



TENNESSEE INVENTORS ASSOCIATION

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As announced in the last newsletter this months meeting was to be highlighted by the 2004 election of officers and board members. The following candidates were proposed.

PRESIDENT	Igor Alexeff
VICE PRESIDENT	Virgil Davis
TREASURER	Anne Alexeff
RECORDING SECRETARY	Terry Brewster
BOARD OF DIRECTORS	Martin Skinner Gordon Campbell Arnold Beal Rainer Riffert

Other nominations were called for prior to the election from the floor. There being none a motion was made and seconded that the proposed slate be accepted by acclimation. The motion was passed.

On a less formal note the meeting continued as an open forum during which several items were discussed.

The revised TIA web page was described as a great improvement over that being presented in the past. Newsletters in a condensed form, that is without photos and graphics, are now available and can be viewed in a PDF format.

A letter was read that was received from an inmate confined in a Michigan penitentiary requesting information about the invention process that might help in his future. After consideration the group agreed that our best offering was to send the writer a complimentary copy of our TIA Inventors Guide.

Anne Alexeff read a memo from John Galkiewicz in which it was mentioned that John's invention (cat toy) was to be mentioned in a segment of the TV program **Good Morning America** on January twenty ninth. The program usually runs between seven and nine a.m. and John's appearance was expected to appear in the latter part of the show. You might want to contact John for more details.

Ernie Maples reported attending a meeting of the Inventors Council of Cincinnati. The group meets on the first Tuesday of each month. Parking was found to be difficult at the downtown library location.

Those attending were pleased to learn that Gordon Campbell has at last received a patent on his student-grading device. You may recall the difficulty Gordon had with a former collaborator who may have usurped the invention and has been marketing one independently.

The notion that starting with a social period might enhance some meetings was talked about. Coffee and donuts or cookies for instance might get things warmed up. Someone said that knowing a person better as a result of such an informal contact would make for an easier interchange of thoughts and reduce the fear of infringements.

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A GOOD THING

NETWORKING--As pointed out earlier, the value of such meetings can be most beneficial. Many meetings, including those with guest speakers frequently consume the entire time allotted and consequently limit our ability to mingle with other members leaving a gap in the exchange of ideas and experiences. It has been noted that when we are able to convene in this fashion it is possible to formulate future activities and programs that might be of use to others.

Another proposition coming from the December meeting was one of starting a help program **for members only**, providing assistance and training in the process of inventing and patenting. Trade marking too might even be a viable subject.

The possibility of having a one on one session with more experienced “inventors” or “practitioners” by way of a select committee who might guide one toward the betterment of his or her idea.

The thinking is that TIA has a commitment to further the education of inventors and advance technology.

To that end it may be possible to have private, confidential sessions, by appointment, wherein an inventor might obtain more specific help. The idea is not to have the association replace professionals but to provide a steering group helping the uninitiated to organize ideas and proceed in a more orderly fashion.

Knowing how to classify, search, or state claims would be of prime importance. When to prototype and build models would be good subject matter. Having someone to state the idea is good, fair or bad might prevent unnecessary expense and disappointment.

This idea would best be conducted aside from our regular meetings, before, after or even off site at some predetermined location and time. The key word is confidence and candor. A kindness would be to pass along evidence that the idea is not new or that it is not ready to progress in the opinion of the committee. It is important to stress that the idea is not intended to provide a “do for” activity but in a fashion set up a “how to” program for the enlightenment of any member requesting help for a personal need.

Your opinion on this and the other subjects brought up here is needed by the board of directors who can make use of such information in formulating our activity for the coming year.

You will find more on this subject on page three outlining some of the possible activity.

NEXT MEETING JANUARY 17, 2004

Our January speaker is Ralph Davis, inventor of Stair Square . This simple tool for measuring and cutting out steps is attracting national attention. The Stair Square is in production at Tennessee Moulding Inc. in the Lake City Industrial Park. He won the Retailers' Choice Award in the International Hardware Show in Chicago last year. This talk will give inventors a good picture of what is involved in taking an invention from concept to production.

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