



the WIRE BENDER

Volume 18 Issue 1

January through July 2026

AMTA PRESIDENT

Originally Pat and I were not planning to do a newsletter at midyear, but then considering the fact we are having a reunion in Greenville, Texas this fall, what better way to get the information out to everyone. Tom Muggeo, AMTA Secretary, is the 2026 AMTA reunion organizer and he has been all over the city of Rockwall, talking with hotels and trying to nail one down for a reasonable price. Tom has called me numerous times and the hotels in Rockwall DO NOT negotiate. As a matter of fact regardless of how many rooms we rent they still want \$150 per day for a hospitality room. Tom believes the hotel management are stuck on that as they are competing with Dallas prices, which is only a few miles away. With all of that said we will have a hotel booked for the reunion and plan to have a nice hospitality room.

After spending more than two weeks going to every corner available in Rockwall, Texas, Tom gave it up as a lost cause due to pricing and unwilling hotel staff to negotiate any price changing. He went up the road about 25 miles to Greenville, Texas which is exactly where the Harris / L3 Comm facility is located. The tour of an aircraft or the facility has not been nailed down yet but Tom is seriously working on it. Just some of the things Tom has encountered during his time as AMTA Reunion coordinator..... He was told the

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BEST WESTERN PLUS, GREENVILLE/TEXAS 2026 AMTA REUNION

TREASURER REPORT

Not much going on for the AMTA Treasurer, so I will simply provide some information on what is going on in our lives.

We have been having some bad weather lately. Lost power last night, no internet overnight. So far 3½ inches of rain. We are forecasted to have wind and rain until Friday. Due to the rain and roads being closed we had to cancel Billie's first rehab appointment this morning. Always something going on. I had a root canal done last week and they broke a drill bit inside my tooth. The procedure should have taken 1 ½ hours, and it really took 3 hours. Didn't even know what had happened until all finished and they explained what had happened. Gum around the tooth is a little sore but healing well. Going on 3 PM, time for lunch or maybe supper!

Thanks to everyone for the support that was given for Billie, as she went through a really tough time and still working at getting well.

Bob White
AMTA Treasurer

AMTA SECRETARY

Well after canvassing all the hotels in Rockwall Texas and trying to negotiate a good deal for our reunion it has come to my attention that none of them are willing to cut us a fair deal.

So, I reached out to hotels in Greenville, Texas and found them to be much more accommodating.

The reunion will be at the Best Western Plus with an arrival date of October 7 and check out on October 10th. The hotel has blocked off 15 Double queen rooms, 15 King rooms and 3 Handicapped accessible rooms. The room rate, with tax, for any of these rooms is \$116.39 per night.

We also plan a buffet dinner on the evening of October 9th buffet will include pork, chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans and a desert. Ice tea and water will also be available. Cost for dinner will be \$30 per person. Seating will be limited to 80 people.

The hospitality room will be available starting at check in time on October 7th until the evening of October 9th after the dinner.

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AIRBORNE MAINTENANCE TECHICIANS, 719 NAMES! WHERE ARE THEY???



(President's Continued from page 1)

best price he could get on hotel rooms was \$169.98 per night and we would still pay for the Hospitality Room at the rate of \$150 per day. Tom settled when he got a deal for individual rooms for \$116.39 per night, including taxes. We have not had a bargain like that since the economy erupted a few years ago. By the way the Hospitality Room and the dining room area are both complementary at no cost to the AMTA. I really believe this reunion in Greenville, Texas is going to be the boost the AMTA has been needing. I appreciate all of the positive feedback we have received this year and we will continue to work hard to ensure the AMTA does succeed. Tom Muggeo is doing a heck of a job as the AMTA Secretary, and Bob White is Bob and is one of the best as the AMTA Treasurer. David Leslie is handling the AMTA memorabilia and doing a great job, and he has some great ideas. Pat Riley is trying to work his way into getting the AMTA newsletter out twice a year, so far it is mostly me. You have probably heard Whitey Gross is the current AMTA Vice-President, but so far not much action out of Whitey. Hope to see many of you in Greenville during the first week of October.

Johnnie Estes
AMTA President

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

Author: Unknown

AMTA VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

Time to review some of the most important documents you should have. First you should create durable Powers of Attorney for financial and health care. This is in the event you become ill, injured or incapacitated to the point you are unable to handle decisions and actions related to these matters. These documents can be made for you by any attorney. Since we are retired military the base legal office will make them up at no cost to you or your spouse.

I apologize for the lack of effort I have been putting into the duties of the AMTA Veterans Service Officer, but as we all age we do not have the same zip and spring in our step as we did 20 or 30 years ago. My wife Bonnie and I sold our home in Plattsmouth and moved to Bellevue, Nebraska in a senior living area. We are not helpless or bedfast but we do need help from time to time. Thanks to everyone that has anything to do with the upcoming reunion in October. As much as we would like to attend, it is totally out of our reach and ability at this time.

John L Hurst
AMTA VSO

the WIREBENDER Staff:

Editor: P. Riley



Temp Editor: J. Estes

"It's your newsletter to use to communicate with other AMTs, etc."

AMTA CHAPLAIN What it's all about.....

The following information has been provided by the AMTA Chaplain, and as you read it and see what Frank has been through and is going through, how his attitude is always positive and trusting his Lord and Savior.

The wire in the Pacemaker is holding, and I'll be good to go in another three weeks. My Aortic valve is working fine, and it's a new model that has flesh in it, so I don't have to take blood thinners. The Doc will cut out the Carcinoma in my mouth next Wednesday and put a graft off my thigh in to cover it so I can move my jaw easier. In a few weeks after the surgery, I will schedule the Carotids to be cleaned out. I guess God has a reason for keeping me here, I won't ask Him why, I'll just do what I can to help Him since we want the same thing. Worry is a conversation with yourself about something you can't do anything about, prayer is a conversation with God about something he can do something about. A wise man once said, "Only a fool fears the inevitable." I hope I can encourage someone to enjoy the time they have left rather than waste it.

Frank Jordan
AMTA Chaplain

**When life gets tough , hang
out with your dog.**



Airborne Maintenance Technician Association

288 Stone Trail
CASTROVILLE, TEXAS 78009

**LIFE IS A ONE TIME OFFER
USE IT WELL!**

(Secretary Continued from page 1)

Refreshments will be available.

I am going to work with L3Harris to see if we can get a tour of their facility to see what the current version of the RC-135 platform looks like.

Tom Muggeo

AMTA Secretary

2026 AMTA Reunion Organizer



King Size Bed



2 Queen Beds

The Winds of Grace are Always
Blowing
It is up to you to raise your sails

AMTA Board of Directors:

Johnnie Estes - President, Director
Mervin Gross - Vice-President, Director
Tom Muggeo - Secretary, Director
Robert White - Treasurer, Director
David Leslie- Director - AMTA memorabilia
John Hurst - Director- AMTA VSO
Pat Riley - Director, AMTA Photographer
Pat Riley - Editor Newsletter

Johnnie Estes- Director (Permanent)
Mervin Gross- Director (Permanent)
Jim Hargrove – Director (Permanent)
Bill Wilson – Director (Permanent)
Mike McLaughlin-Director (Permanent)

This is your **OPINIONS and THOUGHTS....**

Not so much **opinions and/or thoughts**, but a reminder to preserve old memories before they are defunct. Tapes, CDs and DVDs are pretty much 'old hat'.

Magnetic tape was expected to be good for 10 to 30 years, according to the people who studied it for a living. VHS peaked in the late '80s and '90s. Do the math on your shelf. The binder holding the tape's magnetic particles pulls moisture out of the air and breaks down, so the tape sheds its own recording as it plays. Archivists call it "sticky shed."

Here's the twist nobody expects. A UNESCO-backed project set a rescue deadline of roughly 2025, and not because the tapes all failed at once. It's because all the players went obsolete at the same time. The last VCR ever manufactured rolled off the line in July 2016. Every working machine left is at least a decade old, and nobody's making parts. Somewhere in your house there's a box. It contains video of your wedding. Baby's first steps. Dad in that hideous sweater, waving at the camera. Those old tapes are going to be useless before you know it. You've saved tapes of weddings, grandkids, family gatherings, etc. They are stuck away in a drawer or closet or worse yet, in the garage. We are past the deadline. Be kind, rewind. Buy two things to work with your computer's USB port and free storage.

1. A VCR. Copy and paste this into the eBay search bar: "VCR VHS 4-head hi-fi tested working." "Tested working" filters out the junk, and 4-head hi-fi models give you the best picture and sound. Expect \$50 to \$80. Btw, when you're done with the VCR, you can sell it on eBay to someone else.

2. A capture device. The \$110 Portta VHS-to-digital converter is the tech pick and includes the red, white and yellow cables. The cheaper option runs about

\$45. The difference? The cheaper ones need a PC and software like QuickTime to record, while the Portta works by itself. I'm thinking that most of us have a computer, so the cheaper option works fine for me.

Take the colored cables from the back of the VCR into the capture box, USB into the computer, press play, press record. Transfers run in real time, so a two-hour tape takes two hours. Make it a weekend project with a kid who has never seen a tape rewind.

Save every file in two places, a hard drive and the cloud. Do the irreplaceable ones first. The '96 Olympics can wait.

Bill Kaelin

AMTA LIFETIME CHARTER MEMBER

8th Member of the AMTA

Hi, Johnnie. Sorry I missed your birthday, so Happy Belated Birthday. One item that I would like to express my opinion on is reunion location. There are many of us that have reached an age and many with physical limitations that limit long travel distances. I wish to suggest that we consider having one in the Great Lakes region, say Wright Pat or similar. Thanks for you time.

Barry Hamilton

AMTA LIFETIME MEMBER

Newsletter Editor

I'm Trying to get the hang of Microsoft Publisher. It's a process, but maybe I'll catch on.

Anyway I'll keep trying.

Pat Riley
Newsletter Editor

AMTA MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

AMT Association Needs a Restart

It has been many years since we served as Airborne Maintenance Technicians, and it seems that getting together is harder every year. Although we have continued to meet every two years or so, it is becoming more difficult to locate all of our members — and yes, there may be a few ladies among us as well. Still, we persist, and in an effort to make our next reunion successful, we need your help.

If you are reading this newsletter, you can help us find our members who are still around, make contact with them, and encourage them to join us at our next reunion. It will be a chance to reconnect with our peers, share stories about our experiences back in the day, and let us know where life has taken us since then. So much has changed over the years — after all, they have replaced us with drones now.

Please contact me, Andre' Peery, at apeerystar@gmail.com and make sure I have your up-to-date information. Also let me know where you served, and I will provide you with a list of names from our database of people you served with so you can reach out and help us get more folks to our next reunion.

Thank you,

Andre' Peery
Membership Chair
737 Monroe St.
Salem, VA 25153
540-521-0530



Not so fancy bathroom

Going to church no more makes you a Christian, than standing in a garage makes you a car.

Author unknown



Hotel Lobby at the Home of the 2026 AMTA Reunion



Should you want to take a bath



Another view of the Rooms



Taking a swim is definitely available



Preview of Hospitality Room



Not positive but this is probably where the full breakfast is served