



*The*  
**NEMES**  
NEW ENGLAND MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY INC.

# Gazette

No 288

June 2020

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## June Meeting

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the June meeting will be held on line. The meeting is necessary for the election of officers, or, if there are no nominations, to arrange for the dissolution of NEMES, and perhaps to make plans for a Model Engineering Show in a post-NEMES world..

For details of how to get the on-line meeting, please see Dan's President's message.

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## **Club Business**

*Rich Baker*

Our by-laws require that we elect a slate of officers at the June meeting. To date, there are no nominations for officers. Without officers, NEMES will cease to exist.



### **President's Corner Dan Eyring**

### **Message to NEMES Members**

This message is in two parts

- A) Current status of NEMES
- B) Invitation to June 4th on-line NEMES meeting

Be sure to read both parts of the message!

#### **A) Current Status of NEMES**

On May 7th, an on-line NEMES meeting was held, with two objectives. – To accept nominations for 2020 NEMES Officer Elections, to be held on June 4th . – To hear a presentation from John Bottoms on “3D Printing and Machinists”.

NEMES has six Officer positions – President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Editor and

Webmaster. Of the current Officers, two self nominated to continue their service – Bob Timmerman as Editor of the Gazette and James Sheffler as Webmaster, Their decisions to stay on are much appreciated.

All the other current officers have decided not to run for another term, after many years of service running the CLUB. Unfortunately, no nominations were put forward to replace the Club Officers who did not chose to run for re-election. As a result, we will be unable to hold elections for new Officers for 2020. This circumstance has serious consequences for NEMES.

Under State and Federal laws controlling 501c3 Charitable Organizations (of which NEMES is one), such organizations MUST maintain a Board of Directors or a set of managing Officers. Without such a management structure, the organization is required to disband. One way for this to be done is for the failed organization to turn over its assets to another 501c3 organization.

Discussions between NEMES and the Charles River Museum have begun in a tentative way to do this. It will be some time (weeks, maybe months) before the process is fully negotiated and executed. In general terms, NEMES would turn over its financial resources and other assets to the Museum in return for the Museum maintaining key functions of NEMES. Examples of such functions might include, for example, the continued staging of the February Model Engineering Show, the continued availability of a NEMES meeting place within the Museum, and perhaps the establishment of a NEMES Library at the Museum.

We might expect also expect the Museum to occasionally call on NEMES members for such things as helping stage the February Show, helping out with Museum educational initiatives, and perhaps help staging other Model or Live Steam events during the year, as occurred in times past when NEMES and the Museum collaborated on such events.

As the situation continues to develop, I will keep all NEMES members informed. In the meantime, due both to lack of new Officers and the current Pandemic, NEMES will operate in sort of a

“hibernation” state. Any meetings will be held on-line. We may have speakers, we may not. Stay tuned!

## B) Invitation to June 4th NEMES On-Line Meeting

Below you find an Invitation to the meeting. If you want to join the video/audio version of the meeting, click on the HTTPS web link. You will be prompted to download and install a small ZOOM client application. Hopefully this will be a one time thing, you should not need to do this for the next meeting. If you are NOT prompted to do the app download, you can find it here:

<https://zoom.us/download>

If you are using an MS Window system, the download shortcut for the install app will be shown on your screen at the lower left. When the install app has completed you should click on it to install the Zoom app. You will be asked "Do you want to run this file?" Click RUN for permission to install the app and the install should complete.

Audio Only If you only want to dial into the meeting by phone and skip the video, the Invitation includes a number of phone numbers to call in on. You will probably want to click on the “Find your local phone number” link so you don’t end up paying for long distance:

<https://zoom.us/j/6229563584?pwd=eHVmSmdBWFE5ZDRQUVZBWHZJV0NtZz09>

When you dial in, you will be asked to enter the password for the meeting. Do so and you will be connected to the meeting. See (or hear) you there!

- Here is the invitation, on the next page:

Daniel Eyring is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: NEMES June 4th Meeting

Time: Jun 4, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting by clicking on this web link:

<https://zoom.us/j/6229563584?pwd=eHVmSmdBWFE5ZDRQUVZBWHZJV0NtZz09>

Enter the Password if asked:

Meeting ID: 622 956 3584

Password: 072169

One tap mobile:

+13126266799,,6229563584#,1#,072169# US (Chicago)

+19292056099,,6229563584#,1#,072169# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)



From the  
Editor’s Desk

Bob  
Timmerman

We will be electing officers at the June meeting, if we have any nominations. Because we have no nominations at this writing, page 1 of the Gazette shows all the offices as vacant, except for Editor and Webmaster. See Dan’s President’s Corner. If you have any questions about what he wrote, go back and re-read it. In short, without officers, NEMES will cease to exist: **no** meetings, **no** Model Engineering Show, **nothing**. While we might be able to get some help from the Museum with things like renting tables, publicity, and refreshments, the details of getting exhibitors will require the expertise and contracts of the NEMES members.

It has been suggested that a group of people get together to have a discussion on a regular to

irregular basis. Maybe that might work, but it is not sufficient to put together a Model Engineering Show.

I may, or may not put together a Gazette at regular, or irregular intervals, depending upon how much there is to print. Nothing worth printing=no Gazette. I will print listings of future engine shows, and other antique machinery shows if you get me the information--I do not have contact information for the various clubs. Further, if nobody is willing to run for a NEMES office, why should people expect me to run down notices of future events?

Finally, Steve Earle sent in some comments on lack of people interested in NEMES. Steve is less active in NEMES since he moved to Maine.

## Comments by Steve Earle

The recent lack of people interested in leadership positions in NEMES highlights an issue that certainly is not unique to this group. It is mostly a societal behavior and population aging phenomenon, with no instant or even clear solutions. I should warn that most of what's below is not terribly encouraging.

When I was a kid, I went to monthly meetings of the local historical society with my mother. These were well-attended functions with guest speakers and often with off-site activities. To contrast, as an adult, my local town historical society was disbanded because there was only one member. And at one year shy of 60, I am the youngster at the single-shot rifle matches I attend in Indiana.

Among the groups I belong to, this aging of the group's members has unfortunate effects which are difficult (or maybe impossible) to combat. We try to bolster up the membership by having "membership drives" or by trying to encourage young people to join. But too often this is a losing battle, which was primarily lost years ago when schools curtailed their "vocational" classes and embraced an "everyone goes to college" mentality.

Now there's nothing wrong with going to college, and it's often beneficial to be able to learn beyond the high school years and limits of curriculum. However,

this highlights a related failure of our schooling, and that is the dissolution of the apprentice system. We churn out electrical engineers who don't know how to solder, design engineers who design the impossible-to-fabricate, and mechanical engineers who couldn't diagnose their car's funny noise on a bet.

I am aware that there are successful apprenticeship programs still. But the reason that they are touted as so wonderful is the fact that they are completely the "exception which proves the rule". There should be no need to highlight them – they should be so prevalent that making them known is unnecessary.

Pointing fingers can be fun, and even informative, but it doesn't solve the problem or change the underlying facts. And I believe it's a fact that people – especially younger people – don't want to "do things" any more. By "do things" I'm talking about the ability to plan, learn, struggle, create, etc.; with the end result being able to say, "Yeah, I did that." But look at where we are today. Search for it on Google, buy it on Amazon, have it delivered the next day, and break it then throw it away a week later.

I have the sewing cabinet that my grandfather made in high-school shop class and the gun cabinet that he refinished and gave to me on my birthday, many years ago. Today we buy crappy furniture on Wayfair, and then put it on the lawn "free" when it warps too badly or no longer matches the latest trendy paint scheme. Do we even think of building a piece of furniture ourselves? I don't mean a basement shelf out of finger-jointed pine, but something nice, that will take weeks of spare time. Hidden fasteners, carved finials, allowances for the wood's movement, hand-rubbed finishes, etc. Sorry – these things are for the most part lost.

My boyhood friends and I spent thousands of sometimes-fruitless hours making all sorts of silly things – from model airboats to log cabins, and everything in between. On a Saturday, we kids bolted out of the house at dawn, and our parents didn't expect to see us (unless there was serious blood) until suppertime. Here again, looking at today, we have accepted the societal idea that our kids should be watched by us and under our wings so that we can ensure their protection, at all times. I prefer to see it like Calvin and Hobbes, when Calvin states that "If your knees aren't green by the end of the day, you should seriously re-examine your life."

There are other factors we can examine, and many may be contributors to this lack-of-interest in the “stuff” that we “old people” like. Let’s see, we hire someone to mow our lawn and paint our house. To replace our windows , re-wire the spare room, or unclog the sink. To change the oil and tell us we need new tires. And with all this free time we now have instead, what do we do? In general, we sit in front of a screen - TV, computer, phone, whatever – and we passively ingest whatever is presented to us. Or we spout off our own opinions, having never encountered the situation and question that is being asked on some forum.

Home ownership in general seems to be taking a hit. After all, why “waste” your time with yardwork if you can just pay a condo fee and have it done for you?. We lose by being passive and not participating in the game – in this case, the game of “things” and how they are designed, created, and maintained. In this arena, that includes your house, car, lawnmower, whatever.

An interesting (to me) scenario to place yourself in is this... Suppose you and a member of the opposite sex are dropped onto a habitable but uninhabited planet. How much of what we call “society” can you re-create? Bypass just brute survival, and get into details. What rock do you heat to get a metal to come out? Do you know how to make paper? Glass? Plastic? What makes up a light bulb? What makes it light? Can you re-create that? Can you drill a hole? Can you make a drill?

How about what leaf causes a rash? What leaf cures the rash? What do you know about language, psychology, aerodynamics, genetics, weather, statistics, astronomy, zoology, etc. Oh, it can get quite fun (and funny) as you ask questions about everyday things that never get thought about, and especially when you try to tie in what you personally know. I have an idea that many NEMES members would be ahead of the curve in some areas. None of us could fill in all the blanks, though.

But on this planet, in today’s world, the fine antiques market is getting more and more dysfunctional. The R/C helicopter field has been inundated by automatically-controlled toys that you don’t even need to watch. High-end furniture companies are folding. Radio Shack – wherever and /or if it still exists – is a joke. Harbor Freight imports tools from

Bangthedish and Nosepickistan, and you’re happy if they survive for one job. It’s endless and rather sad. There is a bright side, albeit in a sad way as well. Good stuff – nice tools, fine firearms, classy traditional furniture, and so on – is getting less expensive because the market for it is shrinking. This is good for those of us who appreciate these things, but it may be the last gasp before the next step for such items, which is scrap or dump fodder, since there may not be an appreciative generation coming along behind us.

So back to the problem of not having leadership. No answers to the problem, just some probable causes being presented. It’s understandable that any president for the last 10-15 years (I speak very generally, of the heads of many such organizations) may want a break. He should get to play with his own toys, and I appreciate and endorse that spirit. But who’s going to replace him – another 70-year-old guy? That’s not realistic, and in a way it’s not fair either. It’s also inappropriate to try to bludgeon or shame anyone into a post that they’re not enthusiastic about. That’s a short road to disillusionment and burnout.

Taking a quote from a faith-based standpoint, “If you strive to gain, you’ll need to strive to maintain.” It could be said that things that are meant to be, will be, regardless of your efforts. And things that are on life support will need that life support to continue for them to survive. If NEMES (or the car club, or the gun club, or the antiques show, etc.) is going to successfully carry on, it will do so without striving. If striving is required, it will always be required, and some small group of participants will always bear the bulk of that load.

[Editor’s comments: While I agree with many of the things Steve writes, there is another side. I am a 75 year old graduate engineer (Registered Professional Engineer as well). Most of my neighbors in Boston live in condominiums, and the average age is probably 30 years younger than I. When it snows, most have a snow removal service clear their front steps, front walks, and parking spaces in back (probably so they can get to the gym for their upper body workout). I can still swing a snow shovel pretty well, and shovel my own snow. My 35 year old son is an electrical engineer, who is now renovating his own house. He is a design engineer with a high-tech

company on Route 128, and has saved his company money by setting up applications of their products so they were easy to install. So, maybe there is hope for the world yet.]

## Future Events

People wanting to read of future events in the Gazette will please send the Editor information on those events. I do not have contact information on the various groups, and if nobody wants to serve as a NEMES officer, I do not see any reason why I should go to the effort to run down listings.