PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

A very Happy 2019 to everyone! Your Board, Publications Committee, Regional Directors, and local hosts have been working overtime to ensure our next reunion is even better than the last. Throughout this issue of Crew Alert you will find specific articles addressing what has been accomplished. Please read them for all the details.

The 2020 site is San Antonio, TX and we have retained the “El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel!” Many recommendations from the 2018 surveys have been implemented as I am sure you will see and enjoy. The biggest change is we have moved the dates from April/May to the last week in March. This is for two reasons: primarily you will be able to attend the Freedom Flyers reunion at Randolph AFB, TX which includes a tribute to POWs, many of whom you may have transported during Operation Homecoming and second; the weather is better. This March your Board and local hosts will meet at the El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel in order to create the schedule for the reunion, set up meals, activities, costs, and discuss any pending association issues.

The survey items we were able to implement are as follows: 1. The San Antonio Airport is close (15-20 minutes to the hotel) and cabs/shuttles are available for about $15.00; 2. once on-site everything is in the hotel, hospitality room is across & separate from the banquet room, it has a wall of windows and it can be locked when not in use, so you can leave photos, etc, and we can bring in our own snacks/beverages; 3. the breakfast buffet menu has wider variety; 4. you can enjoy the city and not need a car; and 5. plenty of on-site parking to include RVs; 6. room rate is the best on the Riverwalk. We were not able to accommodate safes in the rooms or have room service. There are however, individual safes at the front desk and there is a café in the lobby that is open until 10:00pm so you can pick up coffee, sandwiches, snacks. There is also a Tiki Bar in the lobby. The Hotel is bright and colorful, easy to get around and rooms are great. Check out their web site listed below. I am sure you will enjoy your time there. See you in San Antonio!

Belinda Morrone, President

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2020 HOTEL REGISTRATION SPECIFICS

DATES: MARCH 25-29, 2020 (Wed—Sunday)

LOCATION: El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel
110 Lexington Avenue
San Antonio, TX  78205
www.eltropicanohotel.com

CALL: 210-223-9461 direct to hotel, or 210-277-4043 Lupe Hernandez, reservations coordinator,

EMAIL: or email, reservations@eltropicanohotel.com

GROUP: Must identify self as with the: “Aeromedical Evacuation Association, AMEA”
Wow…what a year! 2018 for AMEA saw 2 huge events highlighted. The first, our May AMEA reunion in Pigeon Forge, TN proved to be an outstanding occasion, as described in the July Crew Alert. Our dinner speaker, TSgt (MSgt select) Sarah Saelens from the School of Aerospace Medicine (USAFSAM), highlighted the history and advancements in the Aeromedical Evacuation world. This set AMEA up for the perfect transition to our next major event, the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the School of Air Evacuation in early August at Wright Patterson AFB, OH.

Earlier in the year I had established contact with Ms. Elizabeth Miller, USAFSAM Deputy Chair En Route Care Dept and, with the assistance of Jim Mitchell, laid the foundation for our presence at the School house during the celebration. We requested, and were given, a speaking slot on the main agenda. The celebration proved to be a star-studded event with a welcome by Col. Alden Hilton, USAFSAM/CC and a moving address by Lt. Gen. Dorothy Hogg, AF/SG topping the event. But the best of the speakers was still to come with one of our very own members, Mrs. Harriet Neill.

Planning for the event involved all members of the Regional Director team from the review and update of the AMEA trifold, to the recruiting skills of Rick Tripp in producing the layout of the AMEA banner, to Steve Davis who produced the banner in record time, etc. The banner photos ‘spoke’ to the people and the mission and truly reflected who we are as AE personnel. Ms. Miller and TSgt (MSgt select) Saelens provided us with the perfect ‘front and center’ location for our exhibit, and 10-12 AMEA members including John Roberts and Deborah Millerberg turned out to help set up for the event and represent AMEA during the two days. Maximum exposure was achieved, and our trifolds flew off the table headed to units throughout the United States.

Mrs. Neill presented her first-hand, personal story on the April 1975 Operation Babylift C-5 crash in Vietnam. Her minute-by-minute recount of the day’s events put us right in with the crew themselves. The description of the pre-flight briefing and crew assignments at Clark AB and aircraft duty stations established at Ton Son Nhut AB helped us to understand the dynamics of the events that were to unfold. During climb to altitude out of Saigon, a faulty rear door latch ruptured resulting in a rapid decompression with all the telltale signs—misty air, pressure change and aircraft noise. Badly damaged, the aircraft attempted a return to Saigon but ended up crashing and breaking apart in a rice paddy some miles short of the airport.

The diagrams of the aircraft and crash site showed just how horrific the accident was and illustrated the challenges faced by the crew as they evacuated more than 100 children/babies, some civilian passengers and injured crew members. During her briefing she invited TSgt Phil Wise, AET, to stand; the audience came to their feet for a standing ovation for both of the survivors.

During her Flight Nurse/Leadership and AE presentation, Col. (R) Barbara Jones stood near the designated seating area for our AMEA group and referred to us as "Giants". She then said that Aeromedical Evacuation today "stands on the shoulders of these Giants". Talk about being proud! The whole group realized, with that statement, the impact of our collective skills and just how important the AMEA is in keeping the history of AirEvac and our ties to each other alive and strong.

Don Raab, MSgt, Ret.
NE Assistant Regional Director, AMEA
AMEA Website Security

What is website security and why does it matter? Before we can answer that question, we must first talk about browsers! Ok, what IS a browser? It’s that program that you use to open a website such as the AMEA. They come in many flavors like Internet Explorer (IE), Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc. But, they don’t all work exactly the same. So a webpage may look a little different if opened in Chrome or IE than it does if opened in Safari or vice versa. Still, they all open basically the same two types of websites. Those that are unsecure and those that are secure. You may be asking yourself, “OK, so how do I tell the difference?” Easy! The unsecure website is identified by http:// and the secure website uses https:// The difference is that “S”, which represents secure! And it usually has a small lock associated with it. An unsecure website can very easily be hacked so you never should enter personal information such as credit card numbers. An https website uses a special security certificate or SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) to encrypt sensitive information so the hacker essentially only sees garbage characters instead of your information.

The AMEA members-only website uses an SSL Certificate and is a secure website. However, there’s still a potential problem and that’s the primary subject of this article. Older browsers can’t use all the functionality of modern technology. That’s a major problem. Even the same old version of your browser such as IE or Chrome or Safari, etc. may not act the same because of the updates included in each new version. If you haven’t updated your computer in a while, chances are you’re using an older version. If you are, it’s very likely that you may encounter problems when you attempt to join or renew your membership dues or use your computer for other electronic payment transactions on the internet. Your payment may even be refused leading you to believe it’s a problem with the AMEA website! You can test your browser by copying and pasting the following web address into the browser you would like to test. https://www.ssllabs.com/ssltest/viewMyClient.html

Yet another problem that may occur is a message relating to a keychain error while using Apple products. This happens because the MacOS comes with its own password management utility that stores usernames and passwords. If your password is changed on the website but not updated in keychain access, the passwords will not match and you will be unable to log into the website.

Finally, some members become frustrated, believing the members-only website is too complicated because it requires them to enter a username and password. Any secure website will have the same requirement. However, imagine what would happen if there were no requirement for a username and password to access the members-only website. There would be no “members-only website”, because anyone with a computer, cell phone or any other device that supports a browser would be able to gain access. Even more disturbing is that all those people, including hackers, would have access to your personal information. So, make sure you enter your correct username (usually your first and last name separated by a period or “DOT” between them). Your password is CasEseNsiTive and must be entered exactly as it is in the members-only database. You can retrieve your username and password by going to the login page and clicking the Forgotten Password? utility at the bottom of the grey box which reads “E-Mail My Password”. The web address is https://member.amea.us/secure/pw-form.asp If you are absolutely certain that you have entered your username and password correctly but are still receiving a login error, try using a different browser. It’s possible for your computer to become confused and store incorrect information in the cache. You might also try restarting your computer, since this often resolves the issue.

Learn how to upgrade your browser and find answers to other questions this article raises by clicking the following web address:

http://aeromedevac.org/help/

Steve Davis, MSgt, Ret.
Website Manager and South Regional Director, AMEA
Our new AMEA Secretary and Treasurer:

Ted Bassett (Secretary) and David Schill (Treasurer) were elected to your Board of Directors in May 2018. They officially assumed the duties of Secretary and Treasurer from Sam Kitttle, effective January 1, 2019. It has been a pleasure to work with Sam during the transition, and we all owe Sam a debt of gratitude for his many years of serving AMEA as our Secretary and Treasurer.

You can contact the Secretary, Ted Bassett at ted.bassett@amea.us and the Treasurer, David Schill, at david.schill@amea.us. The new AMEA mailing address is PO Box 29450, Indianapolis, IN 46229-9998.

AMEA WEBSITE UPDATE:

Our website is a dynamic place and is always under review with an eye to enhancements. Please take a look at the newest updates – they are all on the public portion of the website and do not require login… simply go to www.amea.us.

♦ AE Unit Facebook links are now posted in the upper right corner of the Home page under the category “AMEA Links”. Click on “AE Unit Facebook Links” to access over 40 Facebook pages.

♦ The “Events” tab contains up-to-date information about the 2020 reunion in San Antonio; more detail will be added as the schedule of activities is firmed up so keep your eyes on this page for updates.

♦ The “Honor Roll” continues to be updated as we hear about the sad losses of our airevac brothers and sisters. You can help by notifying AMEA Secretary, Ted Bassett, when you hear of a death in our family… ted.bassett@amea.us.

Coming attractions: many other enhancements are in the process of completion – posting of additional AE History links and other Links of Interest, an online ‘join’ form that will allow complete automation of the join/renew process, a Publications page revamp with additional documents uploaded for membership viewing, etc.

We’re always looking for ideas and suggestions for the website and welcome any thoughts you may have. Please contact the Publications Committee at pubs@amea.us.

Harriet Neill
Publications Committee

REGION UPDATES:

Bruce Lewis, Assistant SE Regional Director, attended Commander’s Call at the 43rd AES at Pope Field, NC earlier this year, and the visit took him back to the old days as he took the attendees back to his old days. Watching several people receive awards for outstanding accomplishments reminded him of the joy he felt after receiving appreciation for a job well done.

Bruce impressed the squadron with stories about how the mission was accomplished in the 60s and 70s and how difficult some of those trips were. He related the events around bringing the POWs back from Hanoi, which involved extensive planning meetings and the location of 3 aircraft with red crosses on their tails. Bruce remembers the first prisoner who came to the rear of the ramp, LJG Everett Alvarez, saluting and requesting permission to come aboard! He also told of how he and Wayne Everingham sneaked a puppy on board one of the flights after the puppy had been given to one of the prisoners by a North Vietnamese prison guard… life was different in those days.

Bruce provided some of the history about the medical inventions that came out of Brooks, how the medical units were put together and how the TATS (Therapeutic Airborne Treatment Station) units were named, and realized no one had ever heard of a SAMCU unit, the designation for an airborne 4-bed ICU.

He provided trifolds to the unit and has been invited to return.

Harriet Neill, SE Regional Director, attended the Society of Air Force Nurses (SAFN) regional meeting in Savannah, GA in Sept and was invited to introduce AMEA to the group of nurses, several of whom had flying careers. Many of the nurses did not know of AMEA and were grateful to take a trifold and sign up for membership. This fall there is a national meeting in New Orleans, and Harriet has again been invited to speak about AMEA.

Rosemary Bauer, Midwest Assistant Regional Director, sadly passed away this past November. She will be greatly missed as a part of AMEA’s leadership team and simply as a friend, mentor and compatriot to so many of us. She was devoted to AMEA and to SAFN and worked tirelessly to recruit members for each organization.
2018 Reunion Survey Results

Out of 63 members attending the 2018 Pigeon Forge Reunion, 40 completed surveys for a 63% response rate which is outstanding! This is the first time we have sent out an electronic survey. The 2018 survey contained questions covering all parts of the reunion; members were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the best and provide comments as needed. The numbers you see below in each section (4.8, 4.2, etc.) represent the rating on the 1-5 scale.

1. How people heard about the reunion: 68% had attended prior reunions or heard from friends, 20% from the Crew Alert, and 12% from Facebook/AMEA Website-BOD.
2. AMEA registration: 4.8, Folks liked being able to register and pay on-line.
3. Reunion Check-In Process: 4.6, Local hosts helpful and appreciated, would like the activity schedule published, set specific times for check-in, have packets available for late check-ins.
4. Hospitality Suite: 4.2, Man it so that photo albums can remain in the room, bring in own snacks, locate with the hotel, had a sterile atmosphere, keep it separate from banquet room, suggest ice breaker.
5. Snacks: 4.8
7. Smoky Mountain National Park Tour: 4.8
8. Vietnam War Veteran Ceremony: 4.8
10. Music Mansion Variety Show: 4.7
11. General Business Meeting: 3.9, Felt rushed, make it longer, have BOD members on Stage & introduce them, enforce Robert’s Rules, have the open meeting first then allow spouses/non-members to either stay or go, announce who can/can’t vote, provide agenda.
12. Banquet: 4.7, Define dress expectations, longer time in the room for goodbyes, some food was cool, was the saving grace of the reunion.
14. Raffle: 4.4, Have table available so items can be viewed prior to auction, draw numbers slowly, auction a one-night free room.
15. Banquet Entertainment: 3.3, Break before it starts, would like to have it again, was too short.
16. Stayed at the Music Road Hotel: 85% Yes, 15% No
17. Hotel: 4.9, Would like a Banner posted, have hotel closer to airport, would like safe in the room, breakfast buffet with more variety, have hotel more aware of the group, there was no room service.
18. What you liked most: Meeting up with friends.
19. What you would like changed/improved: Add an ice breaker, post an agenda.

You will find that all of these concerns have been incorporated whenever possible into the 2020 Reunion at San Antonio. We believe you will be very satisfied with our next reunion.

AMEA Board of Directors

To apply for membership in the AeroMed Evac Association (AMEA) complete this form (at least bold face items).

Enclosed is my biennial/advanced payment of $___________($25 for 2 years)
I request Life Membership and enclose a check for $100.00 (or $_________ partial payment towards full amount to be paid within one year)

Name of Member: _______________________________ Nickname: __________________
Known by Maiden Name: ______________________
Name of Spouse: ________________________ Is spouse an aeromedical member? _____ If so, what position? __________

Mailing Address: ______________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
On-line Address (if available): E-Mail _____________________________________________________________
Phone numbers: (Home) _____ Mobile ___

May we post your address on the AMEA’s Webpage (info available only to other AMEA members)? OK _____ Not OK _____
Post your phone number on AMEA’s Web page (info available only to other AMEA members)? OK _____ Not OK _____

Membership: New ______ Renewal ______ Re-Join ______

Status: Retired _____ Active Duty _____ Reservist _____ AirNatlGuard _____ Other _____ Dependent ______
New Member History: List AirEvac units, Locations, Dates assigned and Aircraft flown: ____________________________

Circle your AE Duty Position (Commander, Pilot, Flight Nurse, Flight Mech/Engineer, Administrative, Logistical Support, AET, MSC Officer, Aeromedical Staging Facility Personnel, Other): ____________________________

How did you hear about AMEA?

Make checks Payable to AMEA and Mail To:

AeroMed Evac Assn.
P.O. Box 29450
Indianapolis, IN 46229-9998
AMEA Directorates

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<tr>
<th>Name/Position</th>
<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>Belinda Morrone</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>382 Hamilton St. Worcester, MA 01604</td>
<td>508-755-1985 <a href="mailto:Belinda.Morrone@amea.us">Belinda.Morrone@amea.us</a></td>
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<td>President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Hosford</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>9510 W. Willowbrook Dr. Sun City, AZ 85373</td>
<td>480-341-9088 <a href="mailto:Daniel.Hosford@amea.us">Daniel.Hosford@amea.us</a></td>
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<td>Vice President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teddy Bassett</td>
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<td>902 Footbridge Pl Cary, NC 27519</td>
<td>937-478-5337 <a href="mailto:Ted.Bassett@amea.us">Ted.Bassett@amea.us</a></td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Schill</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
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<td>10921 Tedder Lake Drive Indianapolis, IN 46239</td>
<td>317-898-4293 <a href="mailto:David.Schill@amea.us">David.Schill@amea.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sam Kittle</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>452 Buckskin Road Angels Camp, CA 95222</td>
<td>209-785-2931 <a href="mailto:Sam.Kittle@amea.us">Sam.Kittle@amea.us</a></td>
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<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harriet Neill</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>2020</td>
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<td>812-548-8686 <a href="mailto:Harriet.Neill@amea.us">Harriet.Neill@amea.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Debby Millerberg</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>9443 Winners Circle NW Pickerington, OH 43147</td>
<td>614-866-6138 <a href="mailto:Deborah.Millerberg@amea.us">Deborah.Millerberg@amea.us</a></td>
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