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USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN

## CVW-2 Change of Command:

*Ceremony in the Sky*

## USS Sterett Proves Readiness:

*COMPTUEX mission*

## Know Your Shipmate:

*DC3 Bryce Brittain*



## KNOW YOUR SHIPMATE!



### DC3 BRYCE BRITTAIN

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

**D**amage Controlman 3rd Class Bryce Brittain is a 22-year-old native of Bemidji, Minn. He is the oldest of two brothers and one sister. From a very young age, he enjoyed outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting and snowmobiling.

Before joining the Navy, Brittain drove tractor-trailor rigs cross-country like his father for over six years. Being very patriotic, Brittain came into the military to serve his country as well as develop job experience for after his naval career.

Brittain plans to become a game warden after the Navy because of his love for outdoor gaming and hobbies. He lives by his favorite quote, "Drive it like you stole it."

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USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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music review

# DRAKE - THANK ME LATER

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Barry Riley

Aubrey “Drake” Graham may be vaguely recognized by many for starring as the wheelchair-bound Jimmy Brooks in the after school special “Degrassi: The Next Generation,” a role that lasted until mid-2009. Since starting his music career in 2006, Drake has released three official mix-tapes, the third of which was titled “So Far Gone” and produced two chart-topping singles including “Best I Ever Had” and “Successful” featuring hip-hop songbird Trey Songz.

The “So Far Gone” mix-tape led to Drake going on a nation-wide tour, earned him a coveted spot on rap artist Lil’ Wayne’s “Young Money” label, under Cash Money/Universal.

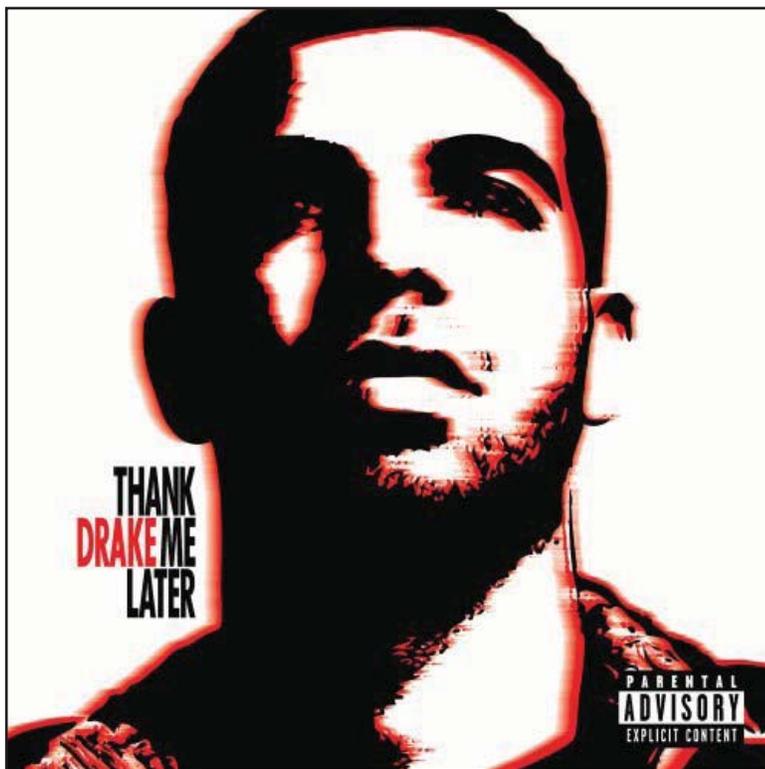
This brings us to the highly anticipated release of his first LP “Thank Me Later,” which debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200, June 15, selling 447,000 records in its first week.

The album has a healthy mix of punch line-filled verses, heartfelt rhymes and auto-tune (also known as the T-Pain effect) over hard hitting hip-hop tracks and melodic watery sounding ambient mixes, reminiscent of “So Far Gone.” The record is also laced with a slew of all-star casted features including Jay-Z, T.I., The Dream, Nicki Minaj and Young Jeezy, as well as production from the likes of Kanye West, Boi 1da, No I.D., Timbaland and Noah “40” Shebib.

Surprisingly on this project, Drake gets very revealing about his personal life on a few tracks. Probably the most memorable of these is the first track on the record, “Fireworks,” featuring Alicia Keys where he talks of his rise to fame and how the sudden flow of money changed many of his relationships with friends and family.

My personal favorite track, “Fancy,” features T.I. and is produced by Swizz Beats.

The song is basically an ode to new-age “independent women,” which doesn’t really apply to me (obviously), but nevertheless Drake’s word play on this song is ridiculous, and T.I. comes through with a smooth verse as well. Around 2:35 the song takes a totally different shape, drowning out all of the sounds



and muffling the drums for a lounge vibe where Drake and Swizz kick a quieter version of the hook and another verse. It’s almost like an entirely different song.

To tie everything off, Drake ends the album with a victory-lap styled track, cleverly called “Thank Me Now,” where he spits a few big-headed swagger-saturated verses about his self-acclaimed position as the golden boy of the hip-hop community.

I would recommend this album, and any of Drake’s other projects for that matter, to anybody who loves good and original hip-hop and R&B music in general. This one is also for anyone who may have fallen victim to the “hip hop is dead” bandwagon, because after listening to all 14 tracks on the album, I strongly beg to differ. This one definitely gets five pennies (only because there wasn’t six to give.)

Our rating...

We give it five out of five pennies!





PHOTO BY MC2 ARIF PATANI

## USS STERETT PROVES MISSION READINESS

By Ensign Tess Carrera, USS Sterett Public Affairs Officer

**A**s USS Sterett (DDG 104) continues preparations for its maiden deployment, the crew's workload has been ramped-up to facilitate the demanding months ahead. In the midst of the ship's numerous preparations, Sterett's Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) team has proven themselves ready for a variety of upcoming challenges.

With piracy continuing to be a major issue in many troubled areas around the world, the surface warfare community has learned to rely on the effective training and mission readiness of their VBSS teams.

Ensigns Ethan Mansel and Tyler Haight, Sterett's Boarding Officers, are in charge of 19 other qualified VBSS team members, and said they are excited to put their training to use.

While the team is young, there are a few members who have prior VBSS experience and have taken a leadership role among the team. Quartermaster 2nd Class Jose Triana previously served as a VBSS team member aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS Lake Champlain (CG 57), where he was involved in the aid and rescue of 52 Somali refugees.

Triana spoke of the rescue, "It was a very emotional experience and made me proud to know that this is another side to the military. The assistance and aid that we provide to those in need was extremely rewarding and an event which I will never forget."

Fire Controlman 1st Class Johnathan Brandenburg also has previous VBSS experience and has maintained his position

as breacher at both his former command and aboard Sterett. The breacher is the go to man for any sealed, locked, or closed doors that the team needs to enter. A breacher must get their teammates in by whatever means necessary.

Hearing about both Triana's and Brandenburg's experiences has allowed the newer members to recognize the impact of their missions.

Brandenburg spoke highly of his teammates, "You form a special brotherhood with the guys and you have to form trust to be able to put your life in the hands of one another," he said.

Brandenburg added that he is looking forward to the opportunity to make the Navy proud while Sterett is deployed.

The importance of the VBSS mission is exemplified in the training Sailors must go through in order to become qualified. They begin with Security Reaction Force Bravo (SRF-B), which involves gaining a basic understanding of force protection, terrorist threats, the Rules of Use of Force (RUF), and the effects of non-lethal and lethal weapons. SRF-B lasts one week, and is followed by a two week SRF-A course. This portion involves team movements, security sweeps, security breaches inside the skin of a ship, and earning gun qualifications.

The last stage in VBSS School is Non-Compliant

Boarding (NCB). During this final, and most challenging phase of training, former SEALs and Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC) personnel familiarize VBSS candidates with the intricacies of boardings, defensive tactics, shooting tactics, and full-fighting exercises.

During the Abraham Lincoln Strike Group's composite training unit exercise (COMPTUEX), Sterett's team has executed six separate VBSS exercises, including their first ever boarding at sea. The first event also proved to be the most challenging, requiring a high free board, non-compliant boarding where the team secured a vessel and took a detainee into custody to further investigate the situation.

Sterett's VBSS team proved to be tactically prepared and ready to execute the mission. The Master of the boarded vessel said Sterett's boarding during the exercise was textbook.

Later events required the team to focus on Counter Piracy operations, the newest addition to the VBSS mission.

Through each COMPTUEX boarding, the team has acquired many valuable lessons, making the better prepared for Sterett's upcoming deployment with the Abraham Lincoln Strike Group.



# LINCOLN AND NIMITZ PARTICIPATE IN DUAL OPERATIONS

By Lt. Greg D. Raelson



**U**SS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) and USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Carrier Strike Groups are currently participating in dual aircraft carrier and strike group operations off the coast of Southern California Aug. 7-11.

In an interconnected world where 80% of the world's population lives within 200 miles of a coastline, the ability for two Carrier Strike Groups to work together as an Expeditionary Strike Force will be crucial to maintaining maritime security during potential large-scale operations around the world.

"The opportunity to conduct large scale, multi-unit training such as this shows the Navy's inherent flexibility and scalability. The presence of two aircraft carriers sends the message that the United States values peace and stability in every region around the world," said Rear Adm. Mark Guadagnini, commander of Lincoln Carrier Strike Group.

The two carriers joined to conduct numerous exercises. During a large force strike exercise on Aug 7, Carrier Air Wing 2 and Carrier Air Wing 11 aviators conducted bombing on various ranges in California and Nevada where all six critical targets were destroyed. Other missions will focus on the

integration of aircraft, ships, squadrons and staffs to include mine exercises, air defense, surface warfare and theater anti-submarine warfare designed to both protect ships against simulated attacks and to project power in multiple dimensions.

Lincoln and Nimitz strike groups bring to bear more than 140 combat aircraft, hundreds of surface-to-air and land-attack missiles, and surveillance range of thousands of miles when working together.

The seamless integration of the two carrier strike groups helped to build a common tactical picture by linking dozens of ships and aircraft, including the shore-based P-3C Orion and shore facilities in California.

"Integrating both strike groups gives the air wings and ships a more complex set of training objectives to hone their skills and to prepare them to combat threats together anywhere in the world. These are core capabilities intrinsic to our Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower," said Rear Adm. Robert Girrier, commander of Nimitz Carrier Strike Group.

"The exercises not only prepare Lincoln for possible future missions on her upcoming deployment, but also increase the interoperability between both carrier strike groups and consequently enhance our operational readiness," said Guadagnini.

The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group is commanded by Rear Adm. Mark Guadagnini and consists of flagship USS Abraham Lincoln, embarked CVW-2, embarked Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 9 and the guided-missile cruiser USS Cape St. George (CG 71).

Nimitz Carrier Strike Group is commanded by Rear Adm. Robert Girrier and consists of flagship USS Nimitz, embarked CVW-11 and embarked DESRON 23.

# STRIKE GROUP CELEBRATES COMPTUEX SUCCESS

Story and Photo By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Jerine Lee

Sailors of Abraham Lincoln Strike Group wrapped up Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX) Aug 13 off the coast of Southern California.

COMPTUEX, an 18-day exercise, evaluates the strike group's operational readiness by assessing the integration of all units of the strike group such as air, strike, information, surface and anti-submarine warfare to certify the strike group ready for operations at sea and the upcoming deployment. The Abraham Lincoln Strike Group consists of USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 2, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 9 and guided-missile cruiser USS Cape St. George (CG 71).

Air wing 2 is the strike group's primary offensive striking weapon. During COMPTUEX, the Lincoln and USS Nimitz (CVN 68) air wings conducted numerous large force strike drills deep into simulated enemy territory to destroy critical hostile targets. Each large force strike involved the EA-6B Prowlers assigned to Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 131, E-2C Hawkeyes assigned to Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 116, F/A-18 Hornets assigned to Strike Fighter Squadrons (VFA) 2, 34, 137 and 151 conducting a simulation of targeting and destruction of critical targets while suppressing enemy radars and anti-aircraft fires.

DESRON 9 destroyers USS Momsen (DDG 92), USS Shoup (DDG 86), USS Halsey (DDG 97) and USS Sterett (DDG 104) completed war at sea and surface action group exercises. These drills included tracking simulated enemy subs, maritime interdiction operations, visit board search and seizure drills and also transiting through narrow straights with potential enemies nearby. Strike group 9 ships also practiced striking land targets with tomahawk missiles.

Guided-missile cruiser Cape St. George coordinated the air defense for the strike group. While leading a combined effort for air defense



of the Lincoln and Nimitz, Cape St. George incorporated all strike group units into a tactical data and communications link, which included P-3 Orion aircraft assigned to Patrol Squadron (VP) 30, Air Force Airborne Warning and Control Aircraft (AWACS) and U.S. 3rd Fleet's shore-based facilities.

COMPTUEX consists of two final battle problems to verify the strike group's competency for open-ocean operations. Both battle problems were successfully completed and the strike group was praised on numerous levels.

During the exercise debrief, Vice Adm. Richard Hunt, Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet said, "You are sound and you executed well. The world is changing. It's more complicated and more dangerous but you're ready."

Areas specifically noted for their excellence were maritime security operations, ship and air wing coordination, deckplate leadership, operational risk management (ORM), crisis planning, rules of engagement (ROE) execution, accuracy in strike warfare, agility in using alternate communication paths, response to network threats and overall performance in professionalism and combat operational effectiveness.

Ordnance



Fueling

Plane Captain

# Flight Deck Shift

Photos by USS Abraham Lincoln Media Dep



Shooter



Catapults and Arresting Gear



Plane Handler



PHOTO BY MC3 LEX T. WENBERG

## LINCOLN TESTING NEW HELO TECHNOLOGY

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Lex T. Wenberg

**U**SS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) is testing a new cable spooling technology, which could save the Navy millions of dollars by preventing costly damage to helicopter anti-submarine warfare equipment.

The new equipment, called the Cable Tensioning System (CTS), was designed by PMA-299, a program office that creates new acquisitions for the MH-60R Seahawk helicopters.

CTS is operated aboard the ship to re-organize quarter-inch thick Kevlar cable on a spool used by Seahawks assigned to Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 77.

The aircraft's buoy hangs down into the water from this cable and transmits sonar signals beneath the surface, helping the helicopters detect enemy submarines. When the buoy is retrieved, a spindle aboard the helicopter rolls up the incoming cable in a pre-set pattern to maximize space and keep a specific amount of tension on the cable so there will be no signal degradation, or worse, having the \$8 million buoy fall into the black depths of the sea.

However, as the cable winds up, the motion and banking of the helicopter often causes slippage in the cable called "miss-wrap," which

leads to costly and time-consuming cable repairs and shipping fees. CTS can perform these “re-wraps” at sea instead of having to send the spools ashore to be serviced.

For now, Lincoln has the only CTS in the Fleet, but plans for other carriers and platforms to get this equipment are in the works and are expected to save the Navy millions of dollars; \$1 million of it on Lincoln’s upcoming deployment alone, said Aviation Electronics Technician 1st Class Mel E. Loga, one of two CTS experts aboard Lincoln.

Lincoln’s Maintenance Officer, Cmdr. Wesley Joshway said the new equipment is already making a difference.

“Commander Naval Air Forces, Vice Adm. Allen Myers wanted his maintenance staff, working with PMA-299 and the HSM community, to develop a means to show cost savings to the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE). The development of the Cable Tensioning System does just that by eliminating a frequent Aviation Depot Level Repair charge to the NAE by an outside source and showing an immediate tangible saving,” said Joshway.

Prior to using CTS, Lincoln’s Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD) frequently had to ship the entire 185-pound spindle back to the warehouse for re-spooling and repairs, costing tens of thousands of dollars each time. During Lincoln’s Tailored Ship’s Training Assessment, AIMD had to send spools to the warehouse four different times, costing the Navy more than \$300,000 in repairs

in four weeks.

The machine only costs \$400,000 up-front, and it has almost paid for itself in a few weeks, said Loga. “About one in five times the helicopter pulls up the ALFS buoy and results in a miss-wrap. Every time that happened before we got the CTS, it would cost the Navy money,” he added.

Lincoln’s AIMD has two aviation electronics technicians who are the only ones capable of running and maintaining the system, Loga, from New Orleans, and Aviation Electronics Technician Airman Patrick Merker, a native of Satellite Beach, Fla.

Loga and Merker spearheaded the acquisition of the CTS and even attended a special training course on how to use, repair and maintain the CTS in order for it to operate aboard Lincoln. They are writing the technical manual which should be released Navy-wide soon.

“It was a hard trip and long hours,” said Loga. “But Airman Merker and I learned what we had to in order to get the job done.”

The CTS will not only help with re-wrapping the cable, but can also be controlled to inspect the cable for damage. This new equipment could mean vigorous work schedules for Lincoln’s two CTS experts, but they’re both proud to be pioneering the new system.

“Two months ago was the first time I actually heard about the system,” said Loga. “But I can already see how this will save so much in man-hours and time that the Navy will never do without one again.”

PHOTO BY MC2 CHRISTOPHER DOLLAR





PHOTO BY MC2 ALAN GRAGG

## CVW2 CHANGES COMMAND AIRBORNE

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Alan Gragg

Capt. John Eden relieved Capt. Alton E. Ross, Jr., as Commander of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 2 during an airborne ceremony in the skies above USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) Aug. 7.

The flight ceremony consisted of a fly-by of the ship and reading of the oath of command during flight, officially turning the reigns over to Eden.

“CAPT Ross has turned over the most prepared Air Wing I have ever seen. I look forward to working with the nation’s best young men and women each and every day,” said Eden.

Rear Adm. Mark D. Guadagnini, Commander of

the Abraham Lincoln Strike Group also took part in the flight, presiding over the ceremony and acknowledging the oaths.

Following Ross’ landing on the ship, he was showered with water in the Naval aviation tradition of “wetting-down” the former skipper.



PHOTO BY MC3 LEX T. WENBERG

During the Abraham Lincoln Strike Group's 2008 deployment, under Ross' command, the air wing squadrons completed 8,218 catapult launches, 7,661 aircraft recoveries and 1,108 helicopter flights.

The change of command took place during the Abraham Lincoln Strike Group's composite unit training exercise (COMPTUEX), as the strike group prepares for an upcoming deployment.

Squadrons of CVW 2 include the "Bounty Hunters" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 2, the "Blue Blasters" of VFA 34, the "Kestrels" of VFA 37, the "Vigilantes" of VFA 151, the "Lancers" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 131, the "Sun Kings" of Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 116, the "Saberhawks" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 77 and the "Golden Falcons" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 12.



PHOTO BY MC3 ROBERT ROBBINS

PHOTO BY CMDR. SEAN BAILEY



# TEXAS TECH VISITS USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Christopher M. Dollar

PHOTO BY MCSN JERINE LEE



USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) welcomed aboard distinguished visitors from Texas Tech University and Sigma Chi Fraternity, August 10-11.

The distinguished visitor program is designed to show influential community members what the Navy does everyday.

“Being here makes me proud to be an American,” said Texas Tech Chancellor Kent Hance. “This has been a great day for us just to see what exemplifies the finest of the young people of America.

Throughout the tour, the distinguished visitors saw how Lincoln operates at sea.

First, the visitors arrived on board via a C-2A Greyhound plane, also known as a “COD.”

Then, after a thorough brief with the commanding officer and Abraham Lincoln Strike Group Commander Rear Adm. Mark Guadagnini, the visitors headed back to the flight deck to get up-close and personal with flight operations.

“It’s not what you see on TV, because you get to feel it,” said Ponzi Black, a social media entrepreneur who was part of the distinguished visitor group. “You get to feel all the energy and the heat, and the smells and the craziness, but it’s all very calm as well and very orchestrated.”

For dinner, the captain ate with the guests

and gave each guest an Abraham Lincoln command ball cap with their “call sign” stitched in the back. After dinner, the guests visited one of the ship’s ready rooms to ask questions to pilots, and then headed up to “vulture’s row” to view night flight operations.

The guest stayed the night and woke up in the morning to continue the tour, where they saw the forecandle, medical and ate with the crew.

“Our Navy has transformed over the last century because of aircraft carriers. What we can do worldwide in preventing outbreaks of violence is achieved by just placing one of these carriers in the right area to send a big message,” said Hance.

One of the distinguished visitors for the day included Wayne Tucker, international president of the Sigma Chi Fraternity, which includes 236 chapters across North America and more than 300,000 members.

“This is just an amazing ship. Absolutely the Sailors are the finest part. They make all this happen; kind of like a choreographed ballet,” said Tucker.

The guests were impressed with the overall atmosphere of the ship and thanked Lincoln’s crew for hosting their visit and making it a time they’ll never forget.

“Everyone from the people that served our meals to the captain and everyone in-between, I’m proud of them and proud to have been here, on board USS Abraham Lincoln,” said Hance.

USS Abraham Lincoln is underway for a composite training unit exercise (COMPTUEX), which is designed to train the ship, embarked air wing and other units that make up Abraham Lincoln Strike Group to function as one highly effective fighting force.

# SCIENTISTS LEARN ABOUT LIFE AT SEA

By Dr. Thomas Beutner, Office of Naval Research

I walked aboard USS Abraham Lincoln on July 23 as part of the Scientists to Sea program along with several other Navy civilians from the Office of Naval Research and Naval Research Laboratory.

For the next two days, we received an in-depth tour of the ship and were briefed on many aspects of ship operations, including mechanical systems, meteorology, firefighting, sonar, ship-to-ship coordination and communication, weapons, aircraft maintenance and flight operations.

We had an opportunity for detailed conversations with specialists, both officers and enlisted personnel, on many aspects of ship operations.

This rare chance to see Sailors in their operational environment as they prepared to carry out their next mission, really put things in perspective for us. I was impressed not only by the technology we saw, but by the people we met—some of whom were on their first deployment.

I strongly recommend this opportunity for other scientists and engineers at ONR. During our time aboard, we interacted with the ship crew—both formally and informally—who shared their knowledge, experience and personal stories of daily life aboard an aircraft carrier.

While we were under way, the air wing began its carrier qualifications, allowing us to see dozens of catapult launches and traps of C-2A, FA-18C, E-2D and EA-6B aircraft. We stood shoulder to shoulder with the deck crew during the catapult launches as the jets took off, feeling the intense jet blast from aircraft that were passing within a few feet of us.

Being on deck as the jets took off was an experience that no picture or video could ever capture. The group had an extended visit with Rear Adm. Mark Guadagnini to discuss the strategic role of the aircraft carrier.

We also visited the ship captain and air boss on their decks to observe operations while the ship was under way.

While aboard, we could see that the crew was passionate about their duties, despite having to say goodbye to their families and friends only hours earlier.



U.S. NAVY PHOTO

Every person we met was eager to share their story—often asking for a few more minutes to show us one more thing during the tour.

As a group of scientists and engineers seeing an aircraft carrier in operation for the first time, we were full of questions. The crew answered them all and helped us understand how their individual roles contribute to the overall mission.

Our visit ended with a catapult launch on a C-2A aircraft that carried us back to shore. The Scientists to Sea program provided us with a unique opportunity to see a ship in operation and interact with the crew, learning about the challenges aboard.

For more information on the Scientists to Sea program, visit <http://www.onr.navy.mil/Science-Technology/ONR-Global/Scientists-to-Sea.aspx>.



Dr. Thomas Beutner is director of the Aerospace Sciences Research division, part of the Naval Air Warfare and Weapons department at the Office of Naval Research.

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