



# the WIRE BENDER

Volume 11 Issue 1

January though June 2019



The Hilton San Antonio Airport once again welcomes the AMTA to enjoy its hospitality.



Hilton San Antonio Airport Guest Room

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## AMTA PRESIDENT'S CORNER

**T**his year is flying by, we are almost to the end of May 2019 and our 2019 AMTA Reunion is only about four and a half months away. It is time to start making your travel plans and reserving your hotel room and your spot at the AMTA dinner. The 2019 Reunion will be at the Hilton at the Airport in San Antonio. Everything is a bit more expensive this year because Mike McLaughlin was thrown a curve ball. The FTVA usually has their reunion the last week in September, but the Lackland Officer's club was booked for a wedding reception during that time so that had to change the date to a week later, as that is where the FTVA has their banquet. Mike al-

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## SECRETARY'S LATEST

**I**n my last article, I related that there was a problem with the FTVA and AMTA reunion dates not being in the same week. I went back into hotel search mode and finally found an alternate location and canceled the contract the AMTA had with Courtyard. The AMTA 2019 reunion will be held at the Airport Hilton on loop 410. Some of you may remember that our 2009 and 2011 reunions were there. Bottom line room/breakfast cost for attendees is comparable to what we would have had at the Courtyard. The room rate is \$105 which includes buffet breakfast for up to two per room. I implore everyone to take advantage of the breakfast. We will have two adjoining meeting rooms

*(Secretary Continued on page 2)*

## AIRBORNE MAINTENANCE TECHICIANS, 951 NAMES! WHERE ARE THEY???



### TREASURER'S FINANCIAL INPUT

**H**ello colleagues, so far it's been a slow and quiet 2019. Since the first of January we've had one Lifetime membership, one 3 year and one 1 year renewal. Recruiting new members into the AMTA is very important! And please help us locate old flying buddies that could become members of the AMTA.

So far this year we've have one incoming donation and no other miscellaneous income. To date, the association has made one donation this year. The AMTA's primary financial commitment remains the Enlisted Widows Home in Shalimar, Florida, which we as an organization are dedicated to each year as long as funds permit. In June 2019 the AMTA was in the position to meet our present financial commitment to donate \$1,000 to the Air Force Enlisted Village.

Plans for the 2019 reunion are already made. The reunion will be held at the Airport Hilton, San Antonio TX., 2-4 Oct 2019. All information on the reunion can be found on the AMTA home page (<http://www.amtassociation.org/>). I urge all members and their friends to plan and register early to attend the reunion. Some of the same old war stories will be told over and over with greater details and the truth stretched. It's a great place to get together with

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on the second floor for our hospitality area. As always, we will be able to bring in our own snacks and beer/wine to the hospitality area. Please make your hotel and reunion dinner reservations as soon as possible. I will be sending out emails over the next months to elicit as many attendees as I can, hopefully I will see many new faces.

The new AMTA T-Shirt design is nearly ready. As soon as I have it along with pricing information, I will get order forms out to all AMTs that I have an email address. If attending the reunion, you will be able to pick up shirts when you arrive. For those not attending, T-Shirts will be mailed. I do not expect to do another shirt design for some years, so I will be ordering enough to have some in the AMTA inventory. I wish everyone a safe summer and looking forward to seeing many of you in October

**Michael McLaughlin**  
Secretary



### Airborne Maintenance Technician

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## AMTA VSO INFORMATION

### Free Access Pass for US National Parks

**S**pring flowers are blooming, the summer travel season quickly approaches and Veterans are joining the 330-million yearly visitors enjoying U.S. National Parks.

AMT's/ASE's, with a service connected disability rating of 10% or higher, are entering Federal parks for free with the Lifetime National Parks Access Pass from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Good for entry into 400+ National Parks and over 2,000 recreation sites across the country, the Lifetime Access Pass is another way a grateful nation says thank you for the service and sacrifices of Veterans with disabilities.

The Access Pass admits disabled Veterans and any passengers in their vehicle (non-commercial) at per-vehicle fee areas; and, the pass owner plus three additional adults where per-person fees are charged. In addition to free entry at participating parks, the Access Pass includes discounts on expanded amenity fees; such as camping, swimming, boat launching and guided tours. There are two ways to apply.

First, disabled Veterans can apply in person at a participating federal recreation site. Simply present photo identification (Driver's license, State ID, Passport) and documentation proving a permanent disability (VA awards letter, VA ID with service connected annotation, VA sum-

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### **AMTA Board of Directors:**

Johnnie Estes - President, Director  
Mervin Gross - Vice-Pres, Dir, Newsletter  
Mike McLaughlin - Secretary, Director  
Robert White - Treasurer, Director  
Jim Hargrove - Director  
Joe Jesty - Director  
Larry Meade - Director  
Bill Wilson - Director (Permanent)

*(President Continued from page 1)*

ready had a great deal negotiated with the Courtyard by Marriott (2017 reunion location), but had to cancel as the hotel was not available the following week. The two choices we had would be to have the AMTA reunion a week before the FTVA which was not practical as many of us enjoy the FTVA Golf Tournament, picnic and the Hall of Honor. With that said Mike started all over trying to find a place at a reasonable price, and due to the short amount of time for planning he had to settle for The Hilton at the Airport. We have to give Mike a lot of credit as he never quits even when he has a giant obstacle in front of him. Something that is getting more and more prevalent everyday is the fact we and I do mean WE are getting older and definitely slowing down a lot. Many AMTA members are no longer attending reunions because of health reasons and it is impossible for them to travel. I missed my first reunion last September due to having health issues, and even making a short trip (230 miles) to the 2019 AMTA reunion will take longer because of stopping and walking around. AMTA members that are missing reunions are strong supporters of the AMTA and very dedicated to ensuring the success of the Association, but none the less they cannot travel. We need to remember we must support all of our fellow AMTs in any way we can. Always keep everyone in your thoughts and prayers. We are going to have three very new board members on the board at the 2019 AMTA reunion. We only have one incumbent running and that is Bob White. Be sure to thank the younger candidates for running as it is much appreciated. David Leslie, Don Weaver, Rick Sluder, Bob Romero and Tom Muggio. Also don't forget about Whitey Gross and Jim Hargrove who have served on the board and done a great job for many years. See you in October!!

**Johnnie Estes  
President**

*(Treasurer Continued from page 2)*

both old and new friends. If you have any ideas that might enhance the reunion please let one of the board members know in advance. Thanks once again for everyone's great support. Without each of you we would not have this association. No official tours are planned for the reunion. However below are a couple of attractions that might interest you!

- \*San Antonio Missions National Historical Park is well worth your time, either by foot or by vehicle. San Antonio is well known as the home of the Alamo, this Texas landmark is one of five historic missions in the area. All five missions are connected along the San Antonio River by a hike and bike trail.
- \*SeaWorld San Antonio is a 250-acre marine mammal park, oceanarium and animal theme park, in the Westover Hills District of San Antonio, Texas, on the city's west side.
- \*Six Flags Fiesta Texas, formerly Fiesta Texas, is a theme park located in La Cantera, San Antonio, Texas on the city's north side.
- \*Texas Hill Country Wineries consists of over 50 wineries in the Texas Hill Country located north of San Antonio and is known for its unique and high quality wines.

Hoping to see everyone in October at the 2019 Reunion. Have a safe trip and God bless each of you, our military and our great country.

**Robert J. White  
Treasurer**



Outdoor Pool & Whirlpool

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many of benefits, or receipt of Social Security disability income). That's It. The Pass is free and issued at the time of entry. Second, if applying by mail, send a completed packet and \$10 processing fee to the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The packet should include:

- \*The Access Pass application form
- \*Proof of residency
- \*VA disability award letter, VA summary of benefits, or proof of SSDI income

Pass delivery expected 10-12 weeks after receipt. Make sure to have photo ID available when using your Lifetime Access Pass and enjoy the majestic scenery and abundant recreational opportunities our National Parks provide.

**John L. Hurst,  
Veterans Service Officer**

## A WORD FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

**A**fter golf one day a friend of mine was telling me about spending a week at a very nice resort for \$349. My ears perked up. I, of course, immediately asked just how he did that. Not a problem he said, through the "Armed Forces Vacation Club." Lo and behold, he was correct! Take a look at <https://www.afvclub.com> and see for yourself. All current active duty and retired members of the U.S. military, National Guard, Reserves (all branches), Coast Guard, civilian employees of DOD, Gold Star families and immediate families of the above are eligible. For veterans (not a full retirement) there is a Vet-

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**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](http://www.amtassociation.org)

## AMTA'S FACEBOOK GROUP LOSS OF AN AMT

### Loss Notification Process

**T**his year has been pretty rough for many of us. We have lost friends, people we know, and family. Some lost to accidents and some due to illness or aging. We know that our life here on Earth is temporary at best.

The losses we have had create problems for those left behind. Usually when a friend or someone we know or a family member passes only a few people know about it.

When someone passes away those within the Airborne Maintenance Technician Association (AMTA) would like to know about it for various reasons. The deceased may be an AMTA member. Secondly even if they are not an AMTA member most likely they are dear to someone associated with the AMTA, which makes them part of the AMTA family and special to all of us within the AMTA. Many people wish to remain private during a time of loss, and that must be respected in every situation. We post nothing on the AMTA website or the AMTA FaceBook group about someone's loss of a dear friend or relative unless the family requests it. Our biggest problem over the past few years is someone will pass away and no one other than the immediate family is aware of the loss. If we do not know within the AMTA we continue searching for the person. It becomes rather embarrassing when you continue to search for someone only to find out they passed away two years ago, six months ago or whatever. In addition to being embarrassing it leaves a very sad an empty feeling within the AMTA especially if it was an AMTA member or an AMTA family member.

Some suggestions that may prevent this from happening so often: First contact the AMTA Board of Directors, a link is in the left border on every page of the AMTA website to email the Board of Directors. This will ensure the membership records and information are corrected. The Board of Directors will share applicable dates and locations of anything concerning the deceased. The Board shares this information with the AMTA membership. If the family does not want anything shared with anyone including the AMTA membership it will not be shared. Everything posted on the AMTA FaceBook group is placed there for public viewing. Even though the AMTA Group is closed it does not prevent others from sharing information that is posted on the group.

Another person that can be contacted is the AMTA FaceBook Group moderator as he will act and treat everything in the same manner as the AMTA Board.

AMTA membership is located all over the World, and we care about each other and would like to know when a friend or family member passes away. This is because we care. Bottom line.....Please inform someone within the AMTA when an AMT or friend or family member passes so that we may show our respect for them.

**John Brown**  
**FaceBook Group**

Politicians are the same all over. They promise to build a bridge even where there is no river.

-Nikita Khrushchev

## CHAPLAIN'S IMPORTANT WORDS

**G**reetings to all. In these changing times it is hard to keep up with what is politically correct or socially proper. The one thing that is off limits to the politicians, media and all the strange people trying to manage our lives for us is your personal conversation with God in prayer. They are trying to take God out of the schools, government and many other places; the only reason they haven't targeted the Lord's Prayer is the word God isn't in it but they still want to limit when and where you can say it. , you can close your eyes and pray as often as you wish so do it as often as you can, the country needs us right now more than ever. In your prayers remember those both present and those departed, they are friends and loved ones forever. I look forward to seeing everyone at our next reunion.

**Frank Jordan**  
**Chaplain**

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erans Holiday site, <https://www.veteransholidays.com>. I think these are sites worth looking at. Another great place to visit is not a web site but, the 2019 AMTA reunion in October. As Dracula would put it, there's new blood in the association. If you want a great time come out and join us over a few beers and maybe, a Bloody Mary or two. Looking forward to see the old and the new at this years get together.

**Mervin "Whitey" Gross**  
**Vice President**

If incompetence was sold as hamburgers, there would be golden arches over every government building.

Brutus P. Thornapple