



the WIRE BENDER

Volume 8 Issue 1

January through June 2016



Best Western Plus Hotel & Suites, Tucson, Arizona

FROM THE AMTA PRESIDENT

We only have a little over five months until the AMTA Informal Reunion in Tucson, Arizona. Joe Jesty is the ramrod on this reunion with the help of Tom Anderson and Scott Kleinhesselink. Joe is doing a great job pulling everything together. He has made a decision on a hotel close to the airport and at a great price. Based on Joe's latest input we would need a reunion of about two weeks to see everything that is available and of

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FROM THE AMTA SECRETARY

If you haven't already made your plans for the 2016 AMTA Reunion in Tucson—it is time to get started. Joe Jesty has been working diligently to nail down a good location and negotiate favorable room rates. Informal reunions are certainly a good chance to visit a place you have never been or haven't been to in a long time. Just a relaxing three days with no meetings leaving plenty of time to visit and go sightseeing. Personally, I haven't been to Tucson since late 1974 when I was there for some training prior to my free trip to NKP provided by the Air Force. I did not get a chance to visit the "Boneyard", but intend to during this reunion. Also, I believe Joe is working on a possible tour. I also hope to visit with our granddaughter who is in the Air Force and stationed at Tucson. She has been TDY to the sandbox a couple of times, returning from her

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FROM THE AMTA VICE PRESIDENT

Joe Jesty, our host for the Informal Reunion, has passed along the following information concerning the reunion.. It has been edited for content and space.

"The dates for our Informal Reunion are October 19th through October 22nd. The committee has been negotiating with the hotels and has selected the Best Western Plus - Tucson International Airport Inn and Suites. They have quoted us a very favorable price on rooms and amenities.

A Single King or Double Queen is \$70.00/ \$80.44 with Tax.

A Suite is \$85.00 / \$97.24 with Tax.

Breakfast is included. We will have a very nice, comfortable hospitality room with a memorabilia table. If you have anything that other members may be interested in seeing, please bring it.

The hotel shuttle will pick up and drop off at the airport and anyplace within five miles of the hotel. Several restaurants and a casino are within that five

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interest in Tucson. I have put some information on the AMTA website that may be helpful and will add additional information as Joe provides it. As I have said before the most fun reunions are the informal ones. We do not have any meetings, no voting and above all no agenda. Now Joe will be setting up a few things of interest in Tucson as a bit of planning must go into group tours and gatherings. I believe we will be having a meal together Thursday evening the 20th. As soon as Joe gets the hotel contract completed and has it set for us to sign up and reserve our rooms do it quickly as this makes Joe's job much easier. I believe he has 30 rooms blocked for a reduced price and getting more rooms later can become difficult, so don't put things off. We still would like to have a small golf outing but so far not enough people have said they will play. More on this as the date grows closer. We have posted no pictures on the website at this time for the 2015 AMTA reunion, mostly because many pictures have been placed on the AMTA Facebook Group. We have some pictures from Bob White, Tom Joines and Hank Gebbia, which I have added. Pat Riley was good enough to put his pictures on a flash drive at the reunion and give to me but in my infinite wisdom I have misplaced it, but Pat will get the pictures to me, and when he does I will add them to the website. You can see pictures from current reunion webpage or the 2015 reunion webpage. Start thinking about the 2017 AMTA Reunion in San Antonio as we will be electing three new board members. We need some younger people to run for a board position and when I say younger this is 50s and 60s, because many of us are in our 70s and a few are in their 80s. We have got some younger members now that are sharp and I believe could take the AMTA to a whole new level. I plan to contact some of them and I am sure Mike McLaughlin and some of the other board members have some ideas about the younger generation of AMTs, ASEs and IMTs. We will

sending out ballots to the AMTA membership about a year from now so give it some thought. Hope many are making plans to go to Tucson in October as it would be great to see everyone again. It is nice that each reunion I see many of the regulars but also we invariably get to see new faces. Thanks for the great AMTA membership that makes our Association such a nice and strong organization.

*Johnnie Estes
President*

FROM THE AMTA VSO

This issue I want to remind those veterans with VA service-connected disability rating conditions that worsen over the years that you can request the VA reevaluate any or all of those conditions for possible increase in rating. However, don't request a reevaluation if your disability has improved as the VA can propose to reduce a rating if they find that the condition has improved unless you've had the rating for 10 or more years then VA is not allowed to reduce the rating. Remember, zero is a rating that just wasn't severe enough to award a percentage that provides compensation. It is not unusual for those originally zero present rated condition to worsen. When I left the service I had a zero present rating for a knee injury, today that knee is rated at 30%. All the VA needs is your request saying "I request I be scheduled for reevaluation of my service-connected _____ condition. This condition has greatly worsened". You can get assistance from any County or Post service officer in your area.

*John Hurst
Veteran's Service Officer*

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last trip a couple months ago. I will bring some of the AMTA memorabilia with me (small stuff) as there may be attendees that have not had the opportunity to purchase items in the past. I strongly solicit your attendance at the reunion and wish safe travel for all.

*Mike McLaughlin
Secretary*

FROM THE AMTA TREASURER

Our organizational financial budget is sound and doing well as expected. Since the first of 2016 we have received three renewal memberships and one personal donation.

I believe in part the decline in renewal memberships are due to members becoming "Life" members. This is not bad, however we cannot expect our assets to maintain at the same level each year. We have day to day operational cost; hosting web services, donations, reimbursements for services and other items that come up throughout the year. As stated in the past, our overall finances are starting to trickle gradually.

Recruiting new members into the AMTA is vital, we need additional AMTs to continue/carry forth what the AMTA has developed to be! Thanks to Tom Joines and others for continually looking for and locating past AMTs. As members of this organization each of us has a responsibility in locating and contacting past AMTs.

This being a non-official reunion year, individual donations are slow

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**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???**



**FROM THE AMTA
CHAPLAIN**

I apologize for not getting closer to the members of the AMTA in my duties of Chaplain; Randy Holt is doing a great job as assistant Chaplain. Feel free to contact me at 503-398-5400 or fjordan603@gmail.com. I just returned from five weeks in New Orleans and had to leave an 8lb 8.4oz new Granddaughter born on May 13th. We drove to New Orleans, 6,000 miles round trip and on the return trip stopped to see Delano and Sharon Jolly; Del is in an assisted living place in Carlisle Arkansas. The day we were there he was as spry as could be and Sharon checked him out for the night and took him home. We had a great visit that night and had breakfast with them, Del's appetite has not gotten any smaller. On a sadder note, it seems we are besieged by ailments due to our military service; I have written two Buddy Letters recently for VA claims. I am thankful we have John to assist and advise us. Today we need to thank God for what we have and what he has promised us and rely on him for comfort and aid. We, as AMTA members, need to draw closer, share our blessings with each other and comfort each other in these times of adversity. I hope to see all of you at future reunions both official and unofficial.

*Frank Jordan
Chaplain*

"Keep your face always toward the sunshine and the shadows will fall behind you"

- Walt Whitman

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
- Larry Meade - Director
- Bill Wilson - Director (Permanent)
- Del Jolly - Director (Permanent)

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mile range. The pool and hot tub are welcoming, so bring your suits. We are also considering a Catered Mexican Buffet for dinner on the 21st.

Tucson has more to see and do than we will have time for. Near the hotel is the Pima Air and Space Museum. They have many indoor and outdoor exhibits. A tram is available to move between the exhibits and they offer a tram tour of the Davis Monthan AFB infamous "Boneyard." Their website is <http://www.pimaair.org/> Also nearby, is a Titan Missile Museum. They give a very good briefing on the Titan missile program and a tour of the actual control center and missile silo. They even have a Titan missile in the silo. Visit their website at <http://www.titanmissilemuseum.org/>

The Arizona Sonora Desert Museum is a must-see if you have the time when in this area. Check out the website at <http://desertmuseum.org/> You can also tour the oldest Franciscan Mission in Arizona. It has been mostly restored to its original condition over several years by artisans from Europe. Visit their website at <http://www.sanxaviermission.org/> Karchner Caverns is about 35 miles away and has recently been named the Best Caverns in the US. It is a little pricy and reservations are required, but it is worth it. They have a website too. <http://azstateparks.com/Parks/KACA/index.html> We are also looking into a briefing on the mission of

Davis Monthan AFB, and possibly an aircraft tour.

More information on making room reservations, etc. will be forthcoming in the next couple of weeks. We hope to see as many AMTs, IMTs, ASES, etc. as possible in Tucson this October."

Go to the AMTA Facebook to keep up with Joe's input on the reunion.

*Mervin "Whitey" Gross
Vice President*

"We must be ready to dare all for our country. For history does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid."

- Dwight D. Eisenhower



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

AMTA Website:
www.amtassociation.org

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coming in. Please contact any of the board members if you have any views on how we can come up with making revenue for the association. Hopefully we will see an increase in personal donations by years end.

As a non-profit organization the AMTA charter designated the Air Force Enlisted Village Home as our primary donation each year. In May 2016 our present funding allowed the AMTA to donate \$1000 once again to the Air Force Enlisted Village Home in Shalimar, Florida, (www.afenlistedwidows.org). We may not always be able to afford this amount, but will always attempt to donate \$500 which as an organization are dedicated to each year as long as resources permit.

It appears that in just a few months we will have an unofficial reunion in Tucson, AZ, 19-22 Oct 16. Joe Jesty and others are busy setting all the arrangements. Details should be coming out soon on our web site. I recommend everyone to plan early and join us in Tucson. It appears that there will be lots to do and many friends to visit with. Again I'm very grateful for the continuous support of our entire membership, thank you! See you at the Tucson reunion.

*Robert J. White
Treasurer*



Play Room



Pool



Lower Lobby



How did that picture of Jennie and Whitey in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico get in here!?



Patio