



the WIRE BENDER

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SECRETARY'S LATEST

This has been a tough year for everyone; not only in the United States, but the world. The pandemic has disrupted "life as usual" and brought much of society to their knees. I hope our fellow AMTs and their families have stayed well and will be able to emerge from this in good health. The possibility of a 2021 AMTA reunion remains to be determined. Much of it depends on how the next few months play out. Many people will continue to

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TREASURER'S FINANCIAL INPUT

To my fellow AMTs, I trust this finds everyone doing as well as possible. Unfortunately the COVID-19 virus has not made 2020 an ordinary year for any of us. Hopefully next year will bring abundant blessings to all.

I believe the COVID-19 virus played a part in our financial status dipping somewhat. The following is a recap of this year's activity. We had three incoming donations totaling \$50. A total of eight memberships renewed or upgraded for a total of \$260. Outgoing donations. The association paid out \$1700, \$1500 annual contribution to the Air Force Enlisted Village and \$200 in the memory of two departed AMTs (Carson Lobb and John Brown). As you see we had a lot more going out than coming in.

As in the past few years, it was decided by the AMTA board members to sup-

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AMTA PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As I look back on the year 2020 and try to think of any year in my lifetime as being worse or as some may say "more challenging", 2020 takes the prize. One of the worst things that happened is the Wuhan China Virus pandemic and the way both parties politicized it. I don't know if a politician ever stops to realize what they are doing to the everyday American with their off the wall decisions. Getting past the pandemic many have faced other challenges as we have had a total of seven AMTs pass away in 2020. Five of those were AMTA members. I know everyone has not faced these major setbacks and have gone through the year almost without any deviation from their normal life, but these instances are few and far between. While losing 7 friends and fellow AMTs is not a good thing, since the founding of the AMTA in June 2004 we have averaged five AMTs per year pass-

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



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ing away. Our only really good year was 2016 as only one passed away. We presently stand at 173 deceased AMTs that we know about. I don't care how healthy and strong we all appear to be our life can be taken from us very quickly and we need to realize this. Let's remember our friends that have passed away and keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

It is difficult for anyone to plan an AMTA reunion in the fall of 2021 as we do not know what to expect with the pandemic that seems to have reached another peak level just recently. Our plan is to have our 11th AMTA reunion in the fall of 2021, and it will be our 15th reunion overall. Information will be provided as the AMTA Reunion committee members, Mike McLaughlin and Don Weaver get more details in the future as to what will and will not be permitted.

With the passing of John Brown, we not only lost a great friend and fellow AMT, we lost a person that brought so much to the AMTA in the work he accomplished and the effort he always put forth in promoting and sharing the great things about the AMTA. We need someone as dedicated to the job as John was as he did great things for the AMTA.

Another sign that 2020 was not a great year is we only had one new member, but we did have six new members in 2019. We have more new memberships each odd numbered year when we have a reunion.

Let us hope that we do get to have a reunion in San Antonio this fall and we can get together with each other for another great time.

*David Leslie
President*

**WORDS FROM THE
VICE PRESIDENT**

This year has been different to say the least and I for one will be happy to see 2020 in the rear-view mirror. Sadly, we lost seven AMT's and friends this year of which three of them, George Gregg, Ed Tillmes and John Brown, were special to me. Although some of the younger members may not know them these are some of the people that helped mentor me as I progressed in my upgrade training. They will always have my respect and thanks for all they have done for the programs we supported. My sincere prayers go out to their families.

So, what are we facing in 2021? Hopefully the COVID vaccines will be successful and we can start getting back to normal life enjoying our family and friends again without having to worry about infecting someone or getting infected. Hopefully the political fighting in this country will end and we can return to the principles of our founding fathers, after all that is what we all served in the military to protect. Before I get up on my political soap box, I am going to end it here by saying to everyone have a Very Merry Christmas and Happy Prosperous New Year. God Bless You All.

*Tom Muggeo
Vice President*

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be reluctant to travel. Also, we are an aging group which continues to decrease reunion attendance. The 2019 reunion was the smallest since reunions started in 2004. Don Weaver has taken over as the lead for future San Antonio reunions and there is a contract in place with the Courtyard by Marriott where the 2017 reunion was held. The AMTA board of directors will be closely monitoring developments as we move into 2021. It is possible we will need to scale back the hotel contract commitments or in the worst case, cancel the contract before incurring a monetary penalty. I sincerely wish you all well and a better year ahead.

*Michael McLaughlin
Secretary*

If God had intended us to fly he would have made it easier to get to the airport.
Jonathan Winters

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

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port the "USO" as our annual Christmas charity. Our members came together and donated **\$1345.00** which was sent to the USO. The USO is definitely a worthy cause and by donating to the USO we are assisting our servicemen and women of the Armed Forces. Once again a heartwarming thank you to all of our members that were able to donate.

I hope everyone had a great and blessed Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas. Due to the COVID-19 virus we were not able to have an unofficial reunion for 2020. Hopefully we will be able to have our annual reunion in 2021. I encourage all of our AMTA members to try to join us. As always our reunions are a great place to reunite past friends and make new ones. The reunion will likely bring back many past memories for everyone. The stories that are told will bring laughs and some tears. The support of our entire membership is appreciated, thank you! I urge you to take time and remember your fellow AMTs and your loved ones, time is so precious and goes by so quickly. Please take care and stay safe. Have a great exciting 2021.

*Robert J. White
Treasurer*

There is no distinctly Native American criminal class, save Congress.
-- Mark Twain --

Freedom is the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.

George Orwell

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)

**REUNION 2021
INFORMATION**

Plans are already in motion for the AMTA 2021 Reunion in San Antonio, TX, Sept 22-25, 2021 at the *Courtyard by Marriott* on Hwy 151 across from SeaWorld, the site of the 2017 Reunion. Room rates are \$89 per night and a link to reserve a room will be posted on the **Airborne Maintenance & Inflight Maintenance Technicians (AMT/IMT/ASE) Group** FaceBook page after New Years. Look for the AMTA Reunion 2021EVENT and the link to the *Courtyard by Marriott* on the AMTA group page after Jan 1, 2021.

We are optimistic that any COVID-19 restrictions presently in place will either be eased or non-existent by summer 2021 due to the coming vaccines and we look forward to seeing everyone next September at the 2021 reunion. We will keep everyone posted on changes or news concerning the reunion through the AMTA page on FaceBook. The AMTA reunion usually runs at the same time as the Freedom Through Vigilance Association (FTVA) reunion so that AMTA reunion attendees can also attend FTVA golf tournament and memorial functions on Security Hill, However, we do not have confirmation of the FTVA reunion at this time and we will update the AMTA Group FaceBook page as events evolve. Also, please update your email address with the editor of the newsletter and President to ensure receiving all pertinent AMTA notifications.

*Don Weaver
Reunion 2021 Team*

'The most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the government and I'm here to help.'
-Ronald Reagan

**AMTA VSO
INFORMATION**

Congress enacted changes to the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) that will eventually eliminate the offset for surviving spouses who are also receiving Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The changes will take place in three phases. January 1, 2021 begins the first phase. In 2021, surviving spouse SBP annuity payments issued by DFAS will be reduced (offset) by no more than two-thirds of the amount of DIC (issued by the VA) rather than by the entire amount of DIC, even though eligible surviving spouses will continue to receive the full amount of DIC from the VA. Beginning January 1, 2022, the second phase, surviving spouse SBP annuity payments will be reduced (offset) by no more than one-third of the amount of DIC (issued by the VA) rather than by the entire amount of DIC, even though eligible surviving spouses will continue to receive the full amount of DIC from the Veterans Administration.. On January 1, 2023, the SBP-DIC offset will be fully eliminated. That means, beginning in 2023, SBP payments will no longer be offset by DIC. Spouses will receive full SBP (issued by DFAS) and full DIC.

*John Hurst
Veterans Service Officer*

OFFSPRING

Ah, children. A woman knows all about her children. She knows about dentist appointments and romances, best friends, favorite foods, secret fears and hopes and dreams.

A man is vaguely aware of some short people living in the house.

AMTA FaceBook Group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AMT.IMT.ASE/>

AMTA Website:
www.amtassociation.org

AMT PERSPECTIVE

May 1970 – Nov 1972 A two year span in a relatively normal life that I remember fondly as two and a half of the most exciting, meaningful and relevant years of my life. I was stationed at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa and had the privilege of flying routine missions on the RC 135M's in the comfort of the small room we shared with the SID's system. The experience was spiced up by TDY's to Cam Ranh Bay, Viet Nam to fly on the leaky C-130 hut birds (one known as the lead sled) and a few on the EC-121's out of Korat, Thailand. The memories of these times live large with me and I am sure in the memories of my "mature" fellow AMT's. For you younger AMT's here are some facts that you may find amazing: we

cleaned the heads of 4 track recorders with alcohol and the pinch rollers with rubber rejuvenator (meant to clean the roller paten on typewriters), We carried a stock of tubes for the RF pre-amps and multi-couplers as well as the first stage RF amplifier in the G175J receivers. Almost all the equipment was analog except the digital frequency counters which displayed the frequency using nixie tubes. I think it was 1971 we got our first digital communication device that operated in the HF spectrum at 50 baud or in good atmospherics we could step it up to 75 baud (Now I get aggravated when my Wi-Fi drops below 100MB). I hope every AMT collects and cherishes the memories of one of the most unique and special lives God allows on earth.

*Don Utt
AMT*

CHAPLAIN'S IMPORTANT WORDS

Greetings AMTA families. As the holidays have been anticlimactic to say the least, we find ourselves in a depressing time. Many of our friends and loved ones are preyed upon by the virus and with the resulting restrictions it can become easy to fall into a spiritual recession. Do not let that happen. Join me in mourning for the fallen ones and praying for those remaining. If you have loved ones in facilities where visitors are not allowed, contact them and arrange for virtual visits and/or emails, they can do it. We need to keep these people in our family circle, show them pictures of new babies and weddings.

Through God's grace and love we will endure despite viruses and politics. May his blessing be on you all.

*Frank Jordan
Chaplain*



The River Ride



The Hotel's Bistro