



the WIRE BENDER

Volume 12 Issue 1

January through June 2020



San Antonio, Texas Courtyard by Marriott AMTA 2021 Reunion Venue

AMTA PRESIDENT'S INSIGHT

By now we know that best laid plans can go off the rail. No one ever suspected our country would go into a complete lockdown for more than three months. Actually we are still in a partial lockdown. Yes, this has definitely put a halt to many things we needed to do in accomplishing the transition from the previous AMTA board members to the newly elected board mem-

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A WORD FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

2020 has been an epic year so far, Impeachment of our president, Mueller report, Covid-19 epidemic, quarantines, protests, riots and wholesale destruction of city neighborhoods and shortage of toilet paper. In all of my lifetime I can not remember such unrest and uncertainty. It is my hope that our elected officials will work together to restore law and order and follow the constitution that our forefathers gave us establishing the laws of this great country. I served this country for 28 years and it pains me to see our great nation being torn apart. I ask that you pray with me, regardless of your religious affiliation, for peace and prosperity for the nation we served.

*Tom Muggeo
AMTA Vice President*

TREASURER'S FINANCIAL INPUT

So far in 2020 it's been quiet with very little activity. Membership wise we had one member that upgraded to life, two members renewed their three year membership and one member for a one year membership. We collected \$130 in membership dues and \$30 in donations. We made a donation to the American Cancer Society for \$100 "in memory of" Carson Lobb. As a non-profit organization the AMTA has elected the Air Force Enlisted Village Home in Shalimar, Florida as our primary contribution organization. This year our members voted to increase our donation to \$1500. Our present funding has allowed the AMTA to increase this donation. However, we may not always be able to afford this amount. We will attempt to continue to donate

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AIRBORNE MAINTENANCE TECHICIANS, 891 NAMES! WHERE ARE THEY???

169 DECEASED

Let's Locate
Others
To Help
Remember
THEM!

(President Continued from page 1)

bers. I had the honor of being elected president of the AMTA during our board meeting following the AMTA election. Johnnie Estes, outgoing president continues to do most if not all of what he was doing previously. Johnnie and I communicate and we definitely have a plan to reach our goal and complete the transition, but it is taking more time than planned. Mervin Gross (Whitey) continues to do the newsletter (the WireBender), and we need to come up with someone presently on the AMTA board to take over those duties. We had a couple of setbacks concerning software but that is being taken care of as we continue to work through it. Yes it is slower than planned but we will get there!

As I embark on this new journey as AMTA President I want everyone to know that I cherish your support and my goal is to meet or exceed your expectations as your new president. I have a lot to learn and will need help as time goes on. Johnnie, Mike, Bob, Whitey and other board members have ensured me they are available anytime I need help. Our new board members, Don Weaver and Tom Muggeo are definitely on board with making the transition as quickly

and painless as possible. We plan no major changes in the AMTA as it is well established and has been working great since inception in June 2004.

Our next AMTA reunion will be in the fall of 2021. The reunion in San Antonio in 2019 had the least participation of any AMTA reunion to this point. It is getting more difficult each year to make the journey in our efforts to attend another AMTA reunion to enjoy our friends old and new. Mike and Don are working with the hotels in San Antonio in an effort to get the best deal possible for the AMTA members and their families. I hope to see many of you at the next reunion, but I definitely realize we are getting older each year. Thanks so much to all the AMTA members and the strong support I am receiving.

David Leslie
AMTA President



Airborne Maintenance Technician Association

288 Stone Trail
CASTROVILLE, TEXAS 78009

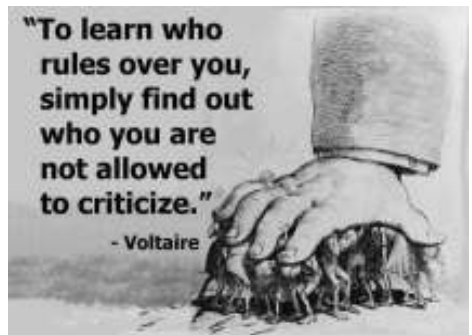
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\$500, which as an organization are committed to each year as long as resources permit.

Our next annual reunion in 2021 should be a great one. That will be two years since we were able to come together. I'm looking forward to our next reunion and visiting with everyone.

The Coronavirus has really hit us hard. The appointments that I had with my Well-Med doctor and with the VA were postponed until end of the year. Hopefully I'll be able to keep them. I know that our members are having the same issues if not more. I trust and pray that our members and their families are doing well. Please be safe and take care of each other. Hopefully we will come together again in 2021.

Robert J. White
AMTA Treasurer



AMTA Board of Directors:

David Leslie - President, Director
Tom Muggeo - Vice-President, Director
Mike McLaughlin - Secretary, Director
Robert White - Treasurer, Director
Joe Jesty - Director
Larry Meade - Director
Don Weaver - Director
Johnnie Estes - Director (Permanent)
Jim Hargrove - Director (Permanent)
Mervin Gross - Director (Permanent)
Mervin Gross - Newsletter Temporary
Bill Wilson - Director (Permanent)

SECRETARY'S LATEST

Greetings from Comfort, Texas: Star Of The Hill Country. The 2019 AMTA reunion attendance was the lowest since reunions were started in 2004. We are getting older and many have medical issues that come with age and prevent distant travel. Also, membership has not grown as we would have hoped. I believe this is largely due to the modernization of the RC135 fleet leading to inevitable elimination of our jobs and being replaced with Airborne Systems Engineers (ASE). Membership in the AMTA is open to IMTs as well as ASEs. Thus far, there has been little interest from ASE's in the AMTA. I can only assume this is because they do not have much in common with us other than they fly. They have no idea what it took for us to maintain systems on the aircraft, flight line, and shop. That is now done by the contractors. If you know someone that may be interested in joining the AMTA, please reach out to them.

The 2021 AMTA reunion will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott as it was in 2017. We were booked there for the 2019 reunion, but had to cancel and contract with the Airport Hilton. The contract with the Courtyard has been negotiated with Don Weaver taking the lead. Myself and Bob White will still be assisting. Hope you are well and I look forward to a larger turnout for the 2021 reunion.

Michael McLaughlin
AMTA Secretary

When a man opens a car door for his wife, it's either a new car or a new wife.

Prince Phillip

CHAPLAIN'S IMPORTANT WORDS

In times like the Pandemic it is important to remember that God has been self-quarantined for many years, he is safe and you can get as close to him as you want. God also works from home and his internet is never down so if you are not getting his messages, guess who is not checking their mail. God says to fellowship with the Saints but he didn't say how, pick up the phone or pen and paper. The sound of a friendly voice can shatter the silence of isolation or relieve the loneliness left by the loss of a loved one. Pray for our Commander in the Capitol as he promotes Christianity, you may not like his politics or even the person but pray for the cause. Remember, it is easiest for evil to succeed when the good do

(Chaplain Continued on page 4)

AMTA VSO INFORMATION

HR7111, Veterans Economic Recovery Act of 2020.

Many of us old AMT's have family members that are veterans or are reserve/guard members with 12 months of education benefits. If unemployed these folks may be eligible to pursue The Rapid Retraining Program with 12 months of educational benefits. To participate veterans must:

- Be between the ages of 25-60.
- Be unemployed on day of application.
- Have an Honorable or other than dishonorable discharge.
- Not be eligible for VA education benefits.

Not be enrolled in another Federal or State job training program.

Not be receiving disability compensation for reasons that have led to Un-employability.

Not be in receipt of any unemployment benefits when they begin training under this program.

John Hurst
AMTA Veterans' Service Officer

AMTA'S FACEBOOK GROUP

Time for another newsletter article related to the FaceBook Group. As many know, or should know, I always request input related to the database maintained by the AMTA when someone requests to join the FaceBook Group. I do this to update the database. The only other time this is done is when someone requests to join the AMTA or requests to renew their membership. This means that the database doesn't get cross-checked on a regular basis, and the database is our main method of contacting people in an emergency. Please, if you change or have changed your address, phone number, or a change in your family members, please let us know so we can update the database. Who needs to be contacted? The AMTA Secretary, Mike McLaughlin or any Board member. Your assistance in this effort is greatly appreciated.

John Brown
AMTA FaceBook Coordinator



**the WIREBENDER
Staff:**

Editor: Whitey Gross

Publisher: Whitey Gross

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

AMTA Yahoo Group:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AMTAssociation/>

AMTA Website:
www.amtassociation.org

A PERMANENT DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

The AMTA is now under a different regime as of September 2019. We are having a few bumps to overcome in the transfer of leadership and duties. The AMTA is a solid and well established organization and the transfer should happen quite easily. Software issues have been a bit of a problem but the new people are obtaining their software and are hopefully close to overcoming this obstacle. No one is going away right now so we are still available to help in any way we can. Mervin Gross is still the TEMPORARY Editor of the WireBender, AMTA Newsletter. Johnnie Estes is still maintaining the website and the AMTA database, but it appears as though the new AMTA board member, Don Weaver will soon be taking over both of these jobs. We do not have anyone presently in line to take on the AMTA Newsletter, but hopefully that will happen soon. AMTA official letters are still being written by Johnnie Estes as the AMTA President, David Leslie is attempting to acquire the necessary software to take over some of these tasks. One of the very good things about this leadership transfer is the AMTA still has some outstanding board members in place. Mike McLaughlin, AMTA Secretary is extremely knowledgeable in most areas of AMTA business and data. Bob White, AMTA Treasurer has mastered the task of AMTA membership and tracking AMTA funds and expenses. The new board members may require help from all of us as time goes on and

everyone should be willing to help when we are needed. The AMTA is an outstanding organization and none of us want to see it deteriorate or become less than the strong association it is today. If any new AMTA board members ask for help be ready to give it to them. David Leslie, President; Tom Muggeo, Vice-President; Don Weaver, Board member.

Thank you, to every member and associate member of the AMTA for the continuous and strong support you always gave to me as the AMTA President. I especially want to thank every AMTA board member as they always made me look good and always provided support and encouragement. Thank you all.

Johnnie Estes
 AMTA Permanent Board Member

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nothing. If you have a loss or tragedy let the AMTA members know, we are there for you and want to help. Be safe always and stay in touch. May God bless all.

Frank Jordan
 AMTA Chaplain



Together Alone By Bill Mahan - 2006

I saw the face of the other guy,
 Flying his bullet in the cold blue sky;
 His helmet was open and I could see
 The stony look he gave to me.

Beneath us waves and distant shore
 Had seen us fly this sky before,
 And though we'd played these deadly
 games
 No one knew the others' names

Round and round our metal birds
 Flew watchfully and spoke no words;
 From him there was no colleagues' hail
 Not with the Red Star on his tail.

Chess pieces were our ears, his eyes,
 Circling round that cold blue skies;
 But he had thunder and lightning hot,
 And he knew well that we did not.

Seemingly safe, the thick white clouds
 Could quickly change to funeral shrouds,
 As from his fatal dragon fire,
 We'd hit the ground a metal pyre.

Yet though we knew the dangers there,
 Still openly we probed this air;
 Our mission we would not let fail,
 Despite the Red Star on his tail.

We knew the story of five-two-eight,
 Knew their fiery, final fate,
 Heard the killers' blazing guns,
 Knew we, too, might be the ones.

But choices we had gladly made.
 And silent in the sky we stayed;
 Listening there with measured breath,
 With nothing there to ward off death.

We did just what we had to do,
 Alone up there in the cold and blue;
 No matter what, they'd be no wail;
 To Hell with the Red Star on his tail!