



New Orleans Section, Inc.

Setting the Standard for Automation

March 2017
The Current Pneusletter



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March meeting cancelled

New Orleans Section will not have a general meeting in March.

Members of the section's executive committee met on 2 February. The action item from that meeting was to prepare a business case for section activities going forward. It is due for completion on 31 March 2017.■

What's going on with New Orleans section?

by Larry Iverson, Editor

Readers of this newsletter might be wondering about suspension of activities of New Orleans Section.

Two reasons should be obvious to the casual observer. Attendance at monthly general meetings has trended downward over the past several years. Recently, the quantity of meeting attendees, who are not members of the executive committee, has been 10 or less.

The small number of attendees is a drain on the section's treasury with no apparent benefit to the sustainability of the section. Every meeting attendee pays the same entry fee, except for the guest speaker—the section pays for that one meal. Many meeting venues require a minimum fee, which can tax the treasury out of proportion to the quantity of attendees.

Also, inviting a guest speaker, who must spend 8–16 hours preparing and tailoring materials for a presentation, only to face an audience of a dozen or less is a disservice to the guest speaker and an embarrassment to the section and its members.

The second reason might not be so obvious to said casual observer. Nevertheless, a glance at p.2 of this newsletter reveals that important *elected* officer positions are vacant (i.e., president-elect and vice president), some executive committee members serve in multiple positions, and there are no new names in the list, year-over-year. This latter reason has a direct bearing on the first reason because, in the absence of "new blood," it has become impossible to present the membership with a full ballot for those important elected positions.

In other words, most Society members, who are members of New Orleans section, do not volunteer for leadership positions afforded by the section's executive committee structure.

Lest the reader conclude that the root cause of diminishing section activity is strictly failure of member support, executive committees of the past several years have relaxed their strategic and succession planning duties, too. It has been many summers since the last strategic planning meeting, the traditional time of year for this activity. Most important, the executive committee

See What's going on? on p.2

SECTION OFFICERS 2016–17

| | |
|--|--|
| President Jose Suarez | Webmaster Wayne Welk (504) 734–6237 |
| President-elect <i>vacant</i> | Exhibits Chairman Bill Brock (504) 734–6211 |
| Vice President <i>vacant</i> | Marketing Chairman Dean Bickerton (504) 717–0718 |
| Secretary Bill Brock (504) 734–6211 | Publications Chairman Larry Iverson (504) 813–6972 |
| Treasurer Natarajan Muthaiah (504) 391–6573 | Honors & Awards Chairman Ram Ramachandran (504) 456–6269 |
| Delegate Mike Williamson (504) 849–2243 Steve May (Alt.) (504) 456–7446 | Historian Larry Iverson (504) 813–6972 |
| Programming Co-chairmen Roger Reedy (504) 220–3030 | Student Section Liaison Bill Brock (504) 734–6211 |
| Education Chairman Robert Terrell (504) 613–8039 | Section–Division Liaison Wayne Welk (504) 734–6237 |
| Membership Chairman Dean Bickerton (504) 717–0718 | Codes, Standards, Practices, Shrimp Boil Chairman Ram Ramachandran (504) 456–6269 |
| Codes, Standards, & Practices Chairman Ram Ramachandran (504) 456–6269 | Past President Brad Vicknair (985) 351–7981 |
| Newsletter Editor Larry Iverson (504) 813–6972 | Arrangements Chairman Mike Benbow (504) 836–8976 |

Articles & Announcements

Articles and Announcements

Submit an article or announcement to *The Current Pneusletter* to Larry Iverson via lhiverson3@att.net.

Deadline

Materials must be submitted by the 10th day of the month preceding the issue in which it should appear.

José Suarez

President
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What's going on? from p.1

as a whole has not engaged in robust and ongoing succession planning. Succession planning is the “without which, none” duty of any executive committee or board of directors—arguably it’s most important duty.

All of this begs the question, “Is New Orleans Section, Inc., a sustainable entity going forward?” An answer is, “It could be.” (Note the indefinite article, “an.”)

This situation has not gone unnoticed by the executive committee—or at the Society level, either. Currently, a core of executive committee volunteers has committed to engage in a process that will yield a business case for the section going forward. These members have accepted a deliverable date of 31 March 2017. The District 7 vice president also has offered to become engaged.

This team has expressed their intent to proceed with a rigorous SWOT—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats—analysis as one element of this business case process. The result of that analysis should offer guidance as to how to plan a restart of section activities on a sustainable platform.

Of course, everyone who has ever engaged in a SWOT analysis realizes that the product is only a snapshot of the current business environment. A SWOT analysis is akin to a company’s balance sheet. It alone does not constitute the business case.

Section members should expect a business case process whose product ought to address the following typical elements of a strategic planning model: (1) business definition; (2) situation analysis; (3) formulation of strategic alternatives; (4) strategy evaluation and selection; and (5) strategy implementation. A timeline for implementation needs to be included, too.

This “product” is a tall order to produce in two months. Now is the time for members, who see value in a healthy New Orleans ISA section to become engaged by offering to participate in the process.

An objective of the section is to serve Society members as well as the companies for whom they work. The Society and the section can be a resource for both—but only if it continues to exist as an energetic and growing enterprise. ■