



the WIRE BENDER

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January through December 2014

FROM THE AMTA PRESIDENT

Planning and organizing the 2014 informal AMTA Reunion in Las Vegas was not a chore but a pleasure thanks to the AMTA members and the Sunset Station Hotel & Casino staff. In the beginning it appeared as though we would be fortunate to have 20 AMTs at the reunion instead we had 36 which was a very good number. An AMT in Las Vegas, Larry Olesky, put forth the effort to ensure the information placed on the website was accurate and extremely informative. Thanks Larry. Everyone always knows what a great job Mike McLaughlin does at every reunion and this was no different. Thanks to you Mike. Bob White is there always available and willing to help at every reunion. Thanks Bob. Another person who is always working and ensuring things go smoothly we tend to overlook, John Brown. Thanks John for all you do. Whitey Gross provides help at every reunion and it was the same in Las Vegas. Whitey and Jennie spent a few days with Betty Jo and I before the reunion and we had a great time. Thanks Whitey for everything. I know I am missing some people who have helped especially those at the Sunset Station Hotel and Casino, those people made me look good just like the AMTA members always seem to make me look good. Thanks to everyone.

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Sunset Station Hotel and Casino, Henderson, Nevada

We did something different concerning snacks and beverages for the Hospitality Room this time and could be the same method for future reunions. During past reunions due to over buying, people forgetting to share the cost and possibly poor planning the AMTA has lost a significant amount of money on the Hospitality Room. This time we collected money to buy snacks and beverages from the membership and then went to the store buying what people had requested. Very little was left over when the reunion ended and the AMTA was a couple of hundred dollars ahead. Thanks to everyone who donated and I would venture to say it was everyone.

The Hospitality Room was not a large room but was more than adequate and furthermore was given to the AMTA for FREE by the Sunset Station Hotel and Casino sales people.

The mini-AMTA golf tournament Wednesday afternoon proved to be a huge success (no I did not win) and everyone had a great time. Following the golf tournament everyone (AMTs and the golfers including local friends) came to our home in North

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FROM THE AMTA VSO

Our Veterans should check with their State Department of Veterans Affairs to learn the latest information on the local state benefits offered veterans. Many benefits have special requirements, such as a service-connected disability, but there are also many state veterans benefits that only require applying based on the veterans needs, or even special discounts and savings in that state. Our AMT family should take a few minutes to contact their state office or county veterans service officers to learn the latest benefits. Many new benefits have been added during the many military actions over the past few years. Go to: <http://www.va.gov/statedva.htm> to see how to contact state veterans offices.

John Hurst
Veterans Service Officer

"People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf."
George Orwell

FROM THE AMTA TREASURER

Hello fellow AMTs! We are at the end of another year. This year has been another great one that's passed so quickly. Many things have happened this year and I'll try to summarize some of the high points. We had a total of 19 renewal/life time memberships. Breakdown; 4 were for "1" year, "6" were for 3 years and "9" were for Life memberships. It appears as time goes on we're having an increase of "Life" memberships. Renewal memberships may go up/down depending on the year individuals renew their membership. Overall membership is steady and we are staying pretty constant with our numbers. Recruiting new members into the AMTA is very important! Once again Tom Joines and others have the endless task of locating past and present AMTs. As an organization it is our responsibility to locate other AMTs. The AMTA contributed to the following areas; Grace Community Evangelical in memory of Daniel Waldo, American Lung Association in memory of Mike Trickey, donation to the Garshasb family and our annual donation to the Air Force Enlisted Village. As in the past couple years the AMTA elected this year to donate to the "USO" Christmas effort that repeatedly supports our servicemen and women throughout the world. Individuals in our membership have donated \$1090.00 and a check has been sent to the USO. The USO is a worthy charity and by donating to the USO we are supporting those who proudly serve our country. Thanks to all of our members that supported this effort. Although we did not have a 2014 reunion we did have an unofficial reunion in Las Vegas. I can truly say that all that were in attendance had a great time. The Sunset Station and its staff were outstanding. The overall food selection was exceptional. The hotel had about everything you could ask for. Some individuals did well on the Casino floor while others kept on trying. Thanks to Johnnie Estes for all the leg work in setting this event up. I

would like to mention that this was the first year that we did not go into the hole on the cost of the snacks and beverages for the reunion. Thanks to everyone that donated towards the refreshments. The 2014 unofficial reunion is history, now we are looking forward to the 2015 official reunion in San Antonio. Soon we will start planning again for the 2015 reunion and will announce the available dates and locations as soon as the information is available. I urge all members and their friends to plan early and attend the next reunion. Yes, some of the same old war stories are told over and over. It's still a great place to get together with both old and new friends. We are getting older and need to keep in touch. Thanks once again for everyone's total support. Without each of you we would not have this association. May God bless each of you, our association, our military and our great country. I wish you and your families a wonderful holiday season.

*Bob White
Treasurer*

FROM THE AMTA SECRETARY

It's time again to start thinking about the next AMTA reunion in San Antonio. The dates will likely be September 23—25th to coincide with the FTVA reunion. I will be visiting the Drury Plaza hotel in the near future to review our previous contract with them and see if we can get as good if not better a deal as we had in 2013. We had a lot of positive comments about the hotel and the afternoon kickback with free snacks and drinks. Also, the staff was always ready to meet whatever needs we had. A plus would be if the Drury has the same manager as in 2013. He is very pro military and even addressed the group during the AMTA banquet. For the 2015 reun-

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Las Vegas and in my opinion may have been the highlight of the reunion as everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves. Thanks to everyone for making it such an enjoyable time. The people are what makes any function successful.

Don't forget in September 2015 we will have the formal AMTA reunion in San Antonio and unless things have really changed it will probably be at the Drury again as they treated us very well and provided excellent pricing. Mike is looking into that in the near future.

We continue to maintain a membership around 160 members and the AMTA though small remains very strong. I would encourage every AMT to at least check out the possibility of becoming an AMTA member, because we are losing our AMTs all too often. Everyone be safe and we will see you in San Antonio in about 9 months.

*Johnnie Estes
President*



No Loving on the Dance Floor

"You haven't had enough coffee until you can thread a sewing machine needle while it's running."

Anon



**the WIREBENDER
Staff:**

Editor: Whitey Gross

Publisher: Whitey Gross

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

**AIRBORNE MAINTENANCE TECHICIANS,
1017 NAMES! WHERE ARE THEY???**



**AMTA MEMBERSHIP
CHAIRMAN**

This has been a great year for me as a retired airborne maintenance technician (AMT), and Membership Chairman for the AMTA. I was able to get together with a lot of old friends (AMTs) and met a lot of men I had heard about or talked to on the phone. I attended a special reunion/memorial service for the 6994th held by the NSA at Ft. Meade. It was a great start for our new year and it was outstanding. We were treated well and had outstanding tours and briefings. While we were there we were able to attend a special service held at Arlington National Cemetery for KIA of the 94th. One of our own, Tommy Guy (AMT) was one of the speakers that memorialized Dale Brandenburg, an Airborne Maintenance Technician, Killed In Action. In October services were held at Goodfellow AFB for Dale and a building there was dedicated as Brandenburg Hall in his honor.

In October Johnnie & Betty Jo Estes put things together for an adventurous 3 days in Las Vegas as an AMTA get-together. Again, I was able to see old buddies, friends, and also some new faces. Had a great time spending a little time rubbing shoulders with some special people. It was well worth the three days traveling to get there. Make your plans to be with us at the reunion/

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**INFORMATION ON
THE AMTA
FACEBOOK**

Introducing the AMT Facebook page. Since our last formal reunion we have initiated a Facebook page to provide an easily found location for the AMTs and associate members to communicate and pass along information that is of interest to all our members. It is located at "Airborne Maintenance & In-flight Maintenance Technicians (AMT/IMT/ASE)". It is a closed group, meaning that in order for you access the site you must request membership. The only prerequisite is that you verify that you are a past or present AMT/IMT/ASE. In turn you will be asked to update your information in the database. This is to ensure we have your correct and current information. At no time will your information be released without your prior permission. The group is open to all past or present AMTs, IMTs, or



**Airborne Maintenance
Technician**

11615 Old Hills Lane
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78251

ASEs that have flown on the various USAF reconnaissance aircraft to include Compass Call. People that request to join the group and are not members of the AMT Association are welcome but we encourage them to join the AMTA.

We pass along information pertaining to the AMTA and our activities. The only thing we ask is that you keep entries clean, civil, in good taste and no political or religious rants. Jokes, pictures, and other information that most would find interesting are welcome. While we do not want to use the site to sell things, those items or things that can be used to provide funds to the AMTA for the purpose of donations are always welcome. There is also a site statement that says what we as an organization are about. Entries from the Board of Directors that need the widest dissemination are also passed along on the site.

Those of you that have already joined, or will join the Facebook group, please share with us any suggestions you may have to improve the site.

*John and Jean Brown
Facebook Coordinators*



Thursday Evening Dinner Location

"The only thing necessary for, "Evil," to triumph, is for good men, to do nothing."

Sir Edmund Burke

AMTA Board of Directors:

- Johnnie Estes - President, Director
- Mervin Gross - Vice-Pres, Dir, Newsletter
- Mike McLaughlin - Secretary and Director
- Robert White - Treasurer, Director
- Jim Hargrove - Director
- Randy Holt - Director
- Bill Wilson - Director (Permanent)
- Del Jolly - Director (Permanent)

AMTA Yahoo Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AMTAssociation/>

AMTA Website:

www.amtassociation.org

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membership meeting in San Antonio in 2015. I hope to see you there. Someone told me that Hope is something you work at to make it come true. Be there. Remember, I need all the information you can furnish on the people we are searching for in order to find them. Very few of the 500 missing Airborne Maintenance men have been found. I received a lot of good inputs but it hasn't worked out well. I plan to continue the effort for another year and see how things go.

We have had a loss of two members this year and the addition of six new members.

I would be neglecting my duties if I didn't again encourage you to become a voting member of the AMTA. Someone asked what the AMTA could do for them; that is not what it is all about. It's what you can do through the AMTA to help others. Every dime from dues, donations, auction, or sale of wares is set up to help others. This month (Dec), it is giving to the USO for our fellow military members. Membership dues, which are very low, (\$10.00 a year/ \$25.00 for 3 years) but a small portion of what we do to help. Check us out and join us in our effort.

On a personal note: I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and that you know the peace and love of Jesus Christ. I also hope you find love and happiness in the coming New Year.

*Tom Joines
Membership Chairman*



Thursday Evening Feasty Buffet Dinner

ion, we will again need to get our own caterer as the Drury does not have a full blown kitchen. I intend to use the same caterer we had in 2013 as they have a varied menu and reasonable pricing. The Board of Directors will finalize the menu.

As always, we encourage attendees to bring something for the silent auction. There will also be a new T-shirt design for the 2015 reunion, though probably not dated. We've done that before and ended up giving a lot of outdated T-shirts away at the 2007 reunion. I solicit inputs for the shirt design, but don't wait too long. I need lead time to finalize the design with whomever I get to do the shirts, get order blanks emailed, and time for them to print the shirts. Those attending can pick their shirts up at the reunion. We will mail shirts to those not attending.

I will email updates as things develop and hope to see all the regular attendees and hopefully many new ones in September 2015.

*Michael McLaughlin
Secretary*



Whitey, Dan, Tom, David
Golfers Extraordinaire



Buz, Lance, Johnnie, Steve
Golfers

FROM THE AMTA VICE PRESIDENT

Well, about April or May I didn't believe the informal reunion in Las Vegas was going to be more than a half dozen of us attending. Boy, was I wrong! We ended with occupying 35 rooms. A number of people took advantage of the area and did some sight-seeing and a few of us played a little golf including a tournament. And of course, a few hit the Casino. Gee. Would have never thought about that. :-). We definitely have to give Johnnie a big WELL DONE for putting this event together. One heck of a job! Now we can look forward to our regular reunion this coming September. I hope to have some good information on this in our June edition of *theWireBender*. Stay tuned.

This year we have four members on the Board of Directors (BoD) up for reelection. They are Johnnie Estes, Whitey Gross, Bob White, and Jim Hargrove. In April or May the AMTA Secretary will be sending out ballots to AMTA members. We encourage everyone to nominate AMTA members of your choice for the ballot. Your nominee must accept the nomination in writing to the AMTA Secretary, amtsec@amtassociation.org. I am sure further instructions on this will be forth coming after the New Year. We need new blood on the BoD to keep the Association viable. Hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. God bless you all.

*Mervin A. "Whitey" Gross
Vice President*

"In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm, and three or more is a congress."

- John Adams