



AMTA SEMI-ANNUAL NEWS

Volume 1 Issue 2

January through July 2005

From the AMTA President.....

AMT's, the clock is ticking....reunion 2005 is nearing. You can feel the anticipation of meeting once again, or meeting for the first time in years, with friends and spouses who shared the comradeship, unique duties and challenges, world wide travel, and a life style that only our AMT families experienced while serving our country during hot and cold wars alike.

Your AMTA Board of Directors exist to help keep our unique kinship alive. Your board members have tried to contribute their time and talents to serve this special group of unsung flying heroes. John Shaffer has worked long and hard to set up a reunion program, location and time that will be enjoyable for the large number of committed attendees. He made sure those who attended last years reunion received their AMTA caps. Johnnie Estes has done a noteworthy job providing us with the AMTA website, AMTA News to keep us in touch and informed, and his editorial assistance for certificates to accompany awards. Vice President, Del Jolly and Chaplain, Jeff Knisley have been the front men in helping those AMTs in times of need. The directors, and their spouses, have contributed ideas, supplies, funds and support in so many ways I am afraid I could not begin to list them without the risk of missing some.

This is your AMTA and your reunion, and both need your support and involvement to sustain them for the long haul. Creating the AMTA and the first reunion, in two locations was a challenge met by a handful of AMTs scattered all over the country. I implore you to **"make it happen"** for many

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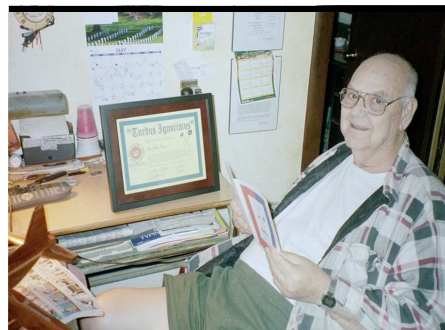
A Lot Going On Since the 2004 AMTA Inaugural REUNION.....

Since the 2004 AMTA Inaugural Reunion a lot has been going on. Our membership in the Airborne Maintenance Technician Association (AMTA) has grown to 107 members. We have exactly 100 **CHARTER MEMBERS**. When we were discussing the cutoff for charter membership we talked about stopping it at the end of 2004 or when we reached 100 members, and the way it worked out we had 100 charter members December 31, 2004.

The AMTA Board of Directors has changed slightly due to other commitments and circumstances. John Hurst the original AMTA Vice-President assumed the duties as AMTA President following Bob Miller's resignation. Bob remains a strong supporter of the AMTA, but is not having to devote the tremendous amount of time as he did in the past. John Shaffer was approved by the AMTA Board of Directors as the AMTA Treasurer following the resignation of Vern Stump. Bill Wilson who was extremely instrumental in getting the AMTA organized and established

as a non-profit organization was forced to resign as the AMTA Secretary due to personal commitments. The AMTA Board of Directors accepted Rick Davis as a board member and as AMTA Secretary, but only for a short period of time as Rick was forced to resign due to unforeseen circumstances, but Mike McLaughlin was willing and was accepted by the AMTA Board of Directors as a board member and as the AMTA Secretary. Mike is also the AMTA Historian. In an effort to get more people involved from the northern sector two other board members were voted on and accepted. Jim Hargrove from Iowa and Frank Jordan from Oregon. Bill Whitehead is the AMTA official photographer.

Big John Deaver who is our AMTA Lifetime Honorary Board Member underwent quadruple by-pass surgery recently, but is recovering nicely at his home in Knoxville, Tennessee. The AMTA Chaplain, Jeff Knisley, will



Big John with the TI Award and other gifts after by-pass surgery

provide more details on Big John's current condition elsewhere in this newsletter. The current and past AMTA board members presented Big John the Turdus Ignorimus (TI) Award for excessive "dumbassness" that did in fact land him in the hospital to undergo the quadruple by-pass surgery.

The current and past AMTA board members presented Big John the Turdus Ignorimus (TI) Award

One of our fellow AMTs, Charlie Vigdor has made an emergency trip to Thailand due to the illness of his daughter, Patty

Vigdor. We have been collecting money to help Charlie with some of the expenses he and his family have incurred, and the response has been outstanding, \$2560.00. Thanks to each and everyone for their generosity.

One of our AMTs from Omaha, Scott Kleinhesselink was married to his lovely wife Blenda in Las Vegas in May 2005. You can find out just about anything you may want to know about the AMTA by going to the website at www.amtassociation.org. For financial reports you can contact John Shaffer, Treasurer. He will be giving a complete financial report at the next General Membership Meeting. Remember the reunion and membership meeting in October 2005. Hope to see everyone there.

By: Johnnie Estes, AMTA Board Member

Airborne Maintenance Technicians, 874 Names! Where Are They???



We have almost nine hundred airborne maintenance technician's (AMTs) names in the AMTA database, but as of today we only know the status and location of 315. 68 of the 315 are deceased, which means we have located only 247 of the 874 AMTs we have identified. This tells us we have 559 AMTs we need to locate.

In order to locate more AMTs everyone needs to be involved. I am sure as we talk to each other and visit different places we will continue to run across more people. We recently ran an article in the American Legion Magazine concerning the 2005 AMTA Reunion in San Antonio and Mr. Larry Mills of Winter Haven, Florida saw the article and immediately contacted the AMTA. He was an AMT at the 6985th at Eielson in the early and mid 1960s. This is the way we must continue to try to locate people.

Please do not just peruse the AMT list on the website. Read the names and see if you recognize someone and possibly know their location and status. If you recognize an old friend on the list with an email or a phone number give them a call or send them an email, and hopefully between the two of you another person may be found.

Jim Hargrove, AMTA Director is the person ensuring recognition of the AMTA in different magazines and newspapers. We are an association listed on the militarylife.com website.

We just need some help from everyone. Noe C. Guerra has helped provide names of many missing AMTs but without more information the names Noe C provides may or may not be an AMT from the past. This is a time consuming process, but with a couple of hundred people working together, the task would be much less overwhelming.

Let's Locate
Others
To Help
Remember
THEM!

Check out the AMTA website at www.amtassociation.org and look over the AMT list (link in left margin) and see if you can identify an old friend who has been located and possibly see one that is listed but has not been, but you would happen to know their whereabouts. Our goal has always been to locate as many AMTs as possible to join in the AMTA camaraderie. HELP!!

By: Johnnie Estes, AMTA Director



Phillip Bruce Pike, April 15, 2005

We lost a dear friend and fellow AMT April 15, 2005. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bruce's family.



Airborne Maintenance Technician Association

3818 Sage Ridge

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78247

Don't lose out on CHARTER MEMBERSHIP & Lifetime AMTA Membership Upgrade!!

Remember you can upgrade to a lifetime membership in the AMTA by paying the difference between your original membership and the lifetime membership fee, but this must be done before your first anniversary date. You cannot go past one year and upgrade for the difference even if you are a three year member. It must be done before the first anniversary of your membership in the AMTA. We presently have 100 CHARTER MEMBERS. Do not lose your charter membership status by allowing your membership to become delinquent. You do not have to become a lifetime member to maintain your charter membership status, but you must renew your membership before the expiration date.

Being a member of the AMTA definitely has its advantages. The difference in being a lifetime member versus a one year or three year member is no more dues to be paid. Your voting rights do not change nor does your eligibility to hold office in the AMTA. The only criteria to hold office in the AMTA or to vote on things at the General Membership Meeting is to be a member in good standing.

As a non-member of the AMTA you can talk, but can never really voice your opinion on how things are done until you become a member in good standing.

Contact any member of the AMTA Board of Directors if you would like to join the AMTA or go to the AMTA website, www.amtassociation.org.

By: Johnnie Estes, Membership

AMTA Board of Directors:

John Hurst - President and Director
Del Jolly - Vice-Pres and Director
Mike McLaughlin - Secretary and Director
John Shaffer - Treasurer and Director
Johnnie Estes - Website and Director
Frank Jordan - Director
Jim Hargrove - Director

From the AMTA National VSO

I have selected three items for this issue of the AMTA News that I believe are worth bringing to your attention. I plan to do this for each future issue as well.

First, I feel we should pay close attention to the actions of the **Veterans Disability Benefits Commission**. Their recommendations could have a negative effect on our disability benefits as a way to offset some of the expense of implementing concurrent receipt and CRSC (combat related special compensation) benefits. **Next**, the proposal for VA to charge enrollment fees, and increasing co-payment for drugs is another issue that may need your attention, especially if the enrollment fee is imposed on those currently enrolled in VA health care. **And lastly**, the good news on the increased VA Home Lone Guaranty amount. If you have questions about these issues, or want guidance on how to access your veterans benefits, just drop me an email. jhurst@comweb.net

Veterans Disability Benefits Commission

The FY2004 Defense Authorization Act established the Veterans Disability Benefits Commission. The commission convened for the first time in May 2005. The Commission is charged with conducting a study of veterans' disability and death benefits. Congress established the Commission as part of negotiations that led to current authorities for concurrent receipt and Combat Related Special Compensation.

Seven of the thirteen members of the Commission, must hold the Silver Star or higher decoration for valor. Lt. Gen. James T. Scott, USA (Ret) was appointed to the Commission by President Bush and will chair the panel.

The Commission must report to the President and Congress within 15 months of its first meeting, the report will be due by August 2006. In conducting its work, the group will evaluate and assess the laws and regulations which determine eligibility for disability and death benefits; assess compensation rates for such benefits based on average impairment of earning capacity; and compare Federal disability benefits with those provided by State governments and the private sector.

VA Home Loan Guaranty Program

The Veterans Benefits Act of 2004 included several changes to the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program.

The Maximum Guaranty Amount. The Maximum Guaranty Amount has been increased for certain loans in excess of \$144,000 to an amount equal to 25 percent of the Freddie Mac conforming loan limit determined under the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation Act for a single family residence, as adjusted for the year involved. The maximum guaranty amount for 2005 is \$89,912. This is 25% percent of a single family residence with a VA home loan amount of \$359,650.

Specially Adapted Housing. The law expands eligibility to the \$50,000 Specially Adapted Housing grant to veterans with permanent and total service-connected disabilities due to the loss of, or loss of use of, both upper extremities such as to preclude use of the arms at or above the elbows. In addition, Title 38, Section 1151, is amended to specify eligibility when any veteran has suffered an injury, or aggravation of an injury, as the result of hospitalization, medical or surgical treatment, as if it were service-connected for benefits under Chapter 21, relating to Specially Adapted Housing.

Adjustable Rate Mortgages. The law gives VA the authority to guarantee "traditional" ARMs in a manner similar to that which HUD insures adjustable rate mortgages under section 251 of the National Housing Act. The VA previously had this authority but it expired September 30, 1995. The legislation provides authority through September 30, 2008.

Hybrid ARM Loans. The law extends VA authority to guarantee hybrid ARM loans to September 30, 2008.

Native American Direct Loan Program (NADL). The authority to make direct loans under the NADL program has been extended to December 31, 2008.

Funding Fee Exemption. The law expands the definition of veterans who are in receipt of compensation and thus entitled to a waiver of the VA funding fee. Veterans who are rated eligible to receive compensation as a result of a pre-discharge disability examination and rating will now be considered as receiving compensation as of that date.

Proposed VA Health Care Fees

The George W. Bush administration has proposed to charge Priority 7 and 8 users of the Department of Veterans Affairs health system an annual \$250 enrollment fee and hike co-payments on prescription drugs from \$7 to \$15. Since then, the House and Senate VA committees have endorsed enrollment fees in different ways. The Senate panel, chaired by Senator Larry Craig, R-Idaho, opted for the \$250 annual fee. On the other hand, the House

Committee, chaired by Representative Steve Buyer, R-Indiana, voted to set the fee for priority 7 enrollees at \$230, which would match the enrollment fee of military retirees using Tricare Prime. Buyer proposed a sliding-scale fee from \$230 to \$500 for priority 8 veterans, based on individual income levels. Both committees disapprove of the proposed more-than-double jump in prescription drug co-payments.

John Hurst, AMTA Veterans' Service Officer

From the President

(Continued from page 1)

years to come. It has never been about the price you pay to join an Association, it is about the price you paid to earn the right to be called an AMT for the rest of your life. Remember, "you don't have to be a member of the AMTA to attend the reunions."

Read in this issue for more on the 2005 Reunion . Our banquet will have a different format this year and a great time will be had by everyone, and in the hospitality room. Bonnie and I hope to see you in San Antonio!

John Hurst, President AMTA

Just for the fun of it ...

Puzzle Something About the AMTA

X B E A F T N I L H G U A L C M E
O E T G R O T A G I V A N I E P T
B A T O L I P L R E E N I G N E V
L C N Z C W E V O R G R A H C N C
O K I Y R A R O P M E T Q H O S O
O B T J A I B R R R T E N I B S M
T E E O A A C E E G I I T J H F A
S K D R I I Q S M W C A R T R A H
C E A D C S R A M I I C O G E S I
R L F A R A W Q A R I O T E I U S
E E D N E C H N H Z N I C C A C T
W C Y N L N H S I R M K E N P I O
D T T E A T S A T O P E R A T O R
R R I Q I M B R P M X E I N Q W I
I O R V N A M E P L N E D E R S A
V N U R G G N O W H A A U T V Q N
E I C D G R X L C E N I M N T S F
R C R E O Y T I R A H C N I O I P
Y A S B L O I N O T N A N A S R N
G F R E K O M S E R V I C M M R H
X I S Q U A D R O N O L D T I O L
A L F L Y L L O J E W E B S I T E

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. San Antonio | 14. Hammer |
| 2. Airborne | 15. Bag drag |
| 3. Maintenance | 16. McLaughlin |
| 4. Technician | 17. Jordan |
| 5. Operator | 18. Hargrove |
| 6. Electronic | 19. Director |
| 7. Fly | 20. Website |
| 8. Temporary | 21. Charity |
| 9. Squadron | 22. Historian |
| 10. Command | 23. Chaplain |
| 11. Iraq War | 24. Pilot |
| 12. Toolbox | 25. Navigator |
| 13. Screwdriver | 26. Engineer |

See Answers on Page 4.

More AMTA News.....

From the AMTA Secretary...

The initial surge in AMTA membership was gratifying. However; it has slowed down considerably. Several AMTA directors have been active in trying to get the word out and possibly reach some of the AMTs who have not been previously located. A good way to publicize the AMTA is through other organizations such as local chapters of the VFW and The American Legion. We know many other AMTs who would join if they could just be located.

The AMTA ended the fiscal year with a healthy balance and tax forms have been filed with the IRS on behalf of the AMTA. Although it is not mandatory that we use all available money each year, the IRS does expect documentation and reporting of what was achieved in carrying out the organization's exempt purposes. In short, the AMTA needs to decide how to best use the funds we generate, whether it is for a service or charitable organization, or other entity. The level of funding the AMTA can support is another issue that needs to be determined. The bulk of excess funds from last year are a direct result of membership dues. Many members paid lifetime memberships which will significantly lower the amount of funds collected in the current and subsequent years. Avenues of increasing our income level are quite limited due to the structure (geographically scattered) of the AMTA, but even with this condition the AMTA can meet most any need as shown by the strong support for the Patty Vigdor Fund which is approaching the \$2400 mark.

Mike McLaughlin, AMTA Secretary

Think about it.....

Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again.

Author: Unknown



AMTA Semi-Annual Newsletter Staff:

Editor: Johnnie Estes

Publisher: Jim Worrell

"It's your newsletter for use to communicate with other AMTs."

Big John Update.... 2005 AMTA Reunion in San Antonio...

I was stationed with Big John Deaver in the early 1960s and had not seen him since, except for a chance meeting at a car dealership in Knoxville, TN where we both live about 30 miles apart. Big John's heart surgery came as quite a shock to me when I received an email telling everyone. After that the emails started flying. We decided we needed to do something for Big John so we presented him with a carved wooden C-130 airplane and a rehabilitation donation and a famous Turdus Ignorimus (TI) Award (which is an award Big John started many years ago).

Everyone pulled together and thanks to Del Jolly's travels the airplane and the rest were delivered to Big John, which he appreciated greatly. Big John was in the hospital and then in rehabilitation for a few weeks and thanks to his wife and daughter was later released from both. He had a small setback with his medication, but is now residing and home with plans to make the PWG reunion in Omaha and hopefully the AMTA reunion, but travel plans for Big John to San Antonio are presently a problem which is being worked by many in the AMTA. Thank you and God Bless each of you.

Jefferson Knisley, AMTA Chaplain



Mr. and Mrs. Scott Kleinhesselink were married in Las Vegas, Nevada in May 2005. Their honeymoon is planned for September 2005 and they will go to Europe. Best of luck Scott and Blenda.

What?????

If you don't get everything you want, think of the things you don't get that you don't want.

As John Hurst the AMTA President has said it so well, the excitement and anticipation are building as the 2005 AMTA Reunion grows closer. It is a wonderful feeling when you think about seeing old friends from the past that you have not seen in 30 or 40 years. The first reunion in September 2004 was a huge success and this one appears to be even better.

We will start signing in Wednesday October 19th and will go through Saturday October 22nd. The FTVA golf tournament will be held in Castroville Thursday October 20th at 12:00 noon. You can contact Joe Hurst for details and signing up for the golf tournament, golf@ftva.org. The AMTA banquet will be Friday October 21st starting at 6:30 PM with fellowship until 7:30 PM and after that dinner will be served until 8:30 PM. The dinner will be a Texas Bar-B-Que Buffet. You can find the menu on the website. General Doyle E. Larson will be our guest speaker and he should start speaking at approximately 8:30 PM. We will continue our fellowship in the Hospitality Room after 10:00 PM.

If you have questions or require additional information check out the website at www.amtassociation.org or you can contact John Shaffer, Reunion Director at jshaffer5@satx.rr.com.

Just for the fun of it

Answers to Puzzle

Puzzle Something About the AMTA

X B E A F T N I L H G U A L C M E
 O E T G R O T A G I V A N I E P T
 B A T O L I P L R E E N I G N E V
 L C N Z C W E V O R G R A H C N C
 O K I Y R A R O P M E T Q H O S O
 O B T J A I B R R R T E N I B S M
 T E E O A A C E E G I I T J H F A
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 E E D N E C H N H Z N I C C A C T
 W C Y N L N H S I R M K E N P I O
 D T T E A T S A T O P E R A T O R
 R R I Q I M B R P M X E I N Q W I
 I O R V N A M E P L N E D E R S A
 V N U R G G N O W H A U T V Q N
 E I C D G R X L C E N I M N T S F
 R C R E O Y T I R A H C N I O I P
 Y A S B L O I N O T N A N A S R N
 G F R E K O M S E R V I C M M R H
 X I S Q U A D R O N O L D T I O L
 A L F L Y L L O J E W E B S I T E