



the WIRE BENDER

Volume 15 Issue 2

July through December 2023

AMTA PRESIDENT'S WORDS OF WISDOM

What a difference something like COVID can do to our everyday lives. Everyone suffered during the lock-down including our organization, the AMTA. We have been unable to have a reunion since the last one in 2019 due to the mandated lock downs. This has not been good for the AMTA as we have had no opportunity to meet and support each other like we have in the past. We lost numerous AMTA members and AMTs during the four years between reunions. We are all dealing with getting older, but if the AMTA is to continue and be the strong organization it has been in the past we are going to have to step up and be actively supporting the AMTA. Age, illness and distance affect all AMTs when trying to attend a reunion. We have been discussing things to help sustain the AMTA membership, which means contacting and attracting younger AMTs to join the AMTA. Each and every AMTA board member must take an active role in making this happen. Continuously asking questions or contributing your two cents worth without doing something does not accomplish much. Every AMTA member should use their knowledge of who they know to help with the AMTA membership.

The USAF has changed things a lot since we originally had the Airborne Maintenance Technicians. We now have in-flight maintenance technicians, airborne flight engineers and some are still referred to as AMTs. Things are different since Security

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MARRIOTT SAN ANTONIO NORTHWEST—2023 AMTA REUNION

TREASURER'S FINANCIAL INPUT

Iwould like to thank everyone that attended the eleventh AMTA Reunion. Although this was one of the smallest reunions that we have had, it turned out quite well. We had a few members attend that had not been to a reunion for some time. During the week we all enjoyed the great fellowship with each other, a lot of stories and a few lies now and then. We even had a few stories from our golfers during the FTVA golf tournament, how everyone did and the maintenance team beating the operators. I believe everyone enjoyed the two entrée buffet dinner. After the dinner our guest speaker was Mr. Gabriel Marshall from the 16th Air Force History Office. His presentation was outstanding, focusing on the past and present Air Force mission and cyber security. Lastly we retired to the Hospitality Room to enjoy further fellowship with old and new friends. During the week bids for the silent auction items were

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SECRETARY'S LATEST

Iwill start this out on a positive note as some of us are getting a bit disturbed over the way things have turned for the AMTA. I do hope everyone has had a very nice *The AMTA Reunion October 18—20, 2023,* and Merry Christmas this year and I hope well attended it was the new 2024 brings everyone positive thinking and good fortune. You may ask, what is bothering some of us, quite simply, the future of the AMTA is in jeopardy. Membership continues to fall and reunion attendance has declined. We realize part of the reasons for this is age, health, financials etc, but that is only a very small part of the issue. We have recently (2019) had three board members (served on the board 14 & 15 years) to step aside to hopefully get the next generation to come forth and run for an AMTA Board position. These three left a huge hole in our AMTA experience level. We presently only have two board members that have been on the board for more than eight

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AIRBORNE MAINTENANCE TECHICIANS, 726 NAMES! WHERE ARE THEY???

189 DECEASED

Let's Locate
Others
To Help
Remember
THEM!

(President's Continued from page 1)

Service began, but the mission and the results are very much the same. Our pride has not changed in this new way of doing business as we know that we take pride in supporting the mission as we always have in the past. We stand on our history and look forward to the future.

I look forward to being your newly elected AMTA president and will do everything to the best of my ability to ensure the AMTA continues to be a strong organization for years to come. I will be seeking help from many of you to ensure that I succeed and the AMTA succeeds. I am new at the job but have no intentions of failing so please be ready to help me when I ask. Thank you, God bless you and I hope you had a Merry Christmas.

*Jim Morton
AMTA President*

*There are men running governments who
shouldn't be allowed to play with matches.*

Will Rogers



Airborne Maintenance Technician Association

288 Stone Trail
CASTROVILLE, TEXAS 78009

AMTA VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

Just some friendly advice from the AMTA Veterans Service Officer (VSO). We have been experiencing some serious cost of living increases this last couple of years and does not seem to be getting any better, any time soon. I strongly recommend, any of us that have a service-connected disability, that may have gotten worse over the years, get it reevaluated. You could possibly receive an increase in tax free income. You can do this a couple of different ways. One is by either providing documentation from a non-VA source, such as a family doctor, or by requesting a reevaluation by the VA facility near you. If you have held a rating for 10 or more years, that rating can not be reduced if you request a reevaluation and the condition hasn't gotten worse. If your disability ratings are related to Agent Orange exposure in Southeast Asia, please check on Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) benefits. Another recommended suggestion is for all veterans that are not currently enrolled in VA Healthcare, many changes are likely to take place as far as the availability of access to the future use of this important benefit. If you are eligible and haven't enrolled, 2024 is the time to take action. Do this in lieu of thinking you may never need this care in the future. You may never need it, but it is better to have it and not need it rather than to need it and not have it.

*John Hurst
AMTA VSO*

I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts. *Will Rogers*

AMTA CHAPLAIN'S THOUGHTS

As the holidays approach it would seem we should be very happy but with everything going on it is very difficult to be happy. I won't get into politics or social issues, I'm sure you are aware of these and how bad they can be at times. What I can tell you is that God loves all of us and will never let you down if you have faith in him. Enjoy your time with the family and have a happy holiday and a Merry Christmas.

I really enjoyed the last reunion and all the people who attended. I'm looking forward to many more. I hope to see you soon and don't forget to call a friend and chat, it can be so rewarding.

*Frank Jordan,
AMTA Chaplain*

The glory of life is to LOVE not be loved; to GIVE not to get; to SERVE not to be served.

As we discuss the future of the AMTA I find it disturbing that we continue to talk and nothing happens. This is not the way to get things done. Someone needs to act in order to get someone else to react. The new AMTA board has been in place for about three months and so far nothing has happened. Why? We still have a newsletter that has no editor and the only inputs have been brilliant questions such as "Do we really need a newsletter?" No one has said they would like to be the editor of the AMTA Newsletter. No new memberships, as matter of fact **nothing**..... We have board members that are classic with their inputs, It is like I do not want to do anything, and as I said NOTHING HAPPENS!!

*Johnnie Estes
Retired Board Member*

Success has many fathers, while failure is a lonely orphan.

Author: Unknown



the WIREBENDER Staff:

Editor: Mike McLaughlin
Publisher: Mike McLaughlin

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

(Treasurer Continued from page 1)

on going. But as always the final bids went down to the last second. Someone was always trying to outbid the last person! Overall the reunion was a complete success. I'm truly sorry for all of the members that were unable to attend, we missed your companionship, stories/lies and hope you're able to attend our next reunion.

Recap of our financial status for 2023. Memberships; we had 5 life time memberships and 3 three year renewals. We had thirteen donations from our members. After everything was posted, cleared and paid out we ended up with a positive balance for the 2023 Reunion. Due to our member's donations and having a reunion that ended up with a positive balance, our overall AMTA financial status remains healthy. Thanks to everyone for their continued support and dedication. Once again the AMTA board members decided to support our "USO" this Christmas. Thanks to everyone that donated to the USO. Total collected for the USO Christmas donation will be in the next newsletter. The USO is a charitable organization that provides resources and services to help service members and their families in various situations, such as deployment, transition, or crisis. Our support helps the USO to further their mission to strengthen America's military service members by keeping them connected to family, home and country, throughout their service to the nation.

This past reunion was Oct 2023 and the one before that was Oct 2019. Due to COVID-19 it took us four years to finally get together. I hope this is not too early to think about the next reunion. We're all are getting older, having health issues and traveling is not as easy as it once was. Time is passing quickly, we are losing more and more friends as time goes on. I trust and pray that we can once again join together soon for memorable fellowship. The board members are grateful for the constant support of our entire membership, thank you! Without you this organization would not exist. If anyone has any constructive ideas on how to build up our membership, increase the interest in our organization or any other topic, please let the board members know. I hope everyone had a blessed Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas. As always thank you, take care and be safe!

*Robert J. White
AMTA Treasurer*

*What do you call advice from a cow?
Beef Tips.*

WORDS FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Hello everyone, if you attended the reunion in October I think you will agree that we had a great time with lots of terrific stories and tons of laughter! BIG news is the AMTs won the FTVA golf tournament for the first time ever! Steve Bland, Mike Cohen, Ray Scott and I had a blast beating the OPS!!! If you were unable to attend, I would highly encourage you to consider attending the next one. We are NOT getting any younger and it's a fantastic experience in reconnecting. Remember you do not have to be a member of the AMTA to attend a reunion. You have the same privileges as an AMTA member other than you cannot attend the General Membership Meeting and you cannot vote on AMTA business, otherwise you are the same as a member. You can invite as many as five guests to any AMTA reunion as a non-member.

As a past AMT on RC-135s Rivet Joint (M model and Block III) from the early 80s and on EC-130s Compass Call, I really enjoyed my time in the USAF and am honored to have been an AMT. I had the opportunity to meet and work with some fantastic people and create many lifelong friends. As the AMTA Membership Chairman, I hope to hear from many of my old Air Force AMT friends with questions about the Airborne Maintenance Technician Association. Earl Sifford, esifford@centuryskate.com, is the Co-Chairman for the AMTA membership, and he is also the person that has taken over the AMTA FaceBook group.

As a new Board member and the AMTA Membership Chairman, I will be working with other Board members and fellow AMTs to recruit new members in our effort to ensure the longevity of the AMTA as a strong and solid organization for the airborne maintenance technicians in the

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AMTA Board of Directors:

Jim Morton - President, Director
Gene Dudley - Vice-President, Director
Mike McLaughlin - Secretary, Director
Robert White - Treasurer, Director
Larry Meade - Director
Tom Muggeo - Director
David Leslie - Director
Johnnie Estes - Director (Permanent)
Mervin Gross - Director (Permanent)
Jim Hargrove - Director (Permanent)
Bill Wilson - Director (Permanent)
OPEN— Newsletter Temporary

(Secretary Continued from page 1)

years. The AMTA Secretary and AMTA Treasurer. We have two new board members starting in 2023. New board members have some learning to do in order to pick up small tasks that need to be done. The new AMTA president is a standup guy and is willing to work with anyone to get the job done. He refuses to fail at his new job. The AMTA desperately needs an AMTA Membership Chairman. We presently have a co-chairman, but so far no chairman, hopefully someone will take that position when asked to do so by the AMTA President. Another extremely simple task that needs to be done is an editor for the AMTA Newsletter (the WireBender). We have AMTA board members that can do this small task and we are lucky enough to have an AMTA member that is quite proficient in the newsletter business, and willing to help anyone learn. The AMTA President is aware of this need and will be asking someone to pick up this simple task.

The AMT arena most of us are familiar with has essentially faded into history. The lineage of AMT membership is about seventy-five years young. About 52% (76) of the AMTA members are 80 years of age or more. 34 of the AMTA members are between 75 and 79 years of age. That only leaves the AMTA with 33 members less than 75 years of age. Even the youngest of us are now in their sixties. We have four members that are 90 or more. We have one AMTA member under 60 years of age. I ask every AMTA member to participate to the degree they can do so comfortably. We have far more AMTs out there that are not members, than we have as members and I would also solicit efforts to contact them about the AMTA. Tell them about the reunions and they DO NOT have to be an AMTA member to come to the reunion with five guests. We have had many non-members to attend an AMTA reunion and join the AMTA while attending. If the AMTA Membership chairman asks for your help, do not refuse the request, as the chairman cannot do the job alone.

I believe we have airborne platforms where the flight crew still includes a maintenance technician of whatever discipline, such as Compass Call. Though these entities may be small and dispersed, they should not be overlooked. If you have information about them or contact with them, please make it known, regardless of your position. It is common knowledge that many recon platforms are built by L-3 Com and L3/Harris. Does anyone have insight on these platforms? We have seventeen members between the ages of 60 and 65. That is almost two generations

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VICE-PRESIDENT

(Vice-President Continued from page 3)

future. We need every AMT to assist us with this effort. I will be the focal point for this effort. One of the best ways to become familiar with the AMTA is by attending a reunion, either formal (every odd numbered year) or informal, when planned during an even numbered year. The strategy for this to work is for everyone making phone calls and connecting with old friends and sharing the benefits and joy of the AMTA. Please connect with us through the AMT website, www.amtassociation.org and the AMTA FaceBook, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AMT.IMT/> If you have any questions or I can assist you in getting involved, please contact me, 205.837.4009 or email BLUJAG-MAN@yahoo.com. Thanks and let's get busy as we can do this.

*Gene Dudley
AMTA Vice-President
AMTA Membership Chairman*



The hotel staff provided anything we needed. The hotel was nice and the breakfast was great as we enjoyed eating together

If you don't know where you are going any road will take you there.....

Will Rogers

When words become weapons, our relationships soon become casualties.

What we let into our minds shapes the heart of our soul

Encouraging words bring hope to the human spirit.

To avoid mistakes of youth, draw from the wisdom of age

Time management is NOT about clock-watching, it is about making the most of the time we have.

GUEST SPEAKER 2023



Our guest speaker for the October 2023 AMTA reunion in San Antonio was Gabriel Marshall with the 16th AF History Office. His presentation was extremely enlightening and very informative. Everyone seem to enjoy his presentation.

Gabriel Marshall was the guest speaker for the 2015 AMTA Reunion. This speaks highly of his desire to support the AMTA and the fact we appreciate him as a guest speaker at our reunions. Here is a run down of the AMTA guest speakers in the past:

- 2004—Speakers were retired AMTs
- 2005—General Doyle E. Larson
- 2006—First AMTA President, Bob Miller
- 2007—Mr. Neal Cooper
- 2008—1st year with no reunion
- 2009—Colonel Bob Cope
- 2010—2nd year with no reunion
- 2011—General Charles Bishop
- 2013—Lt Colonel Carl Washburn
- 2015—Gabriel Marshall
- 2017—General Grover Jackson
- 2019—Major Nancy Larson (Gen Larson's daughter)
- 2021—No reunion due to pandemic

*Gege Whiz Info
Mike McLaughlin
Temporary editor WireBender*



*Mike, Leigh, Jim, Pat, Jim & David
Larry and Dan sitting in the back.*

AMTA SECRETARY

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behind many of us older guys.

I do not want the AMTA to become a "once was". This is not going to just happen. It is going to take a lot of effort, but we have a strong and some young AMTs on the current AMTA board of directors, and we know they are willing to work the issues and ensure the longevity of the Airborne Maintenance Technician Association. Any suggestions on appropriate efforts to consider are welcome. Is the scope of AMTA membership too narrowly focused? We have the people and the tools to ensure the AMTA is around for years to come, and all we have to do is apply ourselves, so when the AMTA President approaches you do not turn your back on him as he is only one person. Let's do this. Thank you and God bless each and everyone of you.

*Mike McLaughlin
AMTA Secretary*

Just for the fun of it

Puzzle that you probably do not know..

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C B E A F T O M T U R K E Y D S E
F E T G L H K M O W I L L I E P T
I A O A I J L N R S B U Y X I U V
P C T Z C W N A D G E E B H F D C
Q K O J K K E K L M E N Q S Y S O
P B R T A I B A B E T W A U B M D
V E X Z S A C E E G H N L J H C F
I K M S I O Q S U W O X V T R K P
Y E A A L S H A M U V C Z G E E B
D L F H V J L N P R E O Q M I N K
T S B L E D H P E Z N I Q E C Z O
E I J F R N V R I Y M K G S P I A
V E R I N T I N T I N N G I S E R
L R B Q P A B R E M X F O C Q W E
E E A V L T I C P M R E D N R S H
V P C R K G J C W H E A U A V Q I
Z P U D G M X L B E N J I R T S F
C I T E Z Y K D I G B Z U F O I P
Y L R B L A C K B E A U T Y G R N
B F Y E K O M S U F C Y W V M R H
X W S D O N J A R N O L D T I O L
O L D Y E L L E R E D X U K S M J
    
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|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Lassie | 14. Flicka |
| 2. Rin Tin Tin | 15. Black Beauty |
| 3. Ben | 16. Elsie |
| 4. Flipper | 17. Spuds McKenzie |
| 5. Trigger | 18. Willie |
| 6. Silver | 19. Shamu |
| 7. Petie | 20. Toto |
| 8. Benji | 21. Morris |
| 9. Mr. Ed | 22. Clyde |
| 10. Francis | 23. Smokey |
| 11. Arnold | 24. Old Yeller |
| 12. Beethoven | 25. Velvet |
| 13. Babe | 26. Tom Turkey |

No, we do not provide the answers. Sorry!