prepared flight plans and handed one out to each crew. These flight plans include maps with the route finalized, but they also have fuel usage figures including offload and predicted fuel-in-tanks at points along the way. My KC-135 is the Command Tanker, and it is usually the #2 tanker in the first or second cell. It is configured with a large worktable in the cargo bay, and the Task Force Commander and I have radio headsets on for communication with the whole task force.

We take off, join up with our fighters at a pre-designated spot over the Pacific and begin "topping them off" almost immediately. If something happens that one of them can't get the refueling, the tanker escorts the aborting fighter back to George AFB and the other two fighters ("chicks") who were with the tanker hop up to another cell. We refuel twice enroute to Hickam AFB, Hawaii, where both tankers and "chicks" RON.

With big, fuel-hungry receivers like the F-4 to refuel, I can feel some apprehension the next morning at 4 AM, computing the "critical wind factor" for the flight - that amount of headwind which results in an unsafe "no-go" decision. Hawaii to Guam is a very long way, eight hours and 50 minutes at 490 knots true airspeed (KTAS). Normal winds across the Pacific at this time of the year are 10-14 knots headwind, and my critical wind factor computes at 18! Four to eight knots to spare! My brow breaks out in a sweat. I file the information with all the command and staff agencies that would have reason to need it and proceed to the briefing room with all the crew packages.

The KC-135's take off first again, then the F-4's takeoff, and we join up for their "topoff." Everything is fine until we near the second air refueling point, and I query all tankers for their remaining fuel on board. I notice that it is quite a bit less on average from that

which was predicted, so I immediately consult with the Task Force Commander, who was usually on his first assignment as a Task Force Commander. He asks me if I have a recommended solution to our impending problem, and I reply that we should change the scheduled air refueling tactics, before we begin refueling. I recommend to him that we have one tanker in each 3-ship cell offload "heavy," and the other two tankers would offload "light." Then we'd send the tankers that had accomplished the heaviest offloads to Wake Island, which was closer than Guam, and which was the only landing spot we could use at that point in the middle of the Pacific. Then the tankers could refuel on the ground at Wake and join us later that evening in Guam. The Task Force Commander "bought it," of course - I never had one turn me down or even suggest a change, as I remember. At any rate, I had to very rapidly compute everyone's offload and quickly relay it to each tanker, because we were almost to the refueling point. Of course, I never sent "myself" to Wake! In fact, as many times as I've crossed the Pacific, I have never seen Wake (RHIP)! You might ask, "Why did the fighters burn more fuel than predicted?" I really don't know, but over time it was noticed that if there was a "temperature deviation" of a few degrees on the plus side at cruising altitude, they'd burn more fuel than predicted. One had to stay flexible at all times in this business - nothing, absolutely nothing, that is written in concrete remains that way in practice!

So we recovered at Guam, RON'ed, and did the same thing the next morning, only this time we planned to say "sayonara" to the fighters near the Vietnam shore. We'd then fly south to Clark AB, Philippines and break up the task force.

Many of the tankers would just fly back across the Pacific to home, but others would get "stuck" with escorting and refueling a repatriating "wardog" fighter back for depot overhaul in the contiguous 48. How we hated that duty, because if the fighter broke down, we'd have to stay with him for several days, somewhere in the Pacific, while he was being repaired.

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Of course, it was our job to escort the fighters around weather - including typhoons. The thunderstorms in these things were very high, and we couldn't fly over them, so we flew around them if possible or through them if necessary, by using airborne radar - picking the "voids." When we were doing this, the "chicks," believe me, would tuck up under our wings and say nothing - they surely didn't want to suddenly look up and see "mother" gone!

Once, when it was good VFR weather and the last refueling had gone off without a hitch, one of the feisty F-100 pilots that we were escorting said, braggardly, "Look here, tanker - I can do something you can't do." He did a quick 360-degree roll and said, "Don't you wish you could do that?" Our tanker pilot said, "Watch me - I'll do something you can't do!" The F-100 guy looked, kept looking but saw nothing. After about five minutes he said, "Hey, tank, I didn't see you do anything." Our tanker pilot replied, "I got up out of my seat, stretched, walked back to the john and relieved myself. Don't you wish you could do that?"

SAC's KC-135's did an absolutely remarkable job in refueling everybody back and forth across the Pacific during the Vietnam conflagration. I believe I am correct when I say that in all those thousands of crossings, escorting and refueling fighters and fighter-bombers, only one aircraft was lost. He was a B-66 that had hooked up to a KC-135, but his system malfunctioned and he couldn't take on any fuel from the tanker. He splashed in the Pacific, but the tanker flew "CAP" for him until a search and rescue airplane arrived overhead from Hickam AFB. As I recall, neither of the crewmen perished - we only lost the aircraft. What a remarkable safety record - during wartime, under pressure on every flight, around weather, over the widest ocean in the world! This remarkable safety success record has never been talked about, never been written about, except by those of us who know from experience.

The Air Force now regards air refueling as an absolute first-priority necessity. All their planning takes into ac-

count the use of aerial tankers. They now fly bomber strike missions from Barksdale or Whiteman AFB's halfway around the world and return without landing - because they receive five air refuelings on the 35-hour missions. Since retiring, I have been fortunate to have been able to keep up somewhat with the art of air refueling by being lucky enough to fly as a passenger on KC-10 refueling missions with my #2 son, Blaine, before he retired as a major a few years ago from the Air Force Reserve. So air refueling has "grown up," and I'm privileged to say that I saw it all happen - from the early KB-29's to the newest KC-10's!

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### **Those who served with the 307th BW in both Korea (B-29s) and the Cold War (B-47s/KC-97s at Lincoln)**

This list is jointly prepared and shared with the B-29 group and will be updated as more people are identified.

#### **Art Craft**

**Sam Sanregret**  
**Robert "Moon" Miller**  
**David Searing** deceased 10/09  
**Steve Mattick** deceased  
**Tom Saltsman** deceased  
**Paul Trudeau**  
**Wally Whitehurst**  
**Don Nigro** deceased  
**Jerry Worthy**  
**Albert E Scott**  
**Norm Weinlien**  
**William "Bill" Brooks**  
**John E Franke**  
**Carlyle (Carl) Curran** deceased  
**Dennis (Buzz) Buzzell**  
**Robert Merick**  
**Charlie Bird**  
**Doug MacCallum**  
**Lt Col Robert Christy**  
**Col Louis Thorup**  
**Col Gene Aenchbacher**

*(Continued from page 6)*

'He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lamp-posts... for support rather than illumination.' Andrew Lang (1844-1912)

'He has Van Gogh's ear for music.' Billy Wilder



### **The Last Flight**

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

*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.  
 Isaiah 6:8*

**Rolland L England** 370th Phoenix, AZ 14 August 2011  
**Samuel T Sloan**, ARS, Hollywood FL, 9 October 1982.  
**Maureen Braeden**, Anacortes WA, 15 August 2011.  
**Jack E Haley**, 372nd BS, Omaha NE, 2 July 2011.  
**Dean W Cook**, Hdqs, Lutz, FL, 12 September 2010.  
**Dewey B Cook Jr**, ARS, Fairview, TN 8 July 2011  
**Jose A Guerra**, 424, Turlock, CA, 21 Oct 2010.  
**Leo Hill**, Hdqs, Lincoln, NE April 23, 2011.  
**Leon W McCrary**, 370thBS, Austin TX, 23 April 2011.  
**Maurice Liebaert**, FMS, Lincoln, NE. Date unknown.  
**Will Martens**, 307th ARS, Sentinal, OK. 4 May 2011.  
**Ernie H Dotson**, 372nd, FMS, Jasper, IN 11 Sept, 2011.  
**Bettye Robertson**, Bossier City, LA, 13 April 2007  
**Ronald E Resh**, 98th BW, 551st SMS, Silver Spring MD, 26 October 2010.  
**Vernon L Biaett**, 370th, AZ, 15 Dec 2010.

**Vernon Biaett** was the first Chairman/President of the 307<sup>th</sup> BW Association 1988-1990 and also wrote its by-laws.

HOLIDAY INN LINCOLN – DOWNTOWN  
402-475-4011 or 1-800-HOLIDAY  
141 North 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, NE 68508

The Holiday Inn Lincoln – Downtown Hotel is located near the corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and “O” Street. Nearby restaurants include Red Onion Bistro and Bar, Barry’s Bar and Grill, Bread and Cup, Brewsky’s, Buzzard Billy’s, Capitol City Grill, Danny’s Downtown, El Potrero, Ivanna Cone, Jack’s Bar and Grill, JTK Cuisine, Lazlo’s Brewery and Grill, Maggie’s, Old Chicago, The Oven, Vincenzo’s Italian, Brix and Stone, along with several others within walking distance of the Hotel.

The Holiday Inn Lincoln – Downtown is a full service hotel, which includes an attached covered parking garage, on-site restaurant, and indoor heated swimming pool with deck, fitness center, business center, room service, and complimentary wireless internet. Sleeping rooms include complimentary wireless internet, flat panel televisions, refrigerator, microwave, coffee maker, iron with ironing board, and hair dryer. The hotel is all ADA compliant, 100 % non-smoking, and offers rooms of either a King or Two Double Beds.

Parking and breakfast will be included in the sleeping room rate of \$105.00 per night for 1-4 persons. Hotel check – in time is 3:00pm, and check out time is 11:00am.

The restaurant hours of operation are Sunday – Thursday 6:30am – 2:00pm and 5:00pm – 9:00pm, and Friday/Saturday 6:30am – 9:00pm.

The Bar hours of operation are Sunday – Thursday 4:30pm – 11:00pm.

Airport transportation is available from the Eppley Airfield in Omaha via Omalink (402) 475-5465 and recommends making the arrangements at least one week in advance.

Holiday Inn Lincoln – Downtown offers complimentary shuttle service to and from the Lincoln Municipal Airport and can be arranged with the front desk before arrival time at (402) 475-4011

**Making a reservation into the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing Block via Phone or Internet**

1. Group Name: 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing
2. Group Code: BWR
3. Dates: 04-29-12 through 05-08-12
4. Rate: Standard: \$105.00
5. Cutoff Date: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012

Reservations cannot be made more than 50 weeks in advance. Decide whether you would like to make your reservations via phone, or via the internet.

- 1) To make a reservation via phone please dial **(402-475-4011)**, and then skip to A.
- 2) To make internet reservations please visit.

<http://www.holidayinn.com/hotels/us/en/lincoln/lnkdt/hoteldetail> and then skip to B.

**A. via phone**

- 1) Call reservation number and ask for new reservations.
- 2) Let attendant know you are making a group block reservation.
- 3) Have check-in and check-out date’s ready, as well as group code \_\_\_\_\_ or account name \_\_\_\_\_ ready. Also, have form of payment accessible.
- 4) Get reservation confirmation number, and any other pertinent information would like.

**B. via internet**

- 1) Go to the above internet address.
- 2) On the right hand side of the screen enter your check – in and check – out dates.
- 3) Fill in the number of rooms you will need.
- 4) Finally fill in your group code \_\_\_\_\_, and click the check availability icon.
- 5) Your group rate and group name should appear.
- 6) Continue making reservations until confirmation number is assigned.

If you have any problems making reservations, please call **402-475-4011 and ask for group sales.**

### Batman Lecturing Robin

Undoubtedly, most of you have forgotten all the wisdom that emanated from the Batman TV program of the early 1960s, so here for your benefit is a refresher.

Robin: "Let's go!"

Batman: "Not you, Robin. They have strict licensing laws in this country. A boy of your age is not allowed in a drinking tavern."

Dick Grayson: "What's so important about Chopin?"

Bruce Wayne: "All music is important, Dick. It's the universal language. One of our best hopes for the eventual realization of the brotherhood of man."

Dick Grayson: "Gosh Bruce, yes, you're right. I'll practice harder from now on."

Robin: "You can't get away from Batman that easy!"

Batman: "Easily."

Robin: "Easily."

Batman: "Good grammar is essential, Robin."

Robin: "Thank you."

Batman: "You're welcome."

Batman: "Better put 5 cents in the meter."

Robin: "No policeman's going to give the Batmobile a ticket."

Batman: "This money goes to building better roads. We all must do our part."

Robin: "Boy! That was our closest call ever! I have to admit that I was pretty scared!"

Batman: "I wasn't scared in the least."

Robin: "Not at all?"

Batman: "Haven't you noticed how we always escape the vicious ensnarements of our enemies?"

Robin: "Yeah, because we're smarter than they are!"

Batman: "I like to think it's because our hearts are pure."

Robin: "Holy molars! Am I ever glad I take good care of my teeth!"

Batman: "True. You owe your life to dental hygiene."

Bruce: "Yes, Dick, your bird calls are close to perfect. If more people

practiced them, someday we might have a chance for real communication with our feathered friends."

Dick: "In that case I think I'll polish up my ruby-crowned kingly and my rose-breasted yellow-tailed grouse-beak calls."

Dick: "Sorry, I'm not interested in dance lessons."

Bruce: "Wait a minute, Dick. The junior prom's coming up, isn't it?"

Dick: "Yes, but..."

Bruce: "Well, we don't want you to be a wallflower, do we? Dancing is an integral part of every young man's education."

Batman to Robin: "When you get a little older, you'll see how easy it is to become lured by the female of the species."

Robin: "I guess you can never trust a woman."

Batman: "You've made a hasty generalization, Robin. It's a bad habit to get into."

*(Continued on page 12)*

### CUT HERE

307<sup>TH</sup> BOMB WING B-47/KC97 ASSOCIATION  
HOTEL RESERVATIONS FORM  
REUNION DATES MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> – MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2012

NAME(s) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE # ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ SHARING ROOM W/ \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTURE DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**ROOM TYPE** –Bed types are on availability and NOT guaranteed.

One King \_\_\_\_\_ Two Double Beds \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap Accessible room \_\_\_\_\_

**ROOM RATE:** 1-4 Persons \$105.00 per night with parking and breakfast included in rate. Lodging tax is currently 16.48. This room rate will be available three days prior and three days following the reunion.

**CUTOFF DATE:** April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012. Reservations received after this date will be processed based upon availability and the special rate is not guaranteed.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Cancellations can be made 24 hours prior to arrival. Cancellations after 3:00pm the day before the arrival will be charged 1<sup>st</sup> nights stay.

**GUARANTEE:** Reservations must be guaranteed by credit card.

MC \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ AMEX \_\_\_\_\_ DISCOVER \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (regardless of payment method) \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO: HOLIDAY INN LINCOLN – DOWNTOWN  
ATTN: SALES DEPARTMENT  
141 NORTH 9<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
LINCOLN, NE 68508

**Taken from Paul Koski's wonderful collection of flight line anecdotes:**

**Snakebit (a common occurrence)**

My aircraft had a forward aux. leak, they changed the bladder tank and had a 24 hour leak check. The next mission we started engines and on my walk around before fight, I found the area just in front of the forward wheel well wet with fuel. The flight was canceled and fuel cell personnel again changed the cell. Again, 24 hour leak check and no leaks. The aircraft had been down for two weeks for the leaks and people were getting unhappy, they had lost two missions and training time.

This time they put a dye packet in the cell after they changed it. Twenty-four leak check and no leaks. We were ready to start engines and the area in front of the wheel well was wet again, the flight crew wanted to know how bad the leak was and I told them it was dripping, they said they would take the aircraft anyway. They said it was their

decision, I said no, I was putting it on a red X and a maintenance officer would have to release the aircraft. We canceled the mission.

The fuel leak didn't have any of the dye package or color so it had to be coming from some where else. Since the fuel people had to come out and find the leak my flight chief told me to help launch another aircraft and jokingly, I said that aircraft had a bomb bay leak and wouldn't go either. The flight chief and I went over to that aircraft and I ran my hand under the belly of the aircraft and sure enough there was a fuel leak. I couldn't believe it, that aircraft was also scratched.

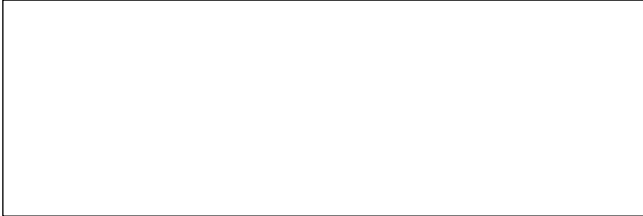
The flight chief said for me to help in the next launch and I said with my luck an engine would fall off. They started engines and went to the end of the runway, went to full throttle, then #6 engine rotated and launched off the aircraft. The aft engine mount had broken. The crew abandoned to aircraft without shutting down the engines.

The engines were still running including number six, the fuel lines on #6 were about the size of small tubing but it was enough to keep the engine running. Someone was told to go back up stairs and shut down the aircraft.

The flight chief told me to get off the flight line and don't come back until tomorrow. I was bad luck! I left the flight line and didn't come back until the next day.

The leak didn't come from the tank. When doing the preflight, the crew opened the air refueling door and pressurized the manifold, the valve that allows fuel to enter the aircraft was the problem.

*(Continued from page 11)*  
Batman: "The green button will turn the car a la izquierda o a la derecha."  
Robin: "To the left or right. Threw in a little Spanish on me, huh, Batman?"  
Batman: "One should always keep abreast of foreign tongues, Robin."



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