



the WIRE BENDER

Volume 1 Issue 1

January through July 2009

2009 AMTA REUNION SAN ANTONIO AIRPORT HILTON HOTEL



The Hilton at the Airport, 611 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78216 home of the 2009 AMTA Reunion

I'LL SEE YOU THERE...

Welcome everyone, to the 2009 AMTA Reunion. At this time, the Reunion Committee has things in pretty good order and I am looking forward to not just a good reunion, but a great reunion. Those of you that have already signed up I commend you. Those who are reflecting on whether or not to attend, I wholeheart-

edly encourage you to do so. I have no doubt in my mind that you will enjoy the reunion and have a really great time. Those that have missed the first one or two are adamant that they will not miss another one. It is amazing what seeing old friends and fellow AMTs from the past is like. Some you may have seen recently or ones you have not seen in years but everyone of them can have a lasting affect on you. Please join us in fellowship September 23, 24 and 25 for a really great time!



Men! This could be a Dangerous Room!

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On another note, you will notice that with this edition of your newsletter, we have changed the name to "the WIRE-BENDER." We just felt the newsletter name needed to identify more with our unique organization and talents.

*Whitey Gross
Newsletter Editor*



Texas Ballroom—for AMTA Banquet

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



**FROM THE AMTA VICE
PRESIDENT...**

Recently, I was asked by the people at L3 Communication in Greenville, Texas, to assist in recovering the history of the RB-50 program. I agreed to help them, but the big portion of the information lies with our older AMTs. The L3 Com representative is Mr. Nicolas Byrd. I suggested to him that he attend the FTVA and AMTA reunions in San Antonio in September where he could meet the mainstay of maintenance and operational personnel that may have information regarding the RB-50 program. To that end, I ask that anyone with information concerning this program meet with Mr. Byrd and pass on any such information.

I am looking forward to, I am sure, the most successful AMTA reunion to date. I have enjoyed serving on the Board of Directors during the time of organizing and the building of the AMTA. It was a challenge however, from the original group of seven until the present Board of Directors. It was fun and hard work at the same time. I would like to express my thanks to Bob Miller, John Hurst, Vern Stump, the late John Shaffer and too all of the Present BOD members. I also wish to thank the newly elected BOD members for stepping up and taking a roll in the leadership of the AMTA.

*Delano Jolly
AMTA Vice President*



- AMTA Board of Directors:**
- Johnnie Estes - President and Director
 - Del Jolly - Vice-Pres and Director
 - Mike McLaughlin - Secretary and Director
 - Robert White - Treasurer and Director
 - Bill Wilson - Director
 - Mervin Gross - Newsletter and Director
 - Jim Hargrove - Director

**FROM THE AMTA
SECRETARY...**

Summer has come much too early in south Texas. The temperature has been in triple digits and I am already looking for a cool off. On top of that, we still have no rain to break this drought that started in 2007. I am enthusiastically looking forward to the 2009 AMTA Reunion at the Hilton San Antonio Airport Hotel. After screening dozens of hotels online to identify those with large enough banquet facilities, Noe C. Guerra and I visited ten of them. Proposals were requested from five hotels, (Doubletree, Holiday Inn Select, Embassy Suites, Marriott NW, and Hilton), with the Hilton making the best initial offer. We entered into negotiations in December 2008 and finalized a contract in February 2009. I fully believe the Hilton is the best hotel we have ever had for a reunion and the hotel staff is definitely pro-military. An underlying goal was to ensure adequate hospitality room space and avoid some other problems encountered during previous reunions. I feel that we have addressed them and the reunion will be a huge success.

As the one in charge of memorabilia, I have been backfilling our normal items

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Remember those that have gone before us and those that are suffering today. Keep them in your prayers.

BOD

**SOME GOOD VSO
INFORMATION**

Hey AMTA'ers. If you are an active member or widow(er) of an AMT, you may qualify for some of the many Department of Veterans Affairs benefit programs. I am often asked for a website that will help a veteran find a path to VA benefits. I've found the following site very useful as a guide: <https://vip.vba.va.gov/portal/VBAH/Home>. Be sure to click on the link for your State's Veterans Service Office for a path to your County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO). The CVSO is ready to help you complete the application process for all federal and state veterans benefits.

*John Hurst
AMTA Veterans Service Officer*



**Airborne Maintenance
Technician Association**

11615 Old Hills Lane
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78251

FROM THE AMTA PRESIDENT ...

Hello again everyone. We hope the year off from AMTA reunions was not too hard on anyone and hope no one had withdrawal pains to overcome. The one year break was a blessing to some that are always deeply involved in reunions regardless of the location. I have a few little jobs that I do in preparation for an AMTA Reunion and to top things off this year I was going to be in Honduras September 12th through the 19th on a mission trip with our church. I was about to bow out of the Honduras trip because of the AMTA Reunion being only four days after my return. But, the other board members stepped up and said they will pick up the slack and that I should go on the Honduras trip. However, the trip has been postponed until spring due to the unrest in Honduras.

I have been working with six board members for about four years as the AMTA President, and what a great time it has been. They always make me look good and it is appreciated as I need the help on looking good. Two of these board members are retiring after this term, Delano R. (Del) Jolly and William E. (Bill). Wilson These guys are not going away just retiring. But...have no fear as the AMTA members (almost 60% voted) have elected two outstanding AMTs to take Del and Bill's place on the board of directors. Stan Aarhus, of Plattsmouth, Nebraska and Joe Jesty also from Plattsmouth were elected to the AMTA Board of Directors and we are looking forward to Stan and Joe joining us for the next two years. Any of you that know these two guys can understand how they were chosen to the AMTA board as they are team players and will help out any way they can. Del and Bill will be missed as they are truly great friends and fellow AMTs, but I have no doubt Joe and Stan will do a great job filling their shoes.

I will touch briefly on the reunion in September as I know someone else will give a full description on what is to take place. Mike McLaughlin, Noe C Guerra and Bob White have done a tremendous job preparing for this reunion. The hotel is a little more costly than in the past but it is

one of the nicest if not the nicest hotel we have ever worked with. I have not seen the hotel yet, just pictures like most.

It will be great seeing everyone at the reunion in September. You have less than two months left so contact the ones taking care of it and get signed up today.

*Johnnie Estes
AMTA President*

(Continued from page 2)

and looking for new items. We now have AFIC and AFISRA hat/lapel pins in addition to USAFSS, ESC, and AIA. To my knowledge, the AMTA is currently the only place to get AFIC and AFISRA pins. We will have an expanded line of t-shirts for the 2009 reunion. In addition to the standard white shirt with a three inch AMTA logo on the left breast, we will have shirts with the reunion year and location on the back. Shirts in a limited selection of colors with just an RC135 (full front or full back) may also be available. The designs for dated reunion and RC135 shirts are in work. When they are finalized, I will get them out to those that have provided us with an email address. After we gave away a surplus of dated 2005 shirts at the 2007 reunion, the board of directors voted that we would no longer order dated shirts on speculation. That being the case, once I have sent out the final designs for dated or RC135 shirts, I will accept paid orders only.

The AMTA website has just about all the information you will need on the Hilton hotel and AMTA activities. A handout will be available for all atten-

2009 AMTA Reunion



Health Nut Area. C U There.



Tex's Grill. Looks like a must try to me.



AMTA room at the Hilton

dees at the AMTA reception desk with further details. This is also where you will pick up your name tag, which we encourage everyone to turn-in on the last night (25th) of the reunion. We should also have some information packets from the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce. I will be glad to see everyone again and travel safely.

*Michael McLaughlin
AMTA Secretary*



Lobby

AMTA Yahoo Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AMTAssociation/>

AMTA Website:

www.amtassociation.org**CHAPLAIN'S CORNER..**

A few weeks ago, I was at a family reunion and the subject of some of the conversations was, "How things have changed in our lifetime." Well, I must confess that after a few minutes I began to think that almost everything has changed in my life time. I took my grand children back to the mountain farm where I was raised and they wanted to know if we were poor. I had to confess that it depended on whether you base your definition of poor on my perception of poor or their perception of poor. I once took them to a field that I plowed with a team of mules and they had to be told what a mule and a plow was. The house I was raised in looks very old to them, but to me it looks just like home. I also remembered that I used to plow all day for a dollar and dinner... I thought that a dollar was a large sum of money...it would buy a double cola and a baby ruth and have 0.90 cents left over...it would also buy five gallons of gasoline at the Wartburg, TN Sinclair station(0.199 cents/gallon)...Times were much simpler and never rushed in those days in the late 1940s. Prosperity, power, riches, leisure living, permissiveness...often referred to as affluence or the great American dream has taken us far, or has it. I am often asked by those same grandchildren, "Tell us about the good ole days Grampy" and I would tell them these are the good ole days. As I get older I have sometimes changed my mind. I would love to again see people make a contract with a hand shake...a time when your word was your bond. I would love to again see a whole community come together to harvest a wheat crop for a neighbor whose back had been broken in a tractor accident...or to spend a Saturday planting or cultivating a 2.5

acre garden by the church house to provide food for those in need...or to spend Thanksgiving week end killing hogs, rendering lard and eating cracklin' cornbread and molasses. Then I think of my house and car with air conditioning. My van with power steering, anti-lock brakes, captains chairs, TV, DVD, comfort control at every seat...etc...etc...Maybe I was right. Maybe these really are the good old days.

I will close this column by sharing with you my thoughts about something that has not changed. That is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God still loves us just like he did in the 1940s. He still desires our praise and worship just like he always has. Jesus Christ is still the "Way..Truth..Life"...and we still come to the Father only through HIM. As I sign off, I'll also share with you, my comrades, that this will be my last column as your Chaplain...I have informed the Board that I will resign effective September this year. It has been my privilege, no it has been my honor, to serve you and I wish each of you GOD'S speed..... In HIS LOVE.

Jeff Knisley
AMTA Chaplain

**FROM BOB,
BILL WILSON**

In May of 2004 I began to see message traffic referring to an AMT organization. In discussion with Del Jolly I learned that Bob Miller was involved with it. A short time later, I contacted Bob whom I know very well to get Bob's take on it. Bob was extremely busy with the Predator program and was running wide open with little time to work with an organization. After discussion with Bob, I agreed to act as Program Manager to form the organization, if the other players would work with me. In addition to Bob Miller, the other players all Founders, were Johnnie Estes, John Hurst, Delano Jolly, John Shaffer,

and Vern Stump.

I wasn't quite sure what to expect as I didn't know everyone nor did they know me. But when, I started assigning the tasks that were needed to form the organization, everyone stepped up to the tasks with absolutely no hesitation. Our goal, which we agreed upon, was to create a legal and tax free non profit organization that would stand the test of time and that would be a class act. Anyone who has attended one of our reunions and our reunion banquets will agree that we accomplished that.

Following the birth of the Airborne Maintenance Association, I was selected as one of the original directors and the initial Secretary which I subsequently relinquished remaining as director. During this period, I've made many friends and new acquaintances and enjoyed the camaraderie of all AMTs and their spouses.

When it became time for nominations for director for the recently completed elections I decided not to submit my name as it was time for some new blood to join the management team. I was impressed by the quality of the AMTs who were nominated and those who were selected, as all were very capable people. Gentlemen, the AMT Association is in good hands and I am proud to be a part of it and I am proud of you my fellow AMTs.

Bill Wilson
AMTA Board of Directors



**the WIREBENDER
Staff:**

Editor: Whitey Gross

Publisher: Whitey Gross

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



Bring your swim suits! Maybe even your snorkel.