



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE APRIL 2021

3/27/21 - 2nd Zoom Interview of David Nock, EFMLS President by Jeff Ursillo

JU: We meet again!

DN: What would be the odds if we weren't using Zoom. How are you Jeff?

JU: Indeed, I wouldn't take those odds. I'm good. What's new? So should we jump right into this again?

DN: Lets do it! I do have a small bit of news today. I consider it a safety message. <https://youtu.be/Td0F-Plp8ZB0>

JU: You mentioned after our last interview that you had more that you wanted to get out there to the EFMLS Members. More in terms of what the local members can see, that is real?

DN: Yes. And no. I realized after our last conversation, I didn't give much substance in regard to the things that over the past 2 years have benefitted the members and their societies. Yes, the members need to know the recent benefits and no, for the reason that I failed to realize they can't see them because they haven't been looking for them or have been shown. I've always thought actions speak for themselves but they don't matter if no one notices or is shown. Unfortunately, most members don't know what we have accomplished for their benefit. I know that sometimes you have to put yourself out front and show them, which is not my thing, that's not really me. I just hoped they were always watching. Don't you hate, that may be too strong, or don't you find grandstanding and showmanship kind of.. I don't know, repulsive, for lack of a better word. Off-putting is probably better.

JU: Point taken. So, if the members were to look or finally be shown, what can they expect to see?

DN: Where do I begin? How about Insurance, the Federation group insurance?

JU: That's a good one to start with and I'm sure you'll get people's attention with that?

DN: This year we combined the annual membership dues renewal with the insurance renewal. After having no choice but to step in as Acting Federation Insurance Coordinator in 2019, I thought, how stupid is this process. Why are we collecting money in November for insurance and then turn around and collect membership dues a month later. Why bother or worse yet, inconvenience the societies twice in a year? It's just more work. Renewals should be once per year, period. We've done this now.

JU: Seems logical. Anything else on insurance or membership dues?

DN: There's usually more to every situation but I'll briefly sum up the past 2 years. We've improved year to year. In 2019 we had a fillable pdf form and this year an online form. We doubled our ease and efficiency for both the Federation and the societies we serve. For membership and for the goodwill of the Federation, we waived the 2021 membership dues during this pandemic. No way to tell how many of the 10,000 members know this though. You see now the problem with communicating what we've done.

JU: Yeah. Sounds like an insurmountable effort in communicating down to the local members.

JU: So what else David have you done for me as a local society member of the EFMLS.

DN: EFMLS.org (the official website of the Eastern Federation, by the way)

JU: Do I see a story coming?

DN: Sorry, but yeah. It is quite the story and it's sad that some people had to turn it into a controversy. The idea for a new website began just before I took office in 2018. Initially, the plan for the website was to manage the affairs of the Federation internally. After the membership voted at the 2019 Annual Meeting to proceed on a new website, an Ad Hoc Committee was formed and realized the website should attempt to expand its customer base to include all members and especially John Q Public. If there was one thing that the Federation should do to serve our member affiliate societies is to help them get more local members. And what better and easier way than a platform such as a website! Man, the majority of mineral societies and clubs in the U.S. (not to mention other social organizations; churches, fraternal orgs, etc.) have seen a steady decline in membership since the early 90's.

JU: I can tell this isn't the complete story but let's move on. I've been seeing things with these new field programs or maybe they are not so new.



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DN: Relatively. Three field programs started in 2019. Actually only 2 but the potential for a third. A field trip sharing program (EFTA) that mimics the Southeast Federation's sharing program. They made it so easy for us, they gave us their program on a silver platter. If only all of the EFMLS Societies could realize its ready right now and almost completely turn-key and the site specific collecting concerns have all but been figured out already. The other field program is the access council (EFAC) which so far has been more of a discussion or think tank group with the goal of ultimately doing something to stop the decline of collecting access. I do feel that I have done a good job with advertising these, EFTA in particular. Go to EFMLS.org and you'll see on the top menu, "Field Programs." The third program is more of an event, a trip or trips, rather than a program. The Southeast Federation's Field Leaders have expressed interest in having both the EFMLS & SFMS do a yearly joint trip on an ad hoc basis. I must digress for a moment here Jeff if I may.

JU: Oh-kay. About what?

DN: Most people who come into the Federation, meaning those who come into the management like officers, chairs or what have you, soon learn about The Great Rift. I know you know or heard that in the mid 70's, several Eastern Societies in the southeastern U.S. decided to leave the Eastern Federation and form the Southeast Federation. Currently, there are no or very, very few members of either Federation who were around at that time almost 50 years ago and there's still this animosity towards members of the Southeast Federation from the management in Eastern. This pisses me off! Their members don't hold a grudge and why should they. If they did, why would they be so gracious, friendly and helpful with our field programs and in general. Again, stupid! Okay, I'm done.

JU: The look on your face is telling. So let's get back to, shall we call it, the Great Reckoning of Benefits.

DN: Yes, that's what we're here to do.

JU: So we've covered or highlighted some of the earlier things in your Presidency, but there's been quite a lot going on in just the past year. Since last March.

DN: What a year. And where the Federation stands, or is looking to stand, right now is because of this Pandemic and the opportunity it provided and seizing that opportunity. You know, I have tried to inform the members through emails, email marketing software, web pages, social media and zoom. And now I must go back to the newsletter format. Communication is always dicey. The difficulty is that there is no way to know if the announcements and messages are being received, let alone seen. So let's cover some of the highlights, shall we?

JU: I'll just let you have at it then.

DN: Okay, thank you. In December 2019, I created the EFMLS Zoom account.

JU: You said 2019.

DN: Yeah, I was using Zoom more and more since 2018 in my day job and I figured maybe one day this would be something to look into for the Federation. We started using the EFLMS Zoom account for the Change Management & Leadership Council (CMLC) in June, 2020. That's also when we started the CMLC.

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JU: Is this committee or program pretty much what the name implies?

DN: Pretty much. The Federation is a business and all businesses require change or they die and part of this to figure out how to manage change and how to develop leadership. All the things I felt this organization most needed. The zooming just took off and snowballed from there. We also started and hosting amfed (AFMS) committee meetings all last summer then a few Southeast Federation Meetings. The Roundtable format here in Eastern seemed to strike a chord and of course in part, many of us were zooming because we were stuck at home. For once, besides the Federation newsletter and the Annual Convention, we were able to interact with so many of our local society members. Local Presidents, Editors, Field Personnel, etc. and they were just coming and coming and coming in on zoom. We were blown away at the response. Plus, there was the variety of different types of "meetings" we'll call them. There were 4 major speaker presentations with very well-known individuals in the field of Mineralogy. President Roundtables and Happy Hours, weekly CMLC Meeting in the fall and winter and a virtual Holiday Party with prizes. Several smaller, working group meetings, including Bylaws, SOPP, Field Programs, Webservice Group, we even had a meeting 2 weeks ago with the good folks of the Maine Mineral & Geological Society about electronic membership cards for smartphones. And there were the called business meetings, Board of Directors Meetings, in which we got business done for once that didn't fall into the typical schedule where we had to wait to meet in person once per year. Some people have remarked that there was more actual business that took place last year than in the past 15, maybe even 20 years. The use of technology for our business has resulted in us working smarter not harder. I believe this has helped made us adopt this mindset in all the Federation business we attempted.

JU: What are you most proud of David?

DN: All the wonderful people who made all this possible. But you are probably still thinking of the "what's in it for me" ideology.

JU: For the purpose of this interview and asking you the questions you probably need to answer, of course, this IS the world we live in.

DN: I'm starting to notice several trends here in these interviews- Jeff. There has been very little of me because it has never been about me and I've always put first those who I have a duty and obligation to serve. That's you and your fellow 10,000 or so members who pay dues to belong to the organization.

JU: So what would be the one takeaway you want people to know.

DN: I think I covered that in our previous interview but it definitely needs to be taken to heart by every member.

JU: The 2020 Bylaws?

DN: The 2020 Bylaws! I know that when any Bylaws are brought up people's eyes tend to glaze over. And I used to be guilty of this too. When the local Presidents voted on October 21, 2020 and ratified the 2020 Bylaws, they weren't really voting for a document containing rules or whatever. No, they were voting for change! Probably because last Spring many of the local Presidents learned that they are President Directors and comprise the majority of the EFMLS Board of Directors. The majority voted 2 to 1 to ratify these Bylaws.

JU: Many of the local members saw the Attorney letter about the purported December Election and so it seems pretty clear that there are some people inside the Federation, those who have been around for years, who don't recognize the 2020 Bylaws.

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DN: The attorney letter is also on the website at efmls.org/bod. Well, we can all believe whatever we want. The vote was verified and confirmed by the Independent Professional Registered Parliamentarian at that meeting (this is critical for everyone to understand because it is not someone inside the organization). And if anyone doesn't consider the votes and the document legal, they have, excuse me, had the opportunity to make the arrangements to contest them. I say had, because the statute of limitations to contest them has passed. Per the Bylaws reviewing attorney, New York law is clear that any party has 4 months to take action. Once February 21, 2021 came and went, there really isn't any more discussion about the 2020 Bylaws, the EFMLS is obligated to adhere to them.

JU: So I would imagine that there are many other contributions that you've made and of course we can't all of them here.

DN: Again, I would rather show than tell.

JU: What can members out there, the individuals who want to learn more about what the EFMLS has done for them, do to see what you and the other individuals have been working on?

DN: We are planning to post more on efmls.org. I'm glad you mentioned the other individuals Jeff. Because there is no way I could have done what has been accomplished without so many of these incredible, hard working members. There's also many local Presidents who have championed these initiatives and programs and the forward thinking many of us want.

JU: Anything else?

DN: Yes, thank you Jeff. I can only hope that the EFMLS members appreciate your contribution in making these interviews happen.

JU: You're welcome David. Good luck!



Judy Juncker February 11, 2021
Maine Mineralogical and Geological Society

Our friend Judy Juncker, of Limerick, died on February 11, 2021. Her husband, Henry (Hank) predeceased her on October 11, 2018. Both joined MMSG in 2011 after returning to Maine from Massachusetts where Judy taught second grade in Gloucester for many years. She also worked with the Mt. Desert Island summer program for families run by College of the Atlantic.

Judy was an enthusiastic participant in our Field Trip program where her boundless curiosity and devotion to the hunt was only surpassed by her cheeriness. No matter the weather, how early we had to meet, or how rugged the terrain, she would wend her way around the dig, sharp eyes peering everywhere, stopping to chat with everyone in the group—and the stories she told!