

Metro Detroit Metalworking Club

Newsletter

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Edited by

WEB SITE ADDRESS

The Metro Detroit Metalworking Club's has a Home Page on the World Wide Web. The "URL" or web address for the site is:

NEXT MEETING

The next club meeting will be held on September 10 from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Marcotte Room of the Southfield Public Library.

MEETING NOTES

SOUTHFIELD, MI. We were pleased to welcome six new members to the club. Bob Lorenz brought several goodies which he gave to lucky winners by pulling their names out of a can.

Once introductions were made we began our meeting by finishing last week's unfinished business.

Until someone else steps up to the plate, Bob Lorenz will continue to be president, secretary and treasurer! Our most pressing club problem is finding a permanent place for our club to meet. Our present site is wonderful but is not always available. John Kacir will look into using a room at Macomb Community College. The Smithy company also suggested the possibility of using their headquarters in Ann Arbor as a meeting site. Both of these sites are just possibilities right now; we hope to find a permanent home for the club soon.

David MacMillan asked for volunteers to help him work on our club website and reminded us to check the links to other metal clubs all over the world.

Bob Lorenz brought up the idea of expanding our membership. He had contacted the staff at *The Home Shop Machinist* who told him they would be happy to send letters to any portion of their readers in our area for a small fee. After a brief discussion we decided to simply place an ad in the magazine which would reach a much wider audience than a regional mailing list.

Stephen Gutierrez brought three lists of member's books. We agreed that borrowing books or tapes from

members should be an informal transaction between those doing the borrowing and lending.

We spent the rest of the meeting discussing a variety of topics centered around club activities and the demise or revival (depending on your point of view) of school shop and young people's interest in machining.

We hatched all kinds of schemes for club activities. Mike Latchka suggested a contest in which club members would make a project based on simple guidelines. He offered, as an example, a woodworking project that specified the contestants were to make a box that looked like an acorn. John Kacir picked up the ball with several more ideas. One of his suggestions was to make a machine by having each member make a part from plans. A variation of this idea was to have each member make the same part for the machine to see if they were interchangeable. Another good idea John suggested was to acquire a clunker machine (lathe, mill, shaper) and recondition it.

We could have lots of fun fixing the thing then we could sell it! We decided to mull over these ideas for a month then bring specific project ideas to the next meeting.

Several of our new members are the dedicated people responsible for the N.A.M.E.S. exhibit presented every year, here in our own backyard. One of Earl Gage's responsibilities is to educate the public about machining and model engineering. He began a very interesting discussion about education. While he and other N.A.M.E.S. members have given demonstrations at schools, they've found themselves swamped by teachers wanting fascinating demonstrations of machines and mechanical principles. A display at the most recent N.A.M.E.S. exhibit showing a simple balloon powered engine drew lots of attention and perplexed many adults who thought the balloon was being filled by the piston engine.

Our club has teachers from all educational levels including elementary, highschool, and college. We had a lively discussion about how young people today have little understanding of basic mechanics and how there is a real void to fill in our schools with interesting demonstrations and models. Some members argued that many high schools have closed their shops because of the enormous risks of insuring twelve year olds working on, say, a bandsaw. Other members saw an interesting trend: more adults were taking metal shop classes at the community college level because they missed them as adolescents. Mike Latchka gave a fascinating example of colleges and high schools collaborating. College students learning how to design parts would write specs for parts and send them to high school shop students who would make them.

As a brand new club, our role is still evolving. We seem to have a strong interest in doing fun group projects and in sharing our knowledge with the public. With half a dozen teachers in the club, it wouldn't surprise this editor to see some sort of educational program forming.

David MacMillan enthralled us with a short video of a rolling ball sculpture made by Gary Gunderson. The contraption was a beautifully made kinetic piece with various finely machined components that guided steel balls through a mesmerizing pattern.

Check out David's own [_____](#) for links to other rolling ball sculpture sites.

- Stephen Gutierrez

Return to the [_____](#) Home Page.