The Journal of the Nova Woodturners' Guild

Volume 30 Issue 10
June 2026

The Turning Point

In this issue:

President's Report	2
May Meeting Notes	3
This Really Sucks	15
DaveM's Fireside Chat	20
Notes From Members	21
Cover Photo	22
Photo Credits	22
Guild Executive	23



The next meeting of the Nova Woodturners' Guild
will be held at Lee Valley Tools, 150 Susie Lake Crescent, Halifax
Sunday, June 14, 2026 at 2:00 PM

At the June meeting:
Annual Turning Competition Results
Annual General Meeting
Show and tell

The President's Report

The final meeting of the year is fast approaching and it's hard to believe that the year is almost over. Reflecting back on the last year and thinking of the topics and procedures that were discussed and demonstrated brings back a flood of memories. Hopefully we all learned a little and enjoyed what was presented.

The annual turning competition has finished with the judging having taken place on May 29. We had entries from 9 turners (2 novice, 3 intermediate, 4 open) submitting 26 items: 5 novice, 10 intermediate, and 11 open. The results of the competition will be announced at this Sunday's meeting.

I wish to thank the executive for all their work. If it wasn't for their contribution we would not be able to carry on. Their knowledge of the Guild and the in and outs of our organization has made it possible for me to make it through my second term. It is my great pleasure to announce that the team has agreement to one more trip around the sun.

That's all for now and I looking forward to see you on Sunday.

Bob Earle – President

Notes from the May Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President **Bob Earle** at 6:15 PM with 8 present in person and 3 participating online.

Announcements:

- The annual Turning competition is coming up in May. The deadline for entry drop off is May 23rd between 10:00 and 2:00 PM at the Seminar Room at Lee Valley in Halifax. Other drop off dates are: Wed, May 20th 10:00-2:00 PM and Friday, May 22 10:00-2:00 PM. All entry forms, Guidelines and Competition Rules are available on the Guild website in the Documents section. We are in need of some volunteers to help accept entries on these dates, so if you are available please speak to anyone on the Executive.

Main Presentation:

The main presentation this month was *A Fantastic Food-safe Finish*, with **Richard Ford**. The presentation was in video format with Richard online to handle any questions that came up.

How important is a Food-Safe finish to the Maker?

Can chemicals be absorbed into your bloodstream?
You bet they can. It depends on the chemical. Consider that medicine can be administered through a patch on the skin: Nicotine patch. Insulin patch. Fentanyl patch. Birth control patch. Clearly, if medicine can be absorbed through the skin and into the blood, so can other substances. In fact, back in 2004, the U.S. Environmental Working Group published studies that found toxic chemicals in the umbilical cord blood of newborn babies born in the U.S. They screened for more than 400 chemicals, and detected 287 toxins.

The bottom line is chemicals can be absorbed by the skin, and since science is not yet sure which chemicals enter the bloodstream, your safest bet is to avoid putting any chemicals on your skin. Plus, even if a chemical doesn't make its way into the bloodstream, it can cause problems on the skin itself through irritation, rash, and even cancer.

What are some of the chemicals to avoid putting on your skin? A good motto: if you can't pronounce it, don't use it. Petroleum derivatives, preservatives, synthetic fragrances, and dyes should be avoided. These go by many names, including Olefin Sulfonate, Sodium Luaroyl Sarcosinate, Potassium Cocoyl Glutamate, Sulfates, Parabens, and Phenoxyethanol.

The above was copied from the internet so do your own research to be sure.

. . . . . .

I have been looking for a finish with no petroleum, no toxic or harmful substances, or vapours.

The three Tried and True finishes I looked at seem to meet that goal:

- Tried and True Original
- Tried and True Danish
- Tried and True Varnish

See what the maker says: **https://www.triedandtruewoodfinish.com/products**.

Using Tried and True Original, I have evolved a simple, safe, fast method, that produces a finish I love, and makes finishing a pleasure.

The full video can be seen here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5lssFc9iJg**
Get the formulas here: **https://novawoodturnersguild.com/hints/Richards_Food-Safe_Finishing.pdf**
Get the pictorial here: **https://novawoodturnersguild.com/hints/RJF_A_Foodsafe_Finishing_Pictorial.pdf**

Richard's Finishing Process:
Below is a pictorial representation of the steps of the method (all images taken from Richard Ford's video):

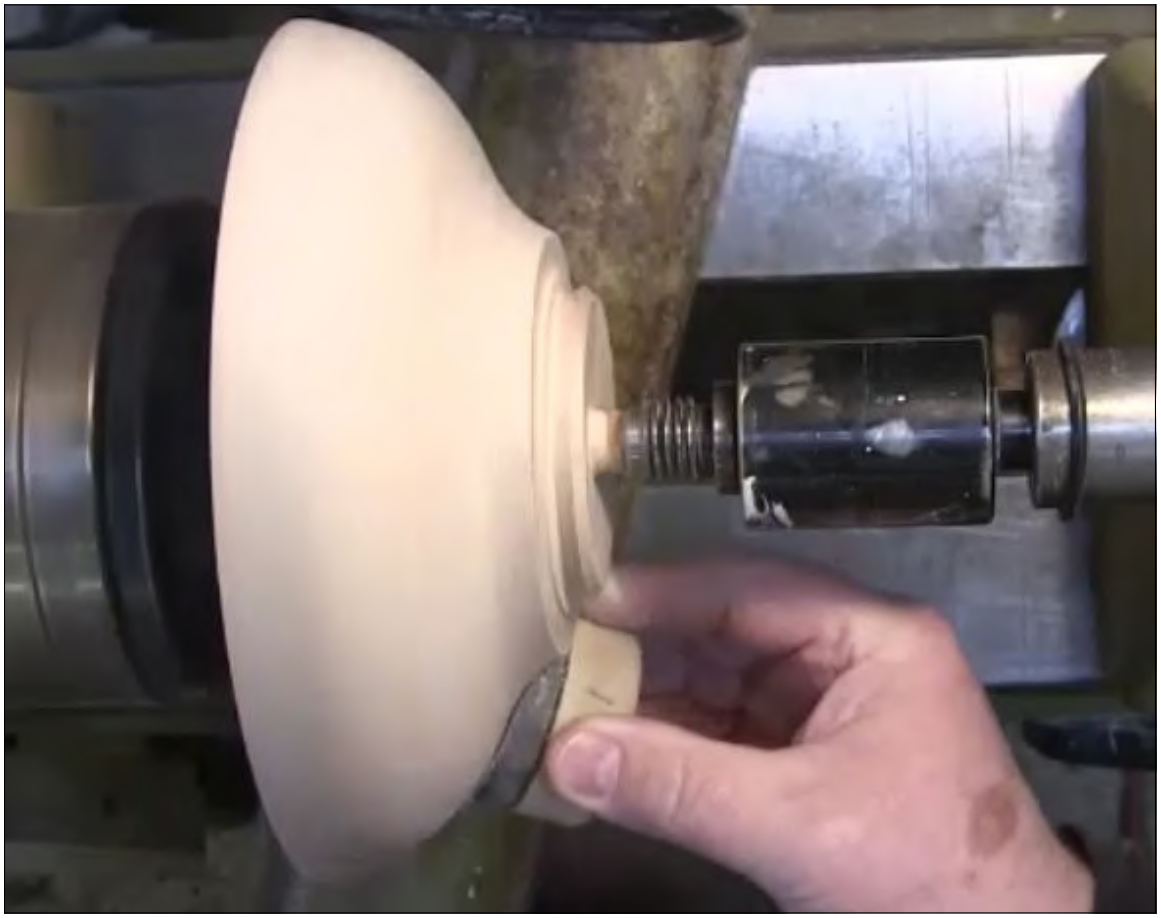


Figure 1 All finishes start with the surface preparation. Here Richard uses 400–600 grit.



Figure 2 Rubbing in the 1st coat of Tried & True Original.



Figure 3 A 2 minute bonding/setting rest; just let it sit for a couple of minutes.



Figure 4 Rubbing the finish into surface with bare hands and checking surface.



Figure 5 Rubbing Nova-Silk into surface with one spot of napkin.



Figure 6 Nova-Silk rubbed until it's gone.



Figure 7 Burnish with wood chips or 000 steel wool.



Figure 8 Repair any imperfection before continuing, here orbital sanding with 600 grit Abranet.



Figure 9 Rubbing in the 2nd coat of Tried & True Original

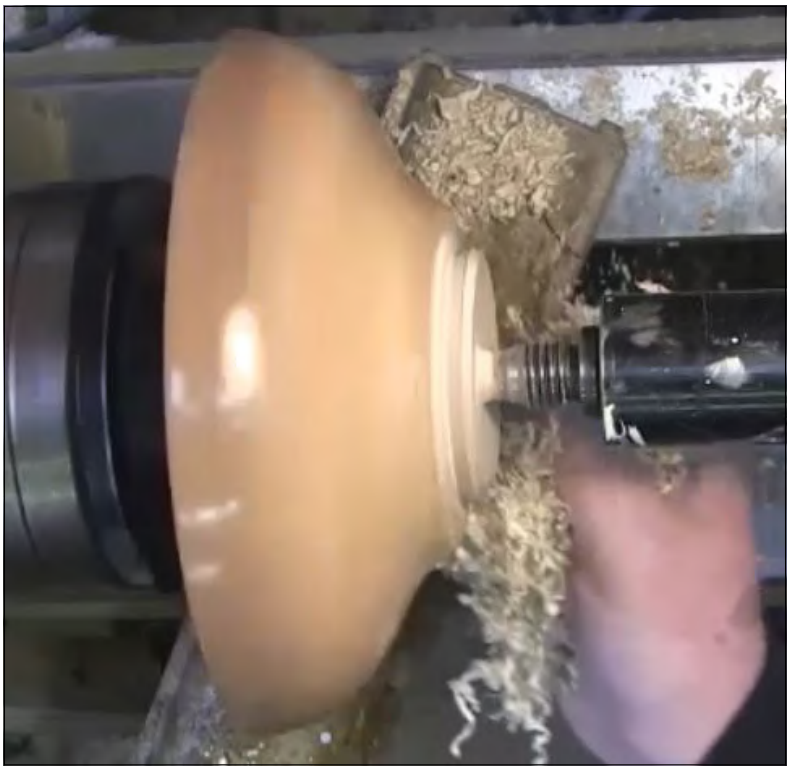


Figure 10 After 2 minute bonding/setup, burnish with wood chips or 000 steel wool



Figure 11 A final polish with a paper towel.



Figure 12 With the outside finished, repeat the process on inside and base.



Figure 13 The Inside finished with the same process.



Figure 14 The Base finished the same way.



Figure 15 After a minimum of 24 hours curing in a warm location it's buffing time.



Figure 16 Buffed with Tripoli (Tried & True Original finish polished).



Figure 17 Buffed with white diamond (Tried & True Original finish polished).



Figure 18 Buffed with carnauba wax.



Figure 19 With the Base Signed.

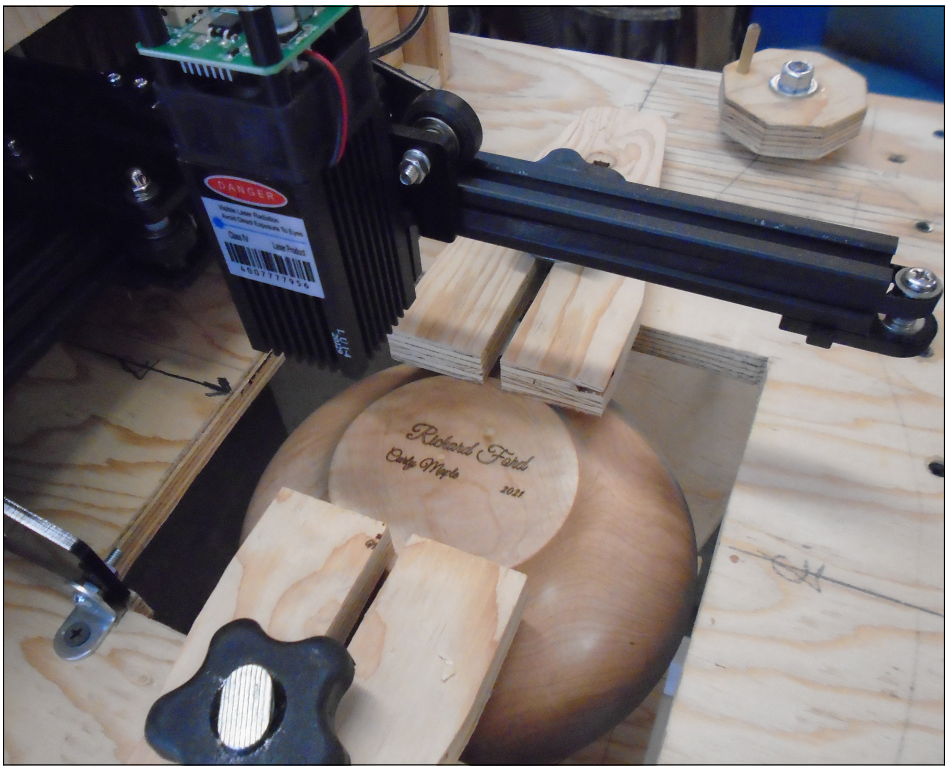


Figure 20 Richard's new bowl/vase signing pen

Show & Tell:

Brian Sharp showed off an interesting Earring Box in the shape of a birthday cake. The box itself is in Maple and Walnut with carved and painted BBQ skewers to represent candles.

Bob Earle presented a Sierra pen in green acrylic resin.

The meeting wrapped up at 8:40 PM. The next meeting is June 7th at 2:00pm.

Editor's Note: The June meeting date has been changed to June 14th.

Calum Ewing — Secretary

This Really Sucks

It is interesting how the mind works. One can see a problem and even come up with a solution but that old nemesis, “paralysis by analysis”, takes over and nothing gets done. That was me when it came to a getting a dust collection point at my lathe. For years I kicked shavings out of my way to get jobs done and eventually (that undefined point in life where common sense overcomes indecision) I got fed up with the status quo.

You see, I have a 1hp dust collector but it is only conveniently located for my table saw, jointer, miter saw and router table at one end of my shop. To clean up around my lathe I had to disconnect it from one of the above and wheel it over to the other side of my basement shop before I could clean up the chips and dust at the lathe. The solutions were obvious. One, get a longer hose to reach the lathe which entailed a possible trip hazard and a major cost for expensive coiled hose OR two, install a pipe along the ceiling from above the dust collector’s normal location to above the lathe. I opted for the latter.

In words, this is what I did. I sourced 4″ PVC sewer pipe, two 45° sewer elbows, two ABS splice unions, some squeeze hose clamps and grounding wire. Some items I had already and some were specific purchases. The pipe was cut to length and a grounding wire was installed leaving connections on the outside of the pipe at each end, to be later connected to a grounding surface in the shop’s wiring. On each end a 45° sewer elbow was attached. The male end of this fitting could not be attached to my existing 4″ hose so I installed a splice union into each one. This did require me to put the unions on my lathe and reduce one end by about $^1/_{16}$″of the total diameter to allow them to slide into the union. Your situation may be different. The final move was to cut some of my existing 4″ dust hose to appropriate lengths and attach one to each union using squeeze hose clamps (for easy removal and re-installation). These “drops” allowed for connection to my dust collector’s suction hose on one end and a hose at my lathe for use during turning and clean up afterwards.

Tests have shown that, without gluing or taping the joints, there is no discernible loss of suction. Another installation may produce a need to reduce vacuum loss by sealing the joints. The side benefit of not sealing the joints is that any future blockages can be cleared by easily disassembling the pipe at one or more joints. So far, I have not noticed any static discharge onto my hands during use so I am fairly confident that my grounding system is working.

Below are some photos to try and make sense of the text above.



Figure 1 This shows how my dust collector's vacuum is directed up to the PVC pipe in the ceiling.



Figure 2 This shows the connection from the dust collector's hose to one end of the pipe and fittings in the ceiling.

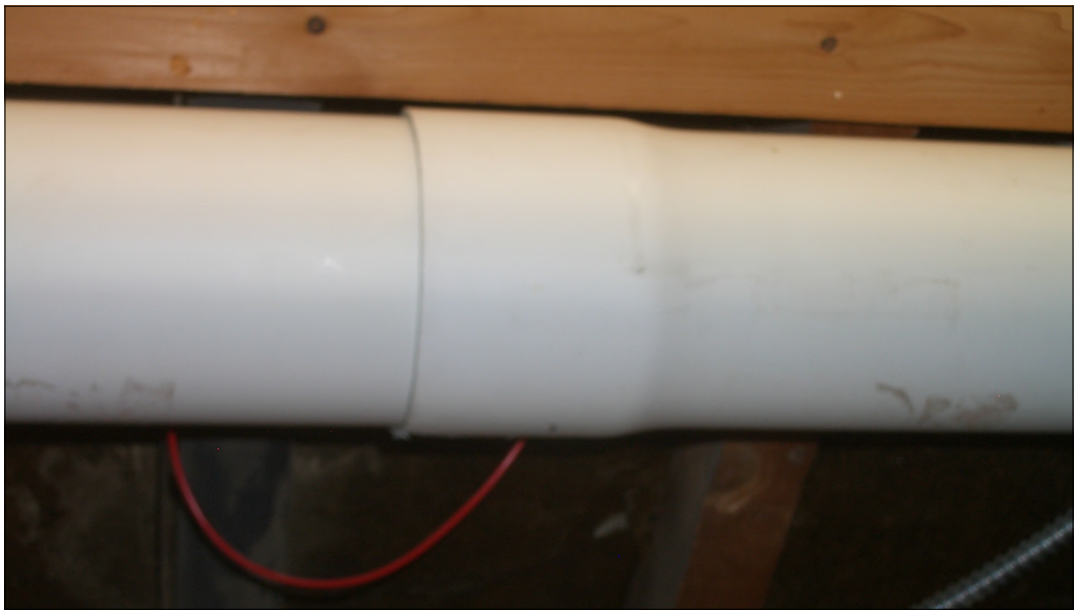


Figure 3 This shows the pipe mid-run. The pipe was cut because only one end had a bell end. By cutting in half I got the same shape on each end which allowed the sewer elbows to slip over the cut end, minimizing the need to have different fittings on each end. Plus, this seam allows for the pipe to be slipped apart for cleaning without disturbing the end fittings. Note the red wire. This is an external jumper from one half to the other so grounding connections do not impair disassembly.



Figure 4 This is a closer view of the main transitions at each end. From left to right, the pipe has the female end of the sewer elbow over it then the splice (turned down in diameter) slipped inside the male end of the sewer elbow. Finally, the hose is installed on the splice and held in place by the squeeze hose clamp.

Parts list:

- Sewer elbow from Home Depot; stock number is 240404 ($9.21+tax each).
- ABS splice from Lee Valley. Part # 03J6105 ($7.50+tax each)
- Squeeze hose clamp from Lee Valley. Part # 03J6174 ($7.90+tax each)



Figure 5 A rather blurry overhead shot of the lathe end of the pipe and its drop. Note the red wire: it is connected to a nut and bolt inside the pipe, and the bolt is secured to the pipe with another nut on the outside of the pipe, where the bolt exits the top of the pipe the red grounding wire is connected to the external nut using another nut. The wire is then attached to the metal junction box's ground wire. This is repeated at the other end of the pipe. Care was taken to ensure the wires inside the pipe never drooped into the pipe but rather ran tightly from bolt to bolt. This should minimize slow accumulation of particles and eventual blockages. Also, the internal wires were stripped of all insulation to increase static conduction.

Well, for what it is worth, that is what I did. It seems to be working well for me. Hopefully, if this presents a solution for your situation as well, you can use some of the information to finally beat the "paralysis by analysis" beast.

Gary Landry

DaveM's Fireside Chat

It is hard to believe but we are at the end of the fiscal year for the Guild and our last meeting before our 2026–27 season in September. It has been a great year for members with some great demonstrations and challenges, and I personally want to thank everyone who made it all happen and all of the participants.

We all have to remember that the idea of a Guild is that it is a place for learning and sharing knowledge, something our executive have strived to accomplish. As all organizations that involve participation and physical meetings our membership numbers have flagged since Covid years. So, I would ask all of our members to seriously chat up the Guild to fellow turners who might be interested in joining our Guild. It would be so great to build our membership up to pre-covid numbers again. There is so much benefit to being a member and improving our turning skills not to mention the camaraderie with like-minded individuals.

In the spirit of a Guild, I am personally going to hold at least two workshops outside of our regular meetings at my own workshop, where 6 members can come for a day-long learning session. We will have three lathes set up and do some hands-on-learning. The first session will be on mastering the skew. I know a lot of us have an aversion to using the skew, but it can be such a workhorse in spindle work and although we see its use in our meeting demonstrations one can never really master the skew without some hands-on practice. Over the years I have worked hard to master it, and I want to share my experience with others and get you comfortable using this very versatile tool. With some one-on-one training I hope I make the skew your new best friend. When I am doing spindle work it is often the first tool I go to after using a roughing gouge. This workshop will happen in September, and the date will be announced at the September meeting.

My second hands-on workshop will be in October on making Christmas ornaments and finials. Again, we will have at least three lathes set up and all the gear to turn out some impressive Xmas ornaments, hopefully everyone will have a chance to turn a couple ornaments.

I am hopeful that others will also hold hands-on workshops outside of our regular meetings to encourage skill building for our members. We had some of these in our pre-Covid years and they were great successes hopefully we can do this again in the new fiscal year.

I want to also thank everyone who helped make this year's Annual Turners Competition a success and to all of the participants. The entries have been on display at Lee Valley for a couple of weeks and the winners will be announced at the June meeting... I encourage everyone to consider entering the competition next year, with three experience levels there is lots of room for everyone to shine. And consider this, everyone who participates gets a participation award the value of which is often more than our membership dues, so participation means that we easily recover our membership fees, a win-win situation.

Have a great summer, get some time in on the lathe and make some shavings. I look forward to seeing some of your work at the September Show and Tell.

Dave McLachlan

Notes From Members

This month, we have two notes from members with information to share. — Editor

First, Guild sister Dianne suggests members check out page 59 of the latest issue of the *American Woodturner*. It might be of interest to members of our group!

That is a bit of mysterious note; the next one is less so, but definitely worth a look.

Guild brother Calum writes: A VERY INTERESTING AND INFORMATIVE VIDEO

We often hear warnings that cloths or paper with finish on then can spontaneously ignite and start fires. While this often seems like a distant and unlikely theoretical possibility, it does happen. I recently came across this excellent video by Jason Hibbs at Bourbon Moth Woodworking on the dangers of spontaneous combustion of rags with finish:

https://youtu.be/3Gqi2cNCKQY?si=pgUETjc_qOp9aQSP

He shows that it is not just something that can happen, but **will occur** in a relatively short time in several different situations.

It's well worth the watch.

Don't be discouraged by its length; if you are impatient or pressed for time, you can watch it at 125% or 150% speed and still see everything. I watched it, and the time was well spent. I always had a suspicion that spontaneous combustion mostly happens in warm environments. The guy in the video talks about how cold his shop was during the video... so I have now adjusted my thinking on that matter. Calum is not exaggerating when he says it is well worth the watch.

Cover Photo



See what happens when no-one sends me a cover photo and the publication deadline is getting close? I find a photo of something vaguely related to woodturning and use that. (Don't make me use my cow drawing!)

To make this a bit more interesting, I'll let you figure out what species of wood this is. Bragging rights, the admiration of your peers and maybe even a prize go to the first person who sends an email to **members@novawoodturnersguild.com** with the correct answer. Hint: this species is known to grow in Nova Scotia, although I am told it is not common.

Admittedly, this is a picture of a flat piece of wood, which is not something we like to deal with. However, I hope some of you are up to the challenge.

Photo Credits

The photos in the "May Meeting Notes" article were captured from Richard's video by Calum. The photos in Gary's article were taken by Gary or his photographer delegate. The cover photo's background is a bit more obscure.

Nova Woodturners' Guild
2025/26 Executive

All members of the executive, as well as committee chairs, can be reached by using the email address associated with that position. That is, a note sent to (for example) the president will go to whomever is president at that time. The following `<address>`*es should be followed by* `@novawoodturnersguild.com` *to send mail to the person holding that position.*

A 'C' after a committee member's name indicates they are chair of that committee.

Position	<address>	Incumbent(s)	
Executive	`executive` (sends the message to all executive positions on the list)		
President	`president` (or) `pres`	Bob Earle	
Vice President	`vice-president` (or) `vp`	Bill Maes	
Secretary	`secretary`	Calum Ewing	
Treasurer	`treasurer`	Dave McLachlan	
Director at Large	`director1`	Mark Hazen	
Committees			
Library	`library`	Jim Diamond Brian Sharp	C
Web Site	`webmaster`	Richard Ford	C
Membership & Promotion	`membership`	vacant	
Newsletter	`newsletter` (or) `news`	Jim Diamond	C
Competition	`competition`	Bill Maes	C
Guild Photographer	`photographer` (or) `photos`	Chris Palmer	C
Fund Raising	`raffles`	vacant	C
Members Group	`members`	members	

The `members` address forwards the email to all members **who have signed up to be on the `members` list**. To add or remove yourself from the `members` list, email `webmaster@novawoodturnersguild.com`.

If you wish to send an email to **all** current members of the NWG, send your message to `secretary@novawoodturnersguild.com` with a request to forward your email to all members.